

EMILIO AMBASZ

Emilio Ambasz was born in Argentina in 1943. He completed the undergraduate program at Princeton University in one year and graduated with the professional degree of Master of Fine Arts in Architecture from the same institution.

He taught at Princeton University's School of Architecture and Urban Planning, and lectured at the Hochschule fur Gestaltung in Ulm, Germany, before being appointed Curator of Design at the Museum of Modern Art in 1970.

Mr. Ambasz has organized several major exhibitions at the Museum, among them Italy: The New Domestic Landscape (1972), one of the most ambitious design exhibitions ever undertaken by the Museum, and The Taxi Project: Realistic Solutions for Today (1976). Other Museum exhibitions directed by Mr. Ambasz include: Paris: May 1968, Posters of the Student Revolt (1968), Urban Anticipations: Eugène Hénard 1849-1923 (1969), A Classic Car: The Cisitalia GT, 1946 (1972), Designing Programs/Programming Designs: An Exhibition by Karl Gerstner (1973), Chairs by Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1974), Walter Pichler: Projects (1975), and The Architecture of Luis Barragán (1976).

While Associate Director of the Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, an institution established with the help of The Museum of Modern Art, Mr. Ambasz was Co-director of its "New Cities Project," a major research program for the New York State Urban Development Corporation. In 1970-71 he directed the research program "Institutions for a Post-Technological Society: The Universitas Project" at the Museum. This international program considered the evaluation and design of the urban environment and questioned the adequacy of prevailing modes of thought and existing institutions to deal with the problems of the man-made milieu.

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Examples of Mr. Ambasz's design work were included in 1967 in The Museum of Modern Art's Collection. He was the recipient in 1967-69 of Princeton University's Phillip Freneau Bicentennial Preceptorship; in 1969-70 of a Fellowship from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts; in 1973 of the "1973 Cover Award" of the American Institute of Graphic Arts; in 1975 of the "Prix Jean de La Fontaine" for his "Working Fables: A Collection of Design Tales for Skeptic Children;" and in 1976 of a "Progressive Architecture Award" for his design of a Community Arts Center.

Books by Mr. Ambasz published by the Museum include: Italy: The New Domestic Landscape (1972), Walter Pichler: Projects (1975), The Architecture of Luis Barragán (1976), The Taxi Project (1976), and The Universitas Project (1976). Designing Programs/Programming Designs: The Work of Karl Gerstner was published by Verlag Niggli, Switzerland (1973). In addition, Mr. Ambasz has contributed more than 20 articles to journals such as Perspecta, Oppositions, Industrial Design, and Casabella, among others.

The Design Collection of The Museum of Modern Art was established in 1934 and now includes over 2,500 mass-produced or hand-crafted objects. They have been selected on the basis of their quality and historical significance to illustrate the development of design during the past 75 years. Some 150 of these objects--including household and office appliances, tableware, tools, and furniture--are permanently exhibited in the Philip L. Goodwin Galleries on the second floor of the Museum's East Wing. This international selection presents both an historical survey of styles, from Art Nouveau to the present, and a standard of reference for judging contemporary design. Other material in the collection may be seen by scholars by appointment in the Lillie P. Bliss International Study Center.