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In Memoriam: Essy Baniassad

Posted by Faculty of Architecture and Planning on February 22, 2023 in [In Memoriam](#)

Dr. Esmail Baniassad (1936–2023)

The Faculty of Architecture and Planning honours the memory of Essy Baniassad. A passionate advocate for architecture, an exceptional thinker and an influential educator, Essy was a citizen of the world who integrated those qualities in his work as an architect and a teacher. He brought exceptional clarity and inspiration to architectural education that has advanced the lives of generations of students, faculty colleagues, practicing architects and peers.

Essy Baniassad was appointed Dean of the Faculty of Architecture at the Technical University of Nova Scotia in 1980. During the next fourteen years he opened that school to the world. Students worked internationally, participated in the design of housing cooperatives in Colombia and assisted in the development of plans for disaster-resistant buildings in Peru. He initiated the Dalhousie-Botswana Architectural Education Project (in collaboration with the Government of Botswana) and between 1992 and 2012 the program graduated 32 students who are now teaching and practising in Botswana. He then helped to establish the School of Architecture at the University of Botswana in 2011.

In 1989, Essy Baniassad was elected President of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, and during his presidency sought to project architecture, architects and design, and to articulate the many benefits they bring to public life.

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In 1993, Essy Baniassad founded TUNS Press, the first architectural publishing house in Canada. The Press publishes monographs of Canadian architects, books on Canadian architectural history, and works that bring architecture to a wider public. In 2011, TUNS Press became Dalhousie Architectural Press and Essy Baniassad continued to serve on the Editorial Board until 2023.

In 2000, Essy Baniassad was appointed Chair of the Department of Architecture at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. During the six years that he held that post, the architecture program was advanced significantly while his research focused on collaborations with the Hong Kong Hospital Authority to re-envision hospitals as civic institutions.

In all his activities, Dr. Baniassad understood the power of architecture to inspire communities in constant change. His understanding of a shared humanity and a shared planet resonated with people far and wide. He will be greatly missed by communities in Nova Scotia, across Canada and around the world. We are especially thankful for his time and inspiration.

Learn more: [Essy Baniassad was a Dalhousie Original](#)

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