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COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY NY:

THE EMILIO AMBASZ ANNUAL LECTURE 'ARCHITECTURE AS POETRY' KICKS OFF

A series of high-level meetings begins, seeking the expression of the poetic in architecture.

The first lecture will be in April 7, 2025 with Kengo Kuma.

Columbia University announces the **Emilio Ambasz Annual Lecture on Architecture as Poetry**, an innovative lecture series made possible by the generosity of world-renowned architect and industrial designer **Emilio Ambasz**. Every year, Columbia will host major practitioners and thinkers in the field of architecture from around the globe to deliver a lecture exploring the ways architecture uniquely enriches communities and daily lives.

Famed Japanese architect Kengo Kuma will deliver the first lecture in April 7, 2025.

*"We are all so pleased to introduce this lecture series, made possible by and carrying the name of world-renowned architect/designer/curator/theoretician **Emilio Ambasz**,"* said Barry Bergdoll, the Meyer Schapiro Professor of Art History and Archaeology. *"Ambasz has a poetic and emotive approach to architecture. The series aims to further one of his life-long commitments, namely that, in addition to all the technical and*



societal demands at the core of the architect's task, the discipline is imbued with the poetic."

Argentinian-born **Ambasz**, an architect and award-winning industrial designer, has been dubbed the "father of green architecture" by other practitioners given his trademark style of incorporating greenery into, or more often onto, his structures. According to **Ambasz**, an architectural project is a set of rituals that, like in fables, gathers and gives shape to deep and universal feelings and emotions. *"I consider architecture as the search for a spiritual dwelling,"* he affirms. *"An architect can be the guardian of the desert of cities created by man, or be the magician who creates eternal forms. The context in which the architect is called to operate may change, but the task remains the same: to give poetic form to the pragmatic. If an architectural work doesn't move the heart,"* **Ambasz** argues, *"it's just another building."*

This quest to express the poetic in architecture will be explored by major practitioners in the **Ambasz Annual Lecture series**, to be organized by Columbia's Department of Art History and Archaeology. The department is well-suited to the depth of this exploration and Ambasz's outstanding legacy of achievement given its rich history with respect to the study of architecture including the great architectural historian, Rudolph Wittkower, who served as department chair for more than 14 years, and the renowned Howard Hibbard and Robert Branner who served on the Columbia faculty.



"It is fitting that Columbia's Department of Art History and Archeology will be home to this unique lecture series," said Amy Hungerford, Executive Vice President of Arts and Sciences and dean of its faculty. "The department's curriculum is interdisciplinary and encourages students to explore all the domains of human experience that inspire, disturb, or energize the imagination, of which architecture is certainly one."

Columbia University is pleased to partner with Emilio Ambasz to bring this lecture series to life.

In the extraordinary list of honors, recognitions, and awards, Ambasz recently received an Honorary Degree in Civil Engineering and Architecture from the University of Bologna in 2021 as a "pioneer" of green architecture.

The year before, he won his fourth Compasso d'Oro for his exceptional career "as a pioneer of the relationship between buildings and nature."

Italian National Career Award IN/Architecture 2023 (for the first time in its history, the award was given to a non-Italian); Honorary Degree 'Aurelio Peccei' in Systemic Design at the Polytechnic University of Turin (IT).

In 2025, the 50th anniversary of one of his most internationally renowned works, the Casa de Retiro Espiritual (Seville, Spain), a stunning and dreamlike evocation of the primordial concept of



home, will be celebrated, an optical mirage among the most celebrated in the world.

Emilio Ambasz has been invited to the 19th International Architecture Exhibition of the Venice Biennale curated by Carlo Ratti (details to come).

<https://www.ambazsmuseum.com/>

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