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INTERNATIONAL 48

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ITALIA AND INTERNATIONAL

Cersaie 2020, the evolution of Archincont(r)act

Archincont(r)act is a highly innovative event in the world of international trade fairs and will take a major step forward at Cersaie 2020 in terms of both concept and exhibition space. Held in the Mall of Hall 29, the first edition of the initiative saw the participation of ten international architecture firms specialising in various areas of the contract sector, from hotels and industrial buildings to retail outlets, spas, hospitals and business centres.

Ceramic materials and bathroom furnishings already enjoy pride of place in major architecture projects in all these fields of application, and through the contribution of these firms are able to acquire greater space and visibility.

At the same time, the large real estate developers who came to this year's Cersaie had the chance not only to talk to these professionals but also to view the latest product innovations showcased by almost 900 exhibitors from all over the world.

At Cersaie 2020, the whole of Hall 18 will become the Contract Hall, a 10,000 square metre exhibition space with at its centre the areas occupied by the architecture firms and a conference area. It will feature new thematic areas devoted specifically to kitchens, systems and products for wellness, lighting, interior and exterior finishings, the varied world of outdoor spaces, home automation, and IT solutions for building design and management.

Thanks to the presence of these companies operating in new product sectors for Cersaie, the show will be able to offer a complete range of solutions for the contract furnishing sector. The hall will be organised according to thematic islands, which in the finest tradition of Cersaie will host world-leading industrial players in terms of innovation, quality and reputation.

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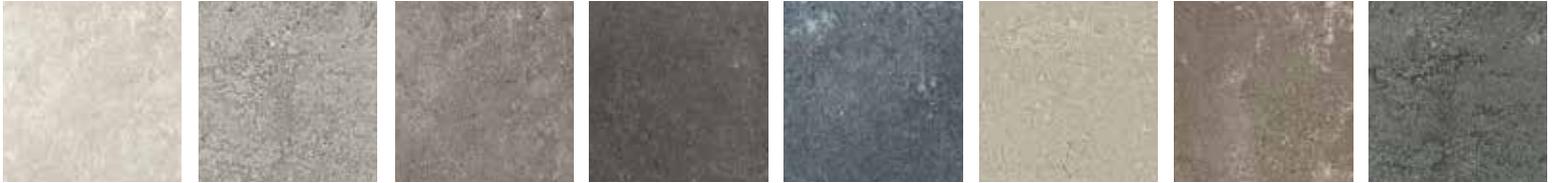
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Ceramics of Italy

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CERSAIE 2019

Sustainability in the spotlight at Cersaie

by Maria Teresa Rubbiani



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Anupama Kundoo

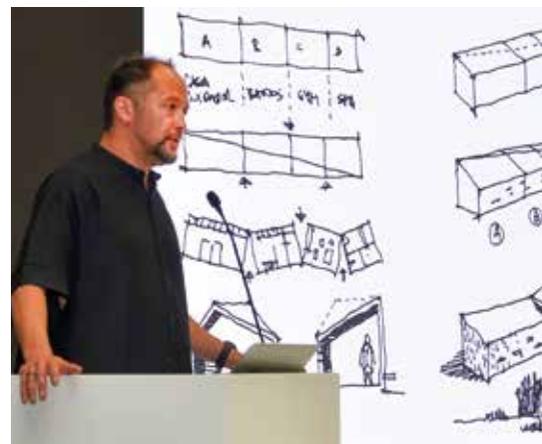
The theme of sustainability dominated Cersaie 2019, taking centre stage everywhere from the architecture conferences to the inaugural convention, from installation materials to ceramic slabs. And while ceramic products were proudly displayed on the stands in all their beauty, the exhibitors armed with figures and diagrams, brochures and catalogues were keen to explain to visitors the concrete contribution that the use of ceramic in architecture brings to the environmental sustainability of the planet.

As early as 2010, Cersaie had chosen “Change of climate” as the title for its entire cultural programme, using the expression to refer not just to the already evident problem of climate change but also to the imminent transformations of society heralded by the 2008 financial crisis.

“Ahead of our time” was the slogan used at Coverings in 2019 to promote Ceramics of Italy with the American public and to underscore the fact that Italian ceramics have always been one step ahead of the competition. This is true not only for product design and innovation but also for environmental sustainability – as will be evident to anyone who takes the time to explore the history of the Italian ceramic industry, which for years has addressed the theme of the environment with innovative solutions. The speakers at the architecture conferences making up the ‘building, dwelling,

thinking’ programme also devoted plenty of attention to environmental issues.

Indian architect **Anupama Kundoo** noted that in spite of the extensive technical knowledge now in our possession, we continue to build without environmental awareness. She discussed sustainability in the broadest possible sense, not just in terms of the environment, citing the factors that an architect must take into consideration. Examples include demographic concentration which often does not correspond to the availability of natural resources; the issue of migration which creates new urbanisation scenarios, resulting in fresh demands for globalisation from new citizens; and the issue of social segregation of people who cannot afford a home and are forced to live in ghettos. Emerging Chilean architect **Felipe Assadi** also discussed the issue, referring in particular to the need to respect the landscape. “The landscape always has a leading role, especially in Chile where the geography and morphology of the land are much more important than history, which is still too recent,” he said. “Our relationship with matter is linked to the earth and natural phenomena.



Felipe Assadi

The climate is a parameter that must be kept in mind when designing.”

