



Introduction to Moshe Safdie. 2:09 min. Interview: Raymond Elman. Select interview questions: Margi Reeve and Elisa Silva. Post-Production: Lee Skye. Music: Joseph Elguera. Recorded at the Miami Book Fair. 11/19/2022. Miami.

# Iconic Architect Moshe Safdie: From Habitat to Yad Vashem

By Elman + Skye

**MOSHE SAFDIE** is an architect, urban planner, educator, theorist, and author. Over a celebrated 50-year career, Safdie has explored the essential principles of socially responsible design through a comprehensive and humane design philosophy. His wide range of completed projects include cultural, educational, and civic institutions; neighborhoods and public parks; housing; mixed-use urban centers and airports; and master plans for existing communities and entirely new cities. Safdie has been involved in projects in North and South America, the Middle East, and Asia.

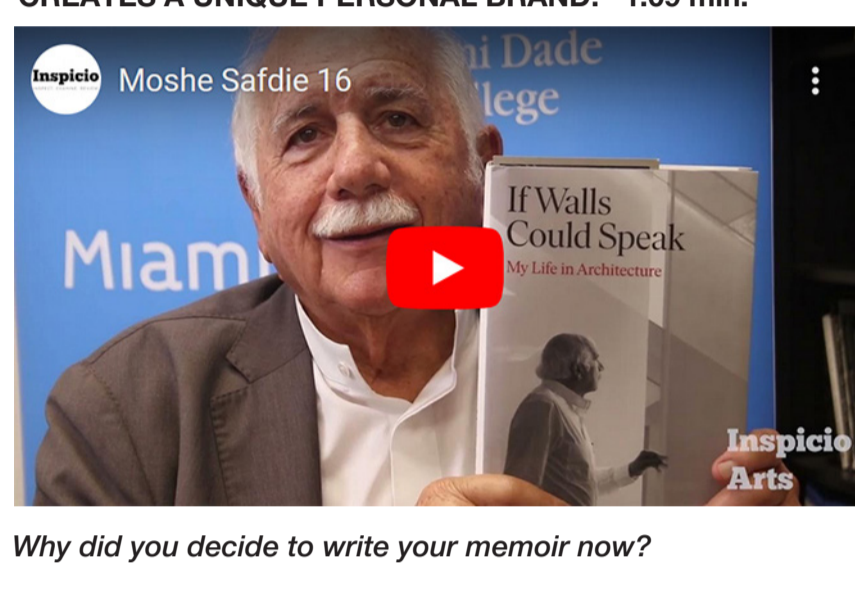
A citizen of Israel, Canada and the United States, Safdie graduated from McGill University. After apprenticing with Louis I. Kahn in Philadelphia, Safdie returned to Montreal to oversee the master plan for the 1967 World Exhibition. In 1964 he established his own firm to realize Habitat '67, an adaptation of his undergraduate thesis and a turning point in modern architecture.

Safdie has been the recipient of numerous awards, honorary degrees, and civil honors including the Companion of the Order of Canada, the Gold Medal from both the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada and the American Institute of Architects, the National Design Award for Lifetime Achievement by the Cooper Hewitt Smithsonian, and recently the Wolf Prize in Architecture—awarded for a career motivated by the social concerns of architecture and formal experimentation.

— <https://www.safdiearchitects.com/>

The videos below are organized by Success Factor, and run between 30 seconds and 5 minutes. Click on any video. You must be connected to the Internet to view the videos.

