

## Gaetano Pesce Biography



Gaetano Pesce, an architect-designer, based in New York City, has undertaken diverse commissions in architecture, urban planning, interiors, exhibitions and industrial design. For more than 40 years Pesce has conceived public and private projects in the United States, Europe, Latin America and Asia.

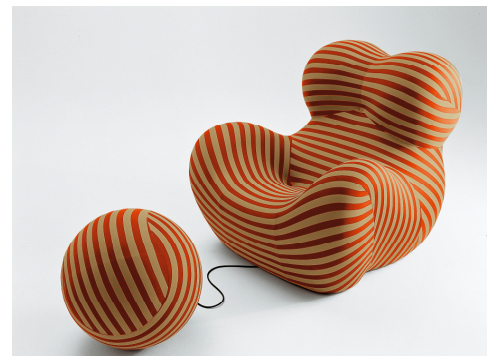
His extensive body of work – recognized for its emotive and tactile qualities, unrestrained use of colour and use of innovative building materials – has been described by the prominent architecture critic Herbert Muschamp as “the architectural equivalent of a brainstorm.”

Pesce’s research into advanced materials has yielded innovations in form and production. Highlights include the iconic “Up” series (1969), seven pieces of biomorphic-shaped seating that are shipped deflated and flattened, but, when opened expand into their voluptuous forms. “Up #5, La Mamma”, the first such industrial product to contain a political element, commented on the status of women by being chained to its accompanying ottoman.

Pesce opposes repetition, nostalgia and abstraction and embraces color, new materials, political dimensions, the “poorly made,” provocation, the feminine and the figurative. At the I Saloni WorldWide fair in New York City in 2005 he created an Italian countryside landscape out of food and produce.

Built projects and commissions include his proposal for Les Halles, Paris(1979); the converted Lingotto Fiat Factory, Turin (1983); the Children’s House for the Parc de la Villette, Paris (1985); the Hubin Apartment, Paris (1986); the Art Gallery in Knokke-le-Zoute, Belgium (1994); and the Shuman residence in New York City (1994).

The city of Osaka, Japan, declared Pesce’s Organic Building (1989-1993), whose façade is a vertical garden, a civic landmark in 1994. Pesce once remarked, “Our time is not monolithic. So if you have a building that is diversified in shape and material, it is much closer to the essence of our time.”



Pesce’s recreation of the offices of Manhattan’s TWBA/Chiat/Day advertising agency (1995) was hailed by the New York Times as “a remarkable work of art that bears no resemblance to the sleek, hard-edged aesthetic we have come to associate with the modern world.” In this project, and all his work, Pesce expresses his guiding principle: that modernism is less a style than a method for interpreting the present and hinting at the future in which individuality is preserved and celebrated.

On the subject of his work, Pesce says: "For the past forty years, I have been trying to give architecture back its capacity to be "useful to the brain," by quoting recognizable, figurative images commonly associated with street life and popular culture. I strive to seek new materials that fit into the logic of construction, while performing services appropriate to real needs. I have tried to communicate feelings of surprise, discovery, femininity, optimism, stimulation, sensuality, generosity and joy."



In 2010, Pesce presented four collections at the Salone del Mobile in Milan. With long time partner Meritalia, he designed a new collection of lamps and objects called "Edizioni del Pesce", a silicone armchair entitled "Senzafine", and a sofa called "La Florita." With the Italian manufacturer Le Fablier he designed a collection of resin furniture

pieces called "L'Abbraccio". He also resumed his collaboration with Cassina, and created the new "Sansone Table" (originally from 1980), a series of 61 tables made in national Italian colors: white, red and green. When put together, the series of tables forms the shape of the Italian peninsula. For Cassina Pesce also created "Notturmo a New York," a revised version of his 1980 sofa "Sunset in New York."

Noted museum exhibitions include his inclusion in the acclaimed Museum of Modern Art exhibition, *Italy: The New Domestic Landscape* (1972), *Gaetano Pesce: Le Temps des Questions* (1996), a retrospective at the Centre Georges Pompidou, *Pushing the Limits* (2005) at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and *Gaetano Pesce: Il Rumore Del Tempo* (2005) at La Triennale di Milano.

Pesce taught for 28 years at the Institut d'Architecture et d'Etudes Urbaines in Strasbourg. He has lectured at universities and cultural institutions around the world, including Carnegie Mellon in Pittsburgh, the Domus Academy in Milan and Cooper Union in New York City.

He received the prestigious Chrysler Award for Innovation and Design (1993), the Architektur and Wohnen Designer of the Year (2006) and the Lawrence J. Israel Prize from the Fashion Institute of Technology (2009).

Pesce was born in La Spezia, Italy in 1939. He studied at the University Of Venice Faculty Of Architecture from 1958 to 1963 and was a participant in Gruppo N, an early collective concerned with programmed art patterned after the Bauhaus.

**For more information or interview requests please contact LUCHFORD APM 0207 6311000**