On the subject of sustainable urban renewal, the New Zealand-born architect **Brendan MacFarlane** presented some of the most important projects his practice has carried out in recent years, particularly in France. He began with the Orange Cube in Lyon, an urban regeneration project to create a sustainable cultural venue located in a green area with pedestrian and cycle paths, then went on to describe the Living Landscape project carried out in the suburbs of Reykjavik which lowers atmospheric CO₂ emissions.

The double conference featuring talks by Argentine architect **Emilio Ambasz** and Milanese architect **Attilio Stocchi** was devoted entirely and explicitly to the theme of the environment and the relationship between architecture and landscape. Ambasz gave a conference entitled “Green prophecy”. Emilio Ambasz, whose works in the 1970s touched on themes such as sustainability and at the time seemed highly utopian, gave a conference entitled “Green prophecy”. He began by discussing the concept of Nature today. “We must create a second Nature strongly influenced by the hand of man and intrinsically connected to given Nature” he said. “The work of an architect is a work of reconciliation. That’s why I speak of ‘Green over Grey’ and have created buildings that restore as much greenery to the community as possible, in some cases returning all the



BRENDAN MACFARLANE



Photo: Vincenzo Conelli



EMILIO AMBASZ



Photo: Vincenzo Conelli

land used for construction. A work of architecture must speak to the heart, so we need to stop thinking that buildings belong in cities and gardens in the suburbs.” Next, the young architect Attilio Stocchi gave a talk entitled Nascitura in which he outlined his poetic vision of architecture. This approach involves placing experimental research into nature at the centre of his design activity, seeing it as a fundamental constitutive element in the creation of space. He discussed several of his projects, from the installation Cuorebosco (2011) – a reconstruction of the Celtic forest, the first historical nucleus of Milan, consisting of metal trunks and misty branches and surrounded by birdsong – to the latest two projects carried out in cooperation with the Archaeology, Fine Arts and Landscape Heritage Commission of Milan: the Collina di ERMES (2018) in Palazzo Citterio and the important new construction site for PAN (2019), the Amphitheatrum Naturae Park already described by the press as the “Green Colosseum”.

With theme areas spanning architecture and nature, ceramics and living solutions, Cersaie 2019 was a highly successful show attended by **112,340 visitors**, including 52,997 from abroad, more than 47% of the total. The Exhibition of Ceramic Tile and Bathroom Furnishings continues to confirm its international appeal and cement its position as a major annual world event for the ceramic industry.

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Building for the common good

by Alessandra Coppa

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Photo: © Tonatiuh Ambrosetti

The approach to architectural design embraced by Pia Durisch and Aldo Nolli stands out for its consistency and its focus on socially useful projects, heritage preservation and city architecture. These characteristics were evident right from their very first works, from the House for a Sculptor in Mendrisio in 1998 (a radical project that involved restoring a mediaeval building to its original state by stripping away the various additions that had been made over the centuries and constructing a new reinforced concrete interior) to the project for the MaxMuseo in Chiasso (which involved transforming an old abandoned garage located opposite the Cinema Teatro in a run-down area of the town's historic centre). This approach dates back to 1985, when the two architects were training at Santiago Calatrava's practice after meeting as students at the ETH in Zurich, an experience they continued at the firm of Giancarlo Durisch in Lugano and consolidated when they opened their first studio in Riva San Vitale in 1993.

How did you come to set up your firm?

Durisch + Nolli was set up by Pia Durisch and myself as a result of a partnership that has lasted for more than 30 years. We have the same professional background and academic training and share our professional and private lives. Together we follow all the firm's projects. We both teach, an activity we see as an opportunity for personal growth and for developing our architectural beliefs together with our students while making our professional expertise available to the younger generations. For years we have been working with professional and cultural associations, promoting competitions as merit-based tools and the diffusion of architectural culture or "Baukultur".

What is your design philosophy?

We engage in a constant dialogue in order to achieve a greater understanding and justification of the things we do and design together. We bring together different but complementary viewpoints to create a well-balanced project and strive to deal with the essential aspects of our local area, our society and our culture. This is one of the most exciting things about the architectural profession. The idea of building something that is useful and sustainable for society is extremely rewarding and a source of great satisfaction. Contributing to the common good through socially useful projects in the belief that good architecture can improve people's lives is one of the most important aspects of our philosophy. Cities are the highest expression of human

“Our architectural approach involves breaking free from the influence of the Ticino-based Tendenza movement while assimilating its ideas. By rejecting false postmodern formalism and the quest for recognisability based on stylistic affectation, we aim to capture the very essence of architecture.”



BIOGRAPHY

Durisch + Nolli Architetti

Established in 1993, the firm was founded by Pia Durisch and Aldo Nolli.

Their first works include the Swisscom Service Centre in Giubiasco and the restoration of the Social Theatre in Bellinzona (1993-1997) in collaboration with Giancarlo Durisch, the restoration of the Monastery of Santa Maria Assunta in Claro (1997-2005) and the House for a Sculptor in Mendrisio (2000), which won the SIA Award for best private building in Ticino for the period from 1998 to 2003. Several public projects in the fields of culture and education followed, including the Cultural Centre of Chiasso with the MaxMuseo and Spazio Officina in 2005, the Vocational Education Centre of the Swiss Builders Society SSIC in Gordola in 2011 and the Federal Criminal Court of Bellinzona in collaboration with Bearth & Deplazes in 2013. With these buildings, Durisch + Nolli have won all editions of the SIA Award in the last decade (2003-2015). Their most recent completed projects include a residential complex for 280 students in Lucerne for the Student Mentor Foundation in 2013 and the Nosedo Primary School in Massagno with Giraudi Radczuweit in 2017. In 2012 they won the *international AIT Global Award* for Interior and Architecture in the Education category and in 2014 the Prix Acier for the best steel building in Switzerland. More recently, through participation in various international competitions, they have also acquired important projects outside the canton of Ticino such as the Assembly and Arts Building of Aiglon College (2017) and the new headquarters of the SRF Swiss television channel in Zurich (2017).