**CREATES A UNIQUE PERSONAL BRAND:** 1:09 min.



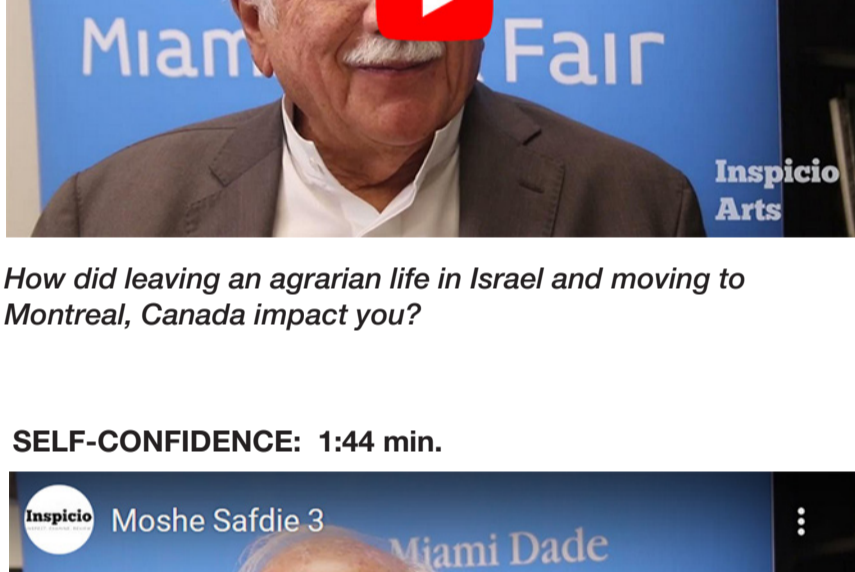
*Why did you decide to write your memoir now?*

**EXPOSURE TO BROAD INFLUENCES:** 1:06 min.



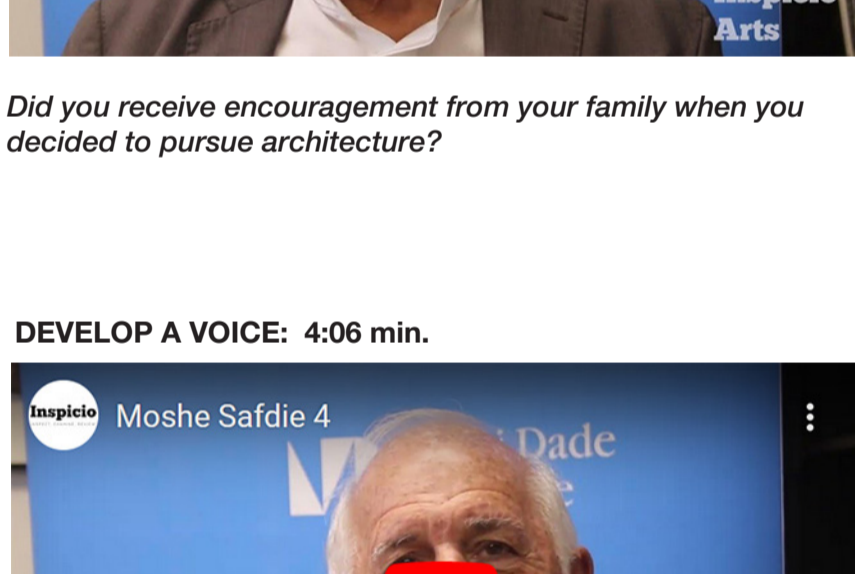
*Did you meet architect Richard Saul Wurman, creator of The TED Conference, through working with iconic architect Louis Kahn?*

