

Ladies and gentlemen, it is my privilege to introduce you the first keynote speaker, an outstanding expert in the fields of Tensile, Deployable and Space Structures.

Félix Escrig was born in 1950, in Castellón de la Plana, in the Valencian Community of Spain. He got his degree and received his PhD degree in Architecture from the University of Seville.

He is now retired from the academy. He was Full Professor at the University of Seville and former Dean of the School of Architecture as well as Head of the Department of Structures.

He was Fulbright granted in Berkeley and he progressively specialised in the design of structures for architecture.

Throughout his career he patented several models of structural interest. He was the author of some important designs for the EXPO 92 in Seville and in Zaragoza 2008.

Among other prizes and distinctions Félix Escrig has received:

- Two IFAI Awards in USA (the Industrial Fabrics Association International);
- Two Tsuboi Awards of the International Association for Shell and Spatial Structures (in 1995, granted to the best paper published in the Proceedings of the Annual Symposia of the Association; in 2011, granted to the best paper published in the Journal of the Association, entitled "Geometry and Structures: Historical Impressions about Architecture");
- The Pioneer Award of the Space Research Centre of the University of Surrey in 2002;
- First Prize granted by the Instituto de Construcción Tubular, in 2006.

He organised several symposia in the field of structures. He is now chairing the organisation of the International Conference Transformables 2013 in Honour of Emilio Pérez Piñero that will be held in Seville next September.

Since 1997 he is the editor of the journal STAR – Structural Architecture – published by the University of Seville.

He is author of more than one hundred technical papers and twenty of popular science. He published several books on Historical Buildings, such as: "The Great Structures in Architecture"; "Towers and Domes in Architecture" and "La Modernidad del Gótico". He is also a Novelist who has recently published "The Goodness of Venice", in Spanish.

Apart from all these technical and scientific achievements Félix is a very nice human being who is really aware of the value of life. In fact, Félix has already faced some difficult battles as he has had three liver transplants.

In June he was hospitalized in critical condition. He is at home now recovering. He tried to be here today. He really wished to share with us his knowledge and tremendous experience, but he was not allowed to travel. He made an effort and he sent a voiced PowerPoint presentation that we are going to see and listen.

I have no doubt that you will join me in a very strong wish for his fast rehabilitation and recovery and in a very special applause in recognition of his example of force and determination.

Thank you Félix.