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civilisation because they represent the desire for civil coexistence within an organised community and adopt infrastructure for the common good. We are fascinated by the way cities are built over time. We firmly believe that a good architectural project can resolve complex situations and give an identity to otherwise characterless places, whether these are abandoned industrial sites or rapidly-growing suburbs. We focus on all construction disciplines in order to have a complete overview of the project and to be able to maintain control over all of its aspects. Sustainability is one of the primary concepts of our architecture and will be an increasingly important factor in the future given the urgent need to drastically reduce energy consumption and emissions.

Many of your projects were carried out in the canton of Ticino in Switzerland. How do they relate to the location and the local architectural tradition?

Our architecture is always closely linked to its location, so a knowledge of local culture is essential. At the same time an architect is always driven by the quest for something new. The ability to see things with a fresh eye, free from prejudice and with childlike enthusiasm is an important complement to the knowledge and expertise we have gained over the years. This body of knowledge includes an understanding of the local building tradition, which in Ticino means the alpine, lacustrine and rural vernacular culture as well as the work of the masters of the Prealpine Lakes region such as Borromini, Fontana and Maderno.



 Read other interviews with architects and designers

An equally important influence was the Tendenza movement that originated in the canton of Ticino and emerged onto the international architectural scene in the early 1970s, the most authoritative representatives being Mario Botta, Aurelio Galfetti, Luigi Snozzi and Livio Vacchini. However, our architectural approach involved breaking free from the ideas of the Tendenza movement, which we nonetheless assimilated together with many other influences.

When the Chiasso Cultural Centre consisting of the MaxMuseo and Spazio Officina was built in the city centre in 2005, it created an urban space that was previously lacking. How did you develop this project?

The Chiasso Cultural Centre was a wide-ranging project in which our role went well beyond that of the architect. It involved the combination, or coincidence, of many different factors that came together by chance to form a project. Aoi Huber, the widow of Max Huber, the influential graphic designer who worked in Milan from the 1940s to the 1970s, wanted to build a museum and archive dedicated to her late husband. But she didn't have the resources even to purchase a site. So we decided to contact the mayor of Chiasso, who was well known for his policy of promoting the town's culture, and asked him to grant free use of an abandoned and contaminated industrial site in a central position close to the school complex. This marked the beginning of a process of environmental remediation that enabled us, with minimal resources, to create a kind of citadel of culture that along with the MaxMuseo now also includes the Cinema Teatro, Spazio Officina and Doppia Palestra (double gym) as well as a large outdoor space available for use by both



VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CENTRE OF THE SWISS BUILDERS SOCIETY SSIC, GORDOLA (CH)

Photo: ©David Willen

the cultural centre and the schools. Starting out from a limited mandate with modest economic resources, through hard work and cooperation between the public and private sectors it was possible to create a new location. The process was described by the press as “the cultural reinvention of a city”.

Another important aspect of your work is that of school buildings, such as the residential complex for 280 students for the Student Mentor Foundation in Lucerne in 2013, the Nosedo School Centre in Massagno in 2017 and most recently the Liceo Cantonale in Bellinzona (2018).

We are committed to working towards the common good, social utility and sustainable city development. The Lucerne project enabled a private no-profit foundation to build co-living student housing units in the grounds of the largest old-people’s home in the city of Lucerne, which granted surface rights to the land at a non-speculative price. As a result, good-quality housing could be provided at prices 20–25% lower than those of the private market. In the Massagno School Centre project in the district of Lugano, we completely renovated the original school building dating from 1967, adopting a fair-faced concrete structure and adapting it to contemporary educational needs. The new double gym is available for use by local associations and the local basketball team. By building it partially underground, we succeeded in inserting the large volume sustainably into the urban landscape and integrating it with the network of pedestrian footpaths, using the roof as a recreational space available for public events organised by the municipality, which could also make use of the school canteen infrastructure located on the roof. The School Centre has become the hub of public life and complements the soft mobility network.

You choose materials very carefully for their strength, sustainability and low cost. What do you think of the potential of ceramic materials?

Ceramic is one of the oldest materials produced by mankind and was used as early as in the Bronze Age. Over time its use has extended to many fields of application, from industry to the heat shields of space shuttles, from medical applications to the building sector in the form of tiles, sanitary appliances and façade cladding. I even have a watch with a ceramic case and several ceramic dental inlays. It’s a material with exceptional characteristics of durability, hygiene and resistance to the widest range of chemical and physical agents while at the same time being inexpensive. The flexibility of unfired ceramic makes it suitable for the widest variety of range of processing and shaping operations. The material’s weak point is the large amount of energy required to produce it, which adversely affects its overall ecological balance, although the ceramic industry has worked hard to address this issue in recent years. The potential offered by digital printing has opened up many different possibilities, although I personally have no interest in solutions such as wood-look ceramic slabs. On the other hand, we are fascinated by the possibility of producing large-size, high-thickness rectified slabs, which allow ceramic to be used as a material in its own right. We’d like to experiment with large-size profiled ceramic slabs, which could be used in a similar way to fibre cement but with the material characteristics of ceramic. Research into roofing or façade systems with integrated photovoltaics would definitely be an interesting challenge.

