

Ricardo Ohtake

(October 24, 1942, São Paulo)

Ohtake was born to a family of Japanese immigrants in the São Paulo neighborhood Mooca. Father Ushio Ohtake, the son to a secondary school teacher, studied agronomy in Tokyo to prepare for his coming to Brazil, but in São Paulo he became a worker for a small laboratory of medicines. Born in Kyoto, his mother Tomie Ohtake, the daughter to two loggers and wood beneficiaries, came to Brazil to visit a brother who was already in the country, but could not return to Japan because of the Pacific War. She has become one of the greatest artists in the country.

Ushio and Tomie met and married in Brazil, and had two children. Ruy, the oldest one, is an architect, graduated from USP's School of Architecture and Urbanism (FAU), and one of the most recognized and awarded professionals in his area in Brazil. Ricardo also graduated in architecture from FAU-USP, but has dedicated his career to visual communication (graphic design) since college.

Ohtake was president of the September 16th Student Body of his secondary school, of the GFAU Student Body in college, and the first representative of students when the FAU Congregation (1968) was formed. He set up his professional office together with Dalton de Luca, a colleague from FAU-USP, and with José Roberto Graciano. After both left, Ohtake continued with the office working with two assistants: former students who accompany him to this day.

Some highlights of his graphic work: Ralph Camargo Gallery, Collection Gallery, São Paulo Gallery, *Construtora Nelson Vitorino*. Urban projects: 25 de Março Street, Sabesp Squares, 13 de Maio Street. Books: 'Tomie Ohtake', '*Novos Horizontes - Pintura Mural nas Cidades Brasileiras*', '*Paulista Símbolo da Cidade*', '*Oscar Niemeyer - Obras até 1985*', '*Minha Arquitetura 1937-2004*', '*Portinari Devora Hans Staden*', '*Danças Populares Brasileiras e Instrumentos Musicais*', Athos Bulcão, '*Ruy Ohtake - La Arquitectura*', '*Contemporaneidade da Arquitetura Brasileira*', '*Bienal de São Paulo (XXII e XXIII)*', and '*Brasil 500 Anos*' (13 volumes). Books, catalogs and graphic material of the Tomie Ohtake Institute.

In parallel to the work at his office, he has taught at faculties of arts, architecture and industrial design for approximately 15 years, emphasizing Iadê School and FAU São José dos Campos. They were two important experiences of secondary and higher education, where innumerable innovations in the curriculum and in the way of approaching education have been promoted. In the first, jointly between teachers and the school's management. In São José dos Campos, by students as well.

During this period, Ohtake resumed the experimentation of cultural projects previously initiated. He has worked in projects of the São Paulo Secretary of Education and the State Secretary of Culture, alongside Dalton de Luca, under the coordination of José Luiz Paes Nunes. In the General Coordination of Planning of the City Hall (COGEP), later Municipal Planning

Department, he has designed urban and cultural projects under the coordination of João Evangelista Leão, and together with Dalton de Luca and José Roberto Graciano.

In the late 1970s, Ohtake started a more institutional phase in the field of culture. In the City Hall of São Paulo, when the secretary of culture was poet Mario Chamie, he experimented new possibilities as head of the graphic arts research sector at the Department of Artistic Information and Documentation (IDART), and as organizer of IDART exhibitions at *Casa das Retortas*.

He was the coordinator of the assembly of the later São Paulo Cultural Center (CCSP), in activities that involved: elaboration of the bill to create the CCSP; project of occupation, including choice and rental of furniture; programming of the first year of operation; and choice of names for the most important positions.

When the Centro Cultural São Paulo was inaugurated, Ohtake became its first director. At the end of a year at the CCSP, he ended his term at the City Hall. There he achieved very effective results through different projects from 1979 to 1982.

In the 1980s, he was Secretary General of the José Martí Cultural Association, a recognized institution whose main positions were occupied by personalities such as Florestan Fernandes, Fernando Morais, Antonio Candido, Chico Buarque de Holanda and Itoby Alves Correa Jr. (coordinator). The Association was basically the unofficial organization of relations between Brazil and Cuba before their resumption of diplomatic relations, which led Ohtake to Cuba for countless times.

In the late 1980s until the mid-1990s, he was director of the Museum of Image and Sound (when journalist Fernando Morais was São Paulo State Secretary of Culture), director of the Brazilian Cinemateca (when the Ministry of Culture was directed by Sergio Paulo Rouanet) and State Secretary of Culture. In these positions, it was possible to carry out great works of cultural policy, with much invention, depth and that gave prestige to the institutions.

Ohtake was also president of the Cultural Chamber of the Alumni Association, an institution that established cultural and educational relations between Brazil and the United States, and carried out work that essentially emphasized cultural activities, not entertainment. He was the director of the Association of Graphic Designers (ADG-Brasil), being in charge of cultural programs, creation of important exhibitions for the history of Brazilian design and the activities of active designers (ADG Biennial).

In the late 1990s, he was Municipal Secretary of Green and the Environment, when he created and started the Environmental Atlas of São Paulo and made the restorations of Luz and Ibirapuera Parks, among others.

In 2001, he created the Tomie Ohtake Institute, which he presides until today. It is the only institution of such size in the country without any permanent or automatic linkage or help of large companies or government, that survives with an exclusively cultural program through incentive laws with strict quality of exhibitions, complemented by projects and activities related to the population. The Institute holds about 17 exhibitions a year in its own space, and

five further ones in other cities, states or countries. The public reached an average of 1 million people a year in the last five years. In the beginning the place had 100,000 annual visitors.

He was curator of Brazil at the Architecture Biennale in Venice in 2010 and one of the curators of the Brazilian Architecture exhibition, parallel to the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2013. He is president of the Brazilian Association of Non-Profit Cultural Entities (ANEC) and a member of IEA's Board. Ohtake is also an adviser to the Padre Anchieta Foundation (TV Cultura).

He won the Ciccillo Matarazzo Prize as Personality of the Year 2013, granted by the Brazilian Association of Art Critics (ABCA). He received the Order of Isabel la Catolica (Spain) and the Order of Rio Branco (Brazil).