

The Museum of Modern Art

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ANNOUNCES THE INAUGURAL AMBASZ-MoMA ANNUAL PRIZE FOR NATURE-RECONCILED ARCHITECTURE TO BE AWARDED THIS YEAR THANKS TO A NEW MAJOR GIFT FROM LEGACY EMILIO AMBASZ FOUNDATION

NEW YORK, April 22, 2026—The Museum of Modern Art has received a new major gift from the Legacy Emilio Ambasz Foundation to establish a first-of-its-kind annual architecture prize. On the occasion of Earth Day, MoMA is pleased to announce the **Ambasz-MoMA Annual Prize for Nature-Reconciled Architecture**. Launching this year, the Ambasz-MoMA Annual Prize will award a total of \$200,000 annually to a pathbreaking architectural project completed in the last 30 years that aligns with the stated mission of the Ambasz Institute for the Joint Study of the Built and the Natural Environment: to promote the exploration and study of creative approaches to design at all scales of the built environment—buildings, cities, landscapes, and objects—with an emphasis on understanding their joint relationship to their natural environment. The total value of the Ambasz-MoMA Annual Prize will be the highest for a single project in the domain of architecture, with \$100,000 going to the architect(s) and \$100,000 going to a not-for-profit organization to plant trees in honor of the project client's name. The inaugural prize will be awarded at a special ceremony at the Museum in late 2026.

The Ambasz-MoMA Annual Prize for Nature-Reconciled Architecture will be awarded by a jury composed of three curators from MoMA's Department of Architecture and Design—including Martino Stierli, MoMA's Philip Johnson Chief Curator of Architecture and Design, Evangelos Kotsioris, Director of the Ambasz Institute—and two esteemed external experts who will rotate every two to three years. Projects will be reviewed through a research-driven, nomination-based process. Drawing on a global network of invited advisors and Institute research, an initial pool of 20 to 30 projects will be assembled and evaluated through a multistage review. Finalists will be selected based on their work's alignment with the core principles of the Ambasz Institute. Projects most aligned with the aims of the prize actively contribute to their environments by restoring ecological balance, reinforcing local contexts, and advancing regenerative relationships with natural systems.

In addition, this gift will support a new, annual Ambasz-MoMA lecture series, titled Architecture as Poetry, to commence at MoMA in spring 2028. The series will be organized by MoMA's Department of Architecture and Design.

"What's compelling about the Ambasz-MoMA Annual Prize is its potential to extend beyond architecture's internal discourse," said Evangelos Kotsioris, Director of the Ambasz Institute. "It is designed to recognize practitioners who invent new prototypes for symbiotic relationships between architecture and its immediate environments, while also supporting the annual planting of trees with direct and lasting benefits for local communities across the world."

"I am thrilled about and deeply grateful to the Legacy Emilio Ambasz Foundation's reinforced commitment to MoMA's initiatives at the intersection of architecture and ecology," said Martino Stierli. "The establishment of this new, important prize not only makes it one of the most generous in the field, but also promises to shape architectural discourse for years and decades to come."

With this generous gift, Legacy Emilio Ambasz Foundation has now pledged more than \$20 million to MoMA to further the mission of the Institute.

About the Ambasz Institute

[The Emilio Ambasz Institute for the Joint Study of the Built and the Natural Environment](#) is a platform for fostering dialogue, promoting conversation, and facilitating research about the relationship between the built and natural environment, with the aim of making the interaction

MoMA

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between architecture and ecology visible and accessible to the wider public while highlighting the urgent need for an ecological recalibration. Established in 2020, the Institute was inspired by [Emilio Ambasz](#)'s visionary role in the emergence of architecture's ecological consciousness. The work of the Institute synthesizes research and programmatic initiatives with current sociopolitical issues to help solidify cultural and art institutions' relevance for today's diverse audiences. Since its founding, the Institute has sparked discourse around ecological issues within the field of architecture and among the general public through panels, conferences, lectures, and conversations. In 2023, the Institute organized [Emerging Ecologies: Architecture and the Rise of Environmentalism](#), the first major museum exhibition to survey the relationship between architecture and the environmental movement in the United States.

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For more information on the Ambasz Institute and the Ambasz-MoMA Annual Prize for Nature-Reconciled Architecture, visit moma.org/research/ambasz/.