**OVERCOMES CHALLENGES TO SUCCEED:** 2:24 min.



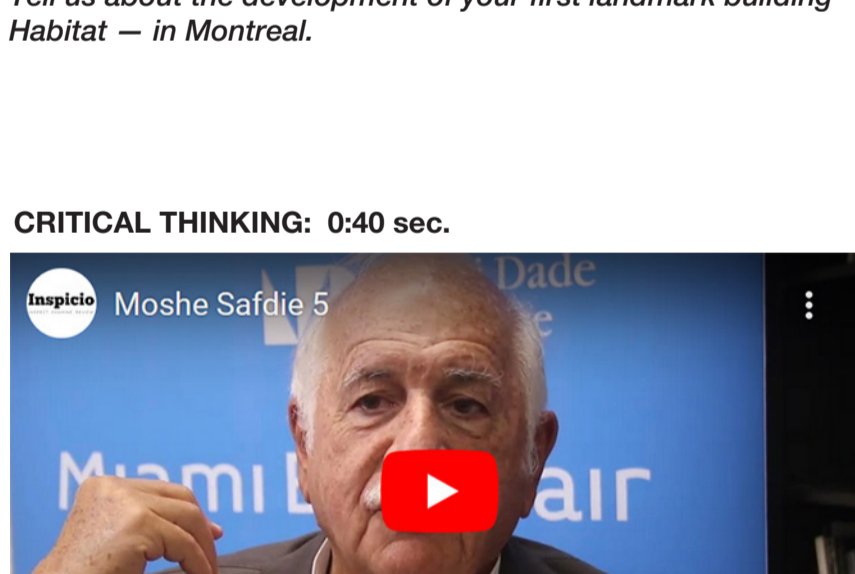
*How did leaving an agrarian life in Israel and moving to Montreal, Canada impact you?*

**SELF-CONFIDENCE:** 1:44 min.



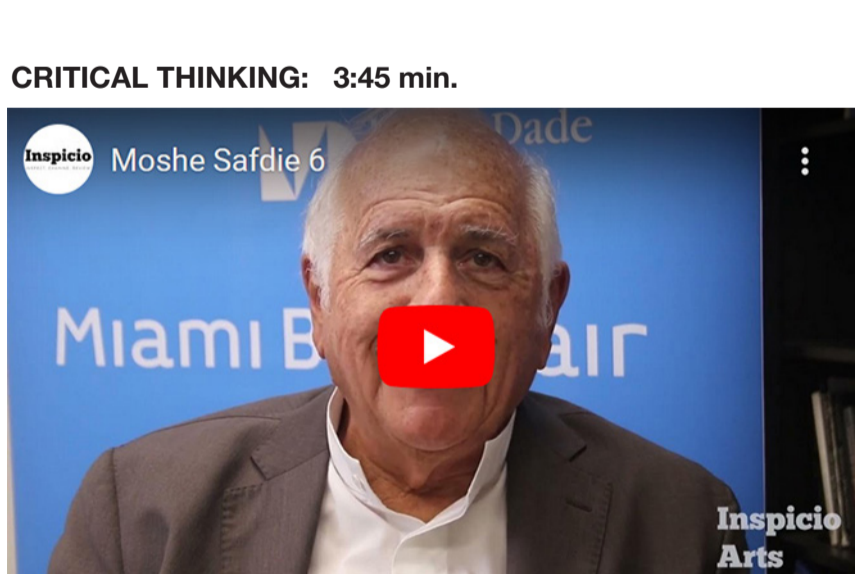
*Did you receive encouragement from your family when you decided to pursue architecture?*

**DEVELOP A VOICE:** 4:06 min.



*Tell us about the development of your first landmark building – Habitat – in Montreal.*

**CRITICAL THINKING:** 0:40 sec.



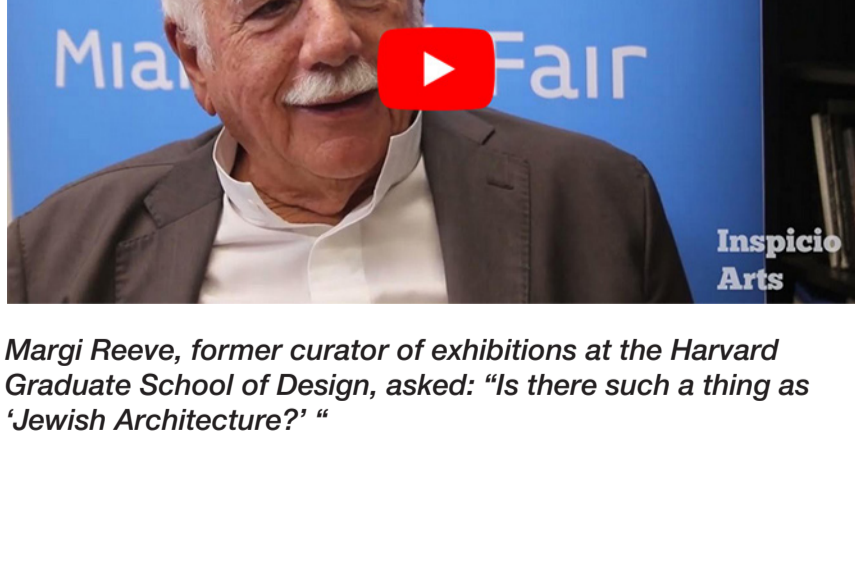
*What were some of the considerations when you were selecting a site for Habitat?*

