



WALTER DE SILVA

With an unquestionable talent for drawing, a love for cars since childhood and a strong and resolute personality, he began his professional career in 1972 in Turin as a Junior Stylist at the Fiat Style Centre. In 1975 he joined the Rodolfo Bonetto firm in Milan where he was responsible for interior car design. Franco Mantegazza and Renzo Piano asked him to head the Idea Institute Design Department from 1979 to 1986.

The Fiat VSS was designed in those years, an experimental, subsystems-based car, the first example of modular design in the automotive sector. After a short period with "Trussardi Design Milan", in 1986 De Silva was invited by Alfa Romeo's Rudolf Hruska to become the head of the company's Centro Stile in Milan.

His dream had come true: designing for the brand he had been in love with since childhood. He designed prototypes such as the "Proteo" and the "Nuvola" as well as production models such as the 156, 147 (Car of the Year in 1998 and 2000, respectively) and the 166.

In 1999 he was asked by Ferdinand Piech to become Head of Design for Seat, for which he developed strategic projects such as Salsa and Tango and production models for the Spanish brand such as Leon, Salsa, Ibiza and Toledo. Prof. Piech and Martin Winterkorn invited him to become Head of Design for the Audi Group (Audi, Seat, Lamborghini).

The aim was clear: to relaunch the four rings cars with a unique and emotional design. He personally developed the new Audi style which won immediate recognition for its extraordinary design and signature single frame front. A6/A8/A7/ A4 /A3/ TT/ Q7/ Q5/ A5 /A1/ Q3 /R8 are his most famous creations, for which he received numerous international awards, including the 2010 Design Award of the Federal Republic of Germany for the Audi A5, which he considers "the most beautiful car I have ever designed".

On January 1st 2007 he was appointed Head of Design of the Volkswagen Group in Wolfsburg for 12 brands: Audi, Volkswagen, Seat, Skoda, the luxury brands Porsche, Bentley, Lamborghini as well as Ducati and the industrial vehicles brands Scania, Man, Volkswagen Commercial.

A formidable challenge in terms of complexity, organization and synergies. Walter De Silva based his research on the definition of brand-specific design criteria and the formal simplicity of the models, combining German technology and his great Italian creativity.

This led to the New Polo and the Golf 7 (Car of the Year 2010 and 2013) and the new aesthetic principles promoted by De Silva characterized all subsequent Volkswagen models such as Up/Tiguan/Touareg, giving them a distinctive and clearly recognizable identity...There were numerous concept cars, such as the Lamborghini Miura Concept and the Egoista, a tribute for the 50th anniversary of the Sant'Agata Bolognese company. In recognition of his undisputed and extraordinary merits, in 2015 De Silva was awarded Car of the Year for the fifth time for the Volkswagen Passat.

Walter De Silva was awarded the Compasso d'Oro alla Carriera (Golden Compass for Lifetime Achievement in Design awarded by the Italian Association for Industrial Design) and continued to focus on product design, which led to two magnificent products such as the Leica M9 Titanium camera and the Luft armchair for Poltrona Frau. When his career as car designer came to an end in December 2015 he immediately started to pursue his not-so-secret dream: designing women's shoes... so together with his wife Emmanuelle he has now created WALTER DE SILVA SHOES.