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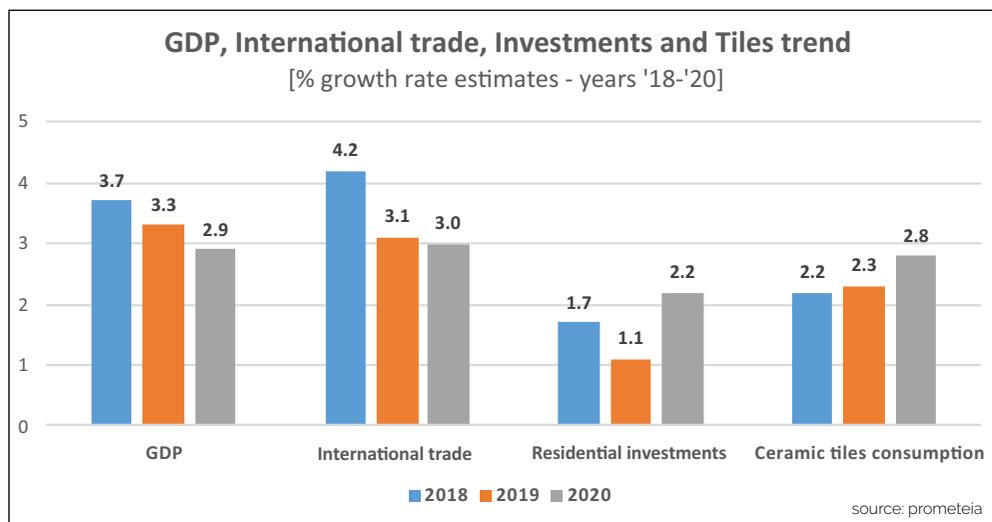
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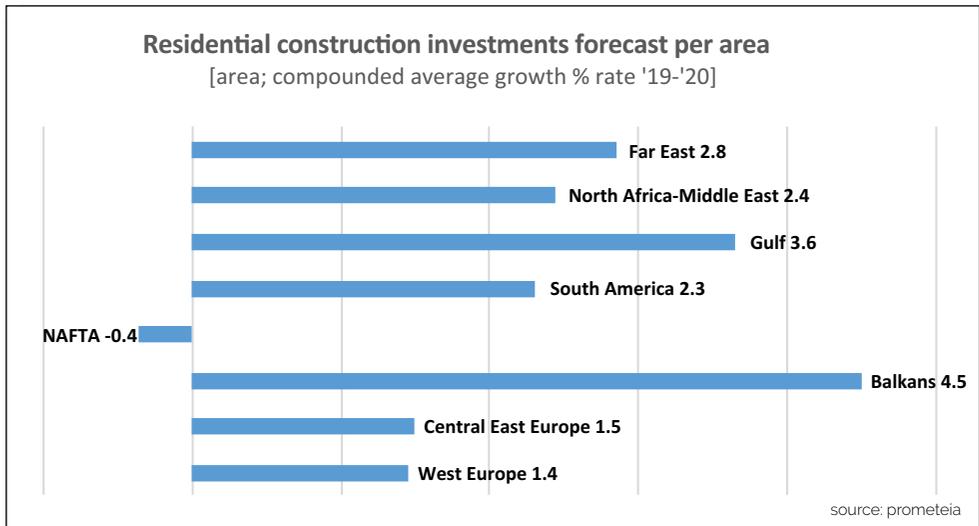
Moderate growth in global GDP and trade

by Andrea Cusi

The growth in the world economy is continuing to weaken and is expected to drop to an annual average of 3.1% in 2019-2020. The main factor behind the slowdown in global GDP growth is the impact of protectionist trends on international trade, which is projected to expand at annual rates of just over 3% compared to the 4.5% of the previous two-year period. The continued uncertainty generated by trade friction, particularly between the United States and China, is compounded by further risk factors including the outcome of the Brexit negotiations, the slowdown of the Chinese economy and the slower pace of expansion of the Euro area. Looking in greater detail at the main economies, the United States is expected to see a moderate slowdown in its rate of GDP growth, closing 2019 at +2.5% before experiencing a steeper decline in 2020 to +1.3%. Growth in the Euro area will continue to be affected by the climate of domestic and international uncertainty, dropping to an annual average of +1.3% over the two-year period. China's economy is continuing to lose momentum, and following the +6.6% growth of 2018 is expected to see a loss of 0.6 points of GDP per year over the next two years, although the government's efforts to support growth through monetary and fiscal policy are likely to

TRADE TENSIONS AND UNCERTAINTY ARE AFFECTING THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY AND TILE CONSUMPTION





avert the risk of a more severe economic decline. The Indian economy is likewise expected to see a moderate slowdown, but will continue to grow at a rate of close to +7% over the two-year period 2019–2020.

In this scenario, investments in residential building are also likely to decline. Growth in world investments is forecast to drop to +1.1% at the end of 2019, then recover in 2020 to +2.2%. In particular, the downswing in the US construction industry has continued through the current year, although a return to moderate expansion is anticipated in 2020 due to more favourable financing conditions deriving from the expected easing of monetary policy. Growth in Western Europe continues to slow, with 2019 forecasts standing at +1.3%. Slightly more sustained expansion is anticipated in 2020 (+1.6%). Looking in greater detail, the Spanish and German markets are expected to maintain an expansionary trend over the two-year period, albeit with a gradual deceleration, while a decline in residential building is expected in France in 2019, followed by a small recovery in 2020. Uncertainty surrounding the final outcome of the Brexit negotiations will lead to a decline in construction in the UK.

As for new markets, the Gulf region and the Far East are the areas expected to experience the most dynamic growth (+3.6% and +2.8% respectively), while the North Africa/Middle East region and Latin America are likely to see more moderate growth. The positive scenario in Asia is the combined result of strong performances in India and Indonesia, a gradual easing of investments in China, a weak trend in Japan and South Korea and expansion in Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia in particular is driving the region's building growth alongside the other Gulf countries, despite the crisis in the Iranian market. Within Central and Eastern Europe, it is the Central European countries in particular that are continuing to push up building growth. The Russian construction sector is expected to see a gradual recovery, while the Turkish building industry continues to suffer the negative effects of the financial crisis.

Investment trends in construction have a significant impact on ceramic tile consumption. In the current scenario, world tile consumption is likely to see a stronger recovery from 2020 onwards, but with a degree of variability across different geographical regions.

In Western Europe, ceramic tile consumption is likely to maintain a moderate level of expansion in 2019–2020 (+1.2% annual average), held back by the stagnant growth of France and Germany. The decline in consumption continues in Central and Eastern Europe, largely due to weaker demand in Turkey, although a recovery is expected in 2020. Tile consumption in the Balkan countries continues to grow at rates of close to +4.5%. This year the NAFTA region will fall into negative territory (-0.3%) for the first time since 2009, but in 2020 the recovery in the housing industry in the USA and Canada may lead to an upswing in consumption, estimated at +1.7%. Following a stagnant 2019, the recovery in the Brazilian market next year will boost consumption levels in Latin America. The prospects for tile consumption in the Gulf region during the two-year period in question are for a gradual recovery in 2019 followed by an even faster rate of growth in 2020. Consumption of the North Africa/Middle East region continues to be driven by expansion of the Egyptian market, which is forecast to be the most dynamic in the two-year period in question. Finally, the Far East is expected to maintain tile consumption growth of +3.0%, on a par with 2018 but significantly lower than the average growth rates of previous years.

To sum up, growth in world ceramic tile consumption in 2019 is expected to remain level with last year's figure (+2.3%), then improve to +2.8% in 2020.



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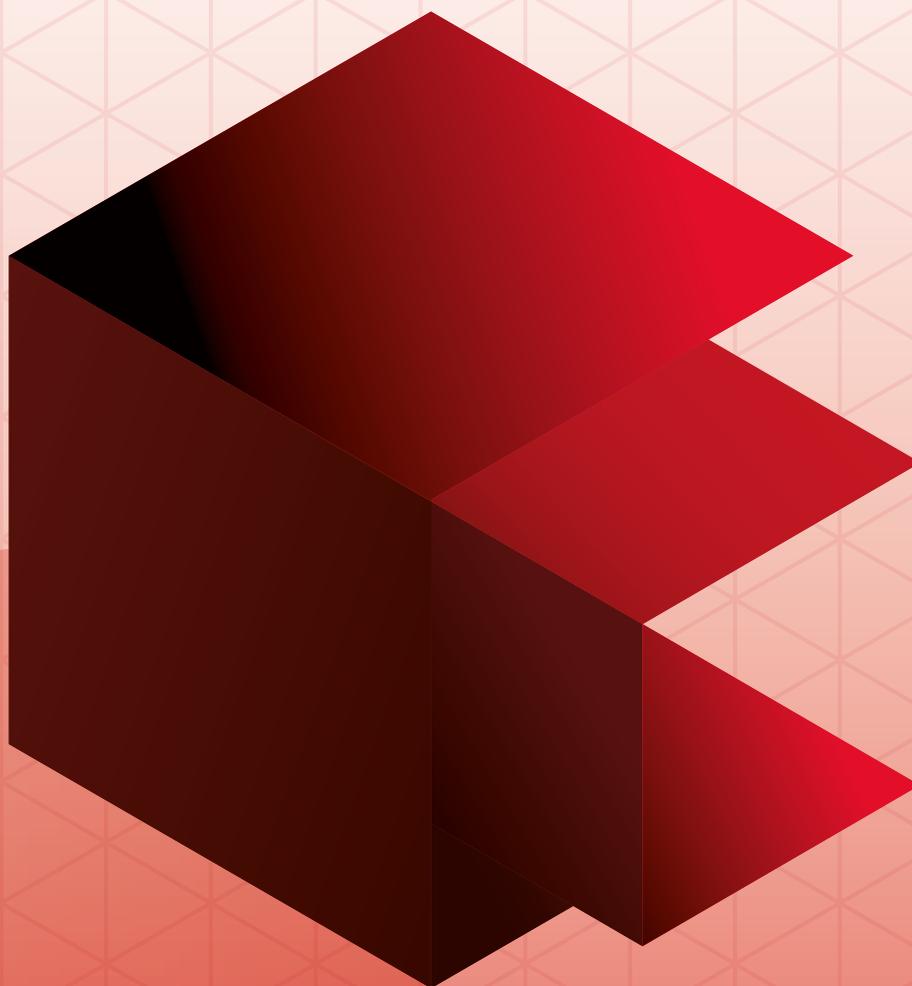
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A discreet approach to new building

A NEW BUILDING IN THE HISTORIC HEART OF NEW YORK MAKES EXTENSIVE USE OF ITALIAN CERAMIC TILE AS AN ICONIC MANIFESTO FOR THE PRODUCT'S APPLICATIONS

by Alfredo Zappa



As Anaximander of Miletus observed some 26 centuries ago, “Things are transformed into each other according to necessity and give justice to one another in conformity with the ordinance of time”. The quotation seems particularly relevant today looking at the photos of the recent building designed by SWA architecture at 132-136 West Houston Street in Lower Manhattan, New York City.