**CRITICAL THINKING:** 3:45 min.



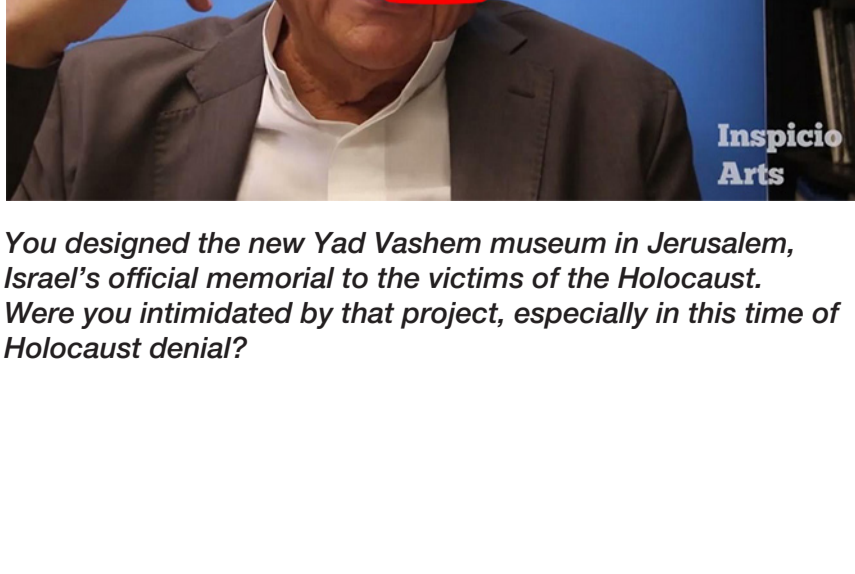
*When did you first start to pay attention to the issues associated with climate change?*

**COMMUNITY VALUES:** 2:06 min.



*Does the spirit of Habitat come from the strong sense of community that you experienced growing up in Israel?*

**CRITICAL THINKING:** 2:50 min.



*Margi Reeve, former curator of exhibitions at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, asked: "Is there such a thing as 'Jewish Architecture'?"*

**CRITICAL THINKING:** 4:11 min.



*You designed the new Yad Vashem museum in Jerusalem, Israel's official memorial to the victims of the Holocaust. Were you intimidated by that project, especially in this time of Holocaust denial?*

**OVERCOMES CHALLENGES TO SUCCEED: 2:21 min.**



*What precipitated your move from Montreal to Harvard and the Boston area?*

**SELF-CONFIDENCE: 1:19 min.**



*Why weren't people coming to you with projects in Canada? Were they jealous of the success of Habitat?*

**EXPOSURE TO BROAD INFLUENCES: 0:50 sec.**



*Was Sert still at Harvard when you arrived?*

**CRITICAL THINKING: 2:01 min.**



*Architect Elisa Silva asked, "In the face of such a compromised world, have you changed your mind regarding buildings and architecture?"*

**SELF-CONFIDENCE: 2:10 min.**



*You have created iconic structures all over the world. At what point in your career did you believe that was possible?*

**UNDERSTANDS ARTISTS' NEEDS: 1:02 min.**



*How much have you personally embraced the wide variety of digital design tools available?*