



USPS Celebrate the Century Express

PROJECT TEAM: Cesar Vergara, Chief Designer, Amtrak (1990-2000)
Amtrak Rail Design Center (Wilmington)
United States Postal Service Design Office, Susan Davis (Washington, DC)
Amtrak Maintenance Facility (Bear, DE)
Avalon Inc. (Milwaukee, WI)
Reidler Decal (St Clare, PA)

CLIENT: United States Postal Service

COMPLETION DATE: 1999

In 1998, the USPS launched a “Celebrate the Century” program with a series of exciting stamps designed by various artists to commemorate accomplishments and historical events of the 20th Century. The USPS hoped to interest a new generation in stamp collecting. Initially, the program was assigned a chartered jet traveling from city to city to showcase the stamps, but it failed to attract crowds. The USPS decided to transfer the exhibit to rail and contracted Amtrak to craft and operate a special train

Amtrak assigned CESAR VERGARA to design the consist which included a locomotive, Amfleet passenger coach, baggage car, private railcar and a railway post office car. The USPS contract called for the restoration of the post office railcar to be showcased and then and donated to a railway museum upon completion of the tour visiting most of the 48 continental states.

CESAR VERGARA, in a cooperative effort with the USPS design office, devised a graphic scheme in which the Genesis GE locomotive and cars were painted and wrapped in a manila envelope yellow hue. The manila color functioned as the background for gigantic reproductions of stamps and postmarks expertly translated to this media by Reidler Decal. The reflective stamp reproductions were fabricated in sizes raging from 4-by-4 stamps up to 9-by-9 feet. To impart a sense of speed and of the passing of a century, the stamps on the Amfleet coach were designed to appear as if they were coming off the train.

Named the “Celebrate the Century Express” by the design team, the trainset was an extraordinary success. In hundreds of scheduled events, hundreds of thousands of viewers visited the train, marveled at the exhibits in the interior and enjoyed the exterior livery.