Squeezed between the low brick and plaster buildings of a historic area of the metropolis between Soho and the legendary Greenwich Village, the new building maintains a certain style while at the same time evoking the nostalgic atmosphere of a bygone era. It brings to mind the film “Barefoot in the park” with Robert Redford and Jane Fonda or the image of a youthful Bob Dylan and his muse Suze Rotolo huddled together against the cold as they stroll amongst these tenement buildings on a freezing winter’s day, immortalised in Don Huntstein’s photo for the cover of the iconic album “The Freewheelin’ Bob Dylan”.

The quality of the project is particularly evident in the restraint with which the new building merges into the context and in its ability to steer clear of postmodern pastiche, a misstep that would have negated any sense of “justice in conformity with the ordinance of time”.

The eight-floor building is strategically located just three blocks from Washington Square Park, surrounded by fashionable clubs, cafés and restaurants. The Soho shopping district is within a five-minute walk, as are numerous theatres and art galleries. The mixed-use development combines several commercial spaces with six apartments that



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PROJECT



stand out for their meticulous spatial organisation and finishes.

Adopting an open-plan distribution concept for the living areas, each dwelling unit features three bedrooms with ensuites, high-spec technological equipment, terraces and large full-height glazed surfaces capable of combining an exclusive domestic environment with spectacular views over the vibrant urban surroundings and the nearby MacDougal-Sullivan Garden.

In this setting, the extensive use of Italian ceramic tile represented a kind of application manifesto for the various fields of use of this product, the palette of colours, materials and sizes bringing added value to the architecture while ensuring a high level of sustainability through LEED credits.

The New York-based practice SWA architecture chose numerous collections from various Florim brands for both the interior spaces and the exterior cladding and envelope (rainscreen, terraces, attic and garden). The selected surfaces fit in perfectly with the style of the surrounding urban contexts - eclectic for the common areas and minimalist for the domestic spaces - with a preference for large slabs and panels including the brands Casa dolce casa - Casamood (Wooden Tile series), Floor Gres (B&W, Industrial and Styletech series), CEDIT - Ceramiche d'Italia (Matrice) and Rex (I Classici).

The high quality of the 132-136 West Houston Street project earned it first prize in the Ceramics of Italy Tile Competition Award 2019, the annual award for innovative use of Italian tiles in architecture and design in North America.

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SPACES
urban residential

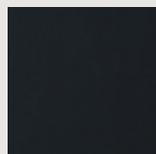
APPLICATIONS
interior floor and wall coverings
exterior cladding



Matrice Sostanza



Matrice Forma



B&W black



I Classici Calacatta Gold



Wooden Tile Almond



Styletech Metal



Industrial Steel

ceramic surfaces

exterior cladding:

Matrice Sostanza and Matrice Forma (CEDIT)
B&W black (Floor Gres)

lobby:

I Classici Calacatta Gold (Rex)

bathrooms, kitchens, living

spaces and corridors:

Wooden Tile Almond
(Casa dolce casa - Casamood)
I Classici Calacatta Gold (Rex)
Styletech Metal, Style 02 (Floor Gres)

terraces:

Industrial Steel (Floor Gres)

Minimalism with a baroque flavour

A BOX-LIKE HOME CONCEIVED AS A SEAMLESS TOTAL-WHITE SPACE NEAR NOTO IN SICILY

by Laura Maggi

A short distance from Noto, the UNESCO World Heritage city considered the capital of Sicilian baroque whose squares and streets are crammed with astonishing examples of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century architecture, an interior design project by architect Salvatore Spataro embraces minimalism and optical white. This visually-striking project was awarded the first honourable mention in the Residential category of the competition Ceramics and Design 2019. At the client's request, the architect took a subtractive approach to the functional distribution of the interiors of the villa, which opens out onto the surrounding countryside. The firm's approach was to conduct "a detailed preliminary analysis of the client's needs and of the context on both a small and large scale to develop unique, exclusive projects based on specific material and spatial research". The client's brief was for a unique space that would be flexible in terms of function and linear in its aesthetics. "The operation of subtraction meant that the interior is more fluid and contemporary, without frills, free to accommodate elements and details created through

collaboration between the owners, the architect and local craftsmen. It features a small number of visually-striking objects", reads the description. "The heart of the entire spatial reorganisation project is the ground-floor living area, a white, brightly-lit open-plan space enhanced by the large windows looking out onto the garden, where minimalism meets an industrial aesthetic." This has been achieved not only through the choice of colour palette for the finishes – the cool tones of optical white and graphite grey contrasting with the bright green of the vegetation – but also through a careful choice of surface covering materials. The white lacquered MDF wall is particularly striking, a kind of contemporary wainscoting decorated with a three-dimensional geometric pattern that creates a sense of continuity between the dining and living spaces. This open-plan area communicates with the outdoor green space where olive trees and native Sicilian plants grow and is illuminated by a large sliding window. "The large kitchen island is a pure, compact volume which interacts powerfully with the space, creating a graphic effect that is further enhanced



 Go to the Project Gallery for other residential projects in Italy and worldwide

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

PROJECT

SALVATORE SPATARO
WWW.SALVATORESPATARO.COM

PHOTOS

SAMUELE CASTIGLIONE
WWW.WEDESTUDIO.IT

CERAMIC SURFACES

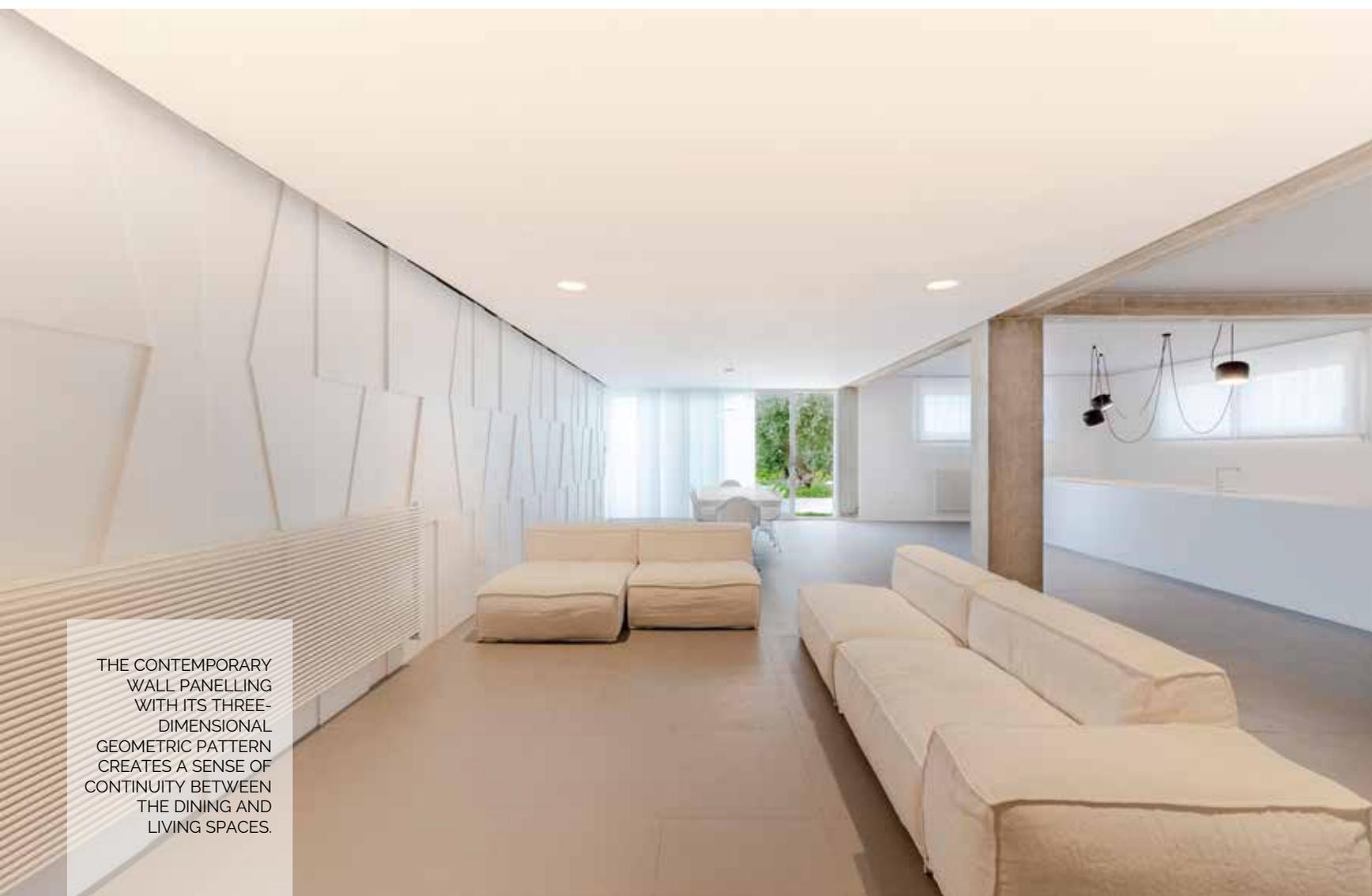
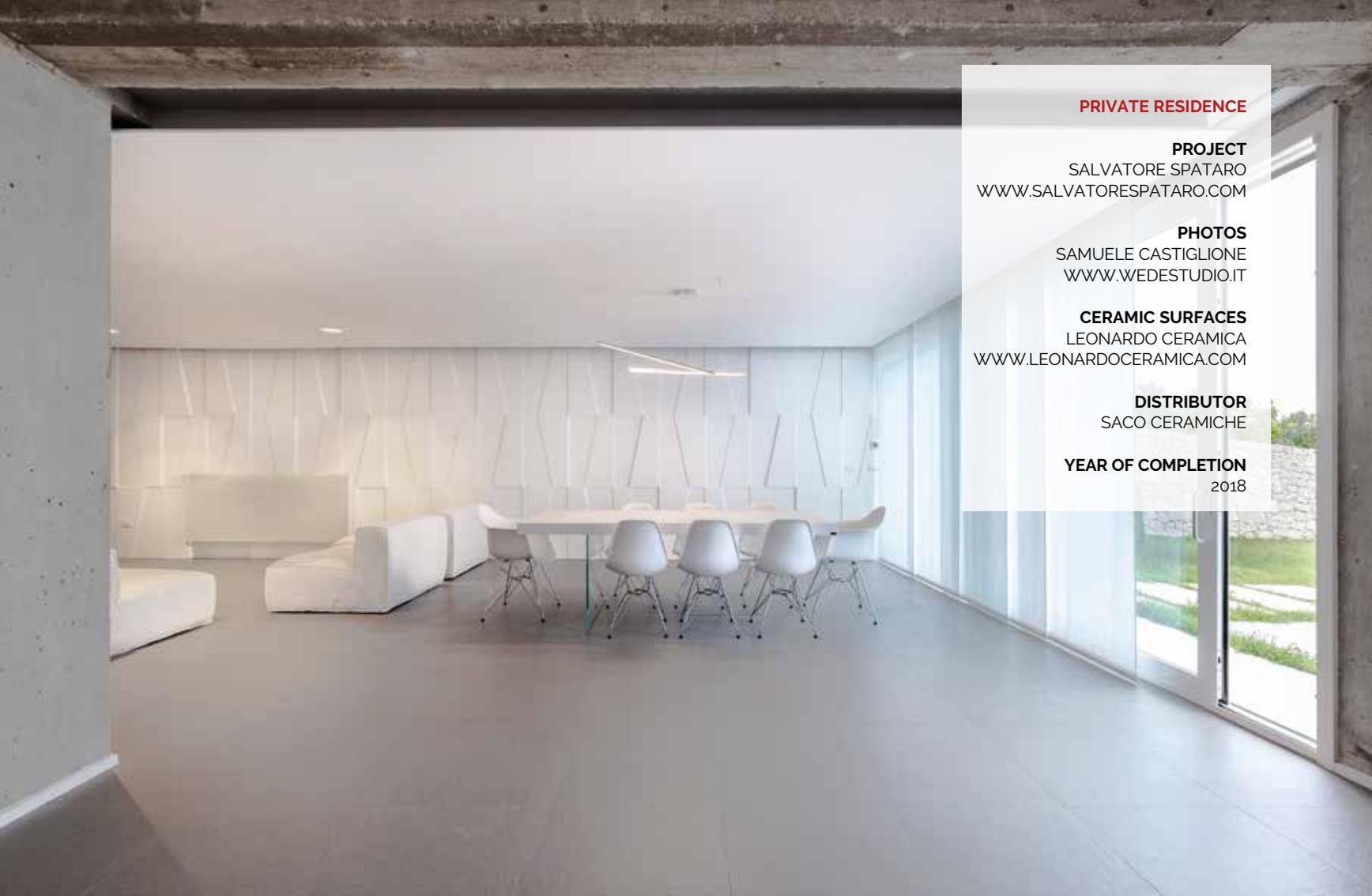
LEONARDO CERAMICA
WWW.LEONARDOCERAMICA.COM

DISTRIBUTOR

SACO CERAMICHE

YEAR OF COMPLETION

2018



THE CONTEMPORARY
WALL PANELLING
WITH ITS THREE-
DIMENSIONAL
GEOMETRIC PATTERN
CREATES A SENSE OF
CONTINUITY BETWEEN
THE DINING AND
LIVING SPACES.



THE UPPER FLOOR, CONNECTED BY A STAIRCASE WITH ILLUMINATED STEPS, HOUSES THE STUDY, A SPACE FOR WORKING AND READING SURROUNDED BY BOOKS, FURNISHINGS AND DESIGN OBJECTS



SPACES

urban residential

APPLICATIONS

interior floor coverings



Architecture grigio

ceramic surfaces

Leonardo Ceramica
porcelain tile
Architecture
grigio
60x60 cm

technical characteristics

water absorption
(ISO 10545-3): $\leq 0.1\%$
modulus of rupture and
breaking strength
(ISO 10545-4): $> 45 \text{ N/mm}^2$
deep abrasion resistance
(ISO 10545-6): $\leq 140 \text{ mm}^3$
surface abrasion resistance
(ISO 10545-7): class 4
coefficient of linear thermal
expansion (ISO 10545-8):
 $\leq 7 \times 10^{-6} \text{ } ^\circ\text{C}^{-1}$
thermal shock resistance
(ISO 10545-9): compliant
crazing resistance
(ISO 10545-11): compliant
frost resistance
(ISO 10545-12): compliant
chemical resistance
(ISO 10545-13):
from LA, LB to LC
slip resistance
(DIN 51130): R10

certifications

Ecolabel



by the scenic suspended lighting,” continues the description. Porcelain tiles from Leonardo Ceramica are used to create a seamless floor covering throughout the entire home, contrasting elegantly with the white walls and coordinating effectively with the colour of the exposed concrete pillars. The upper floor, connected by a staircase with illuminated steps, houses the study complete with library designed to create “a warm, relaxing and compact space for working and reading surrounded by books, furnishings and design objects, even including a Lambretta scooter! It’s a kind of a box within a box.” The top floor houses the sleeping area complete with an elegant walnut wood walk-in closet with LED lighting integrated into the shelves and storage units. The house has been completely refurbished in a contemporary style, devoting particular attention to details and the client’s taste and striking a perfect balance between minimalism and baroque in tribute to the local area and its traditions.

The Sicilian-born architect, who divides his time between Noto and Florence (where he graduated in architecture and collaborated with the firm Pierattelli Architettura, designing hotels and residential and office buildings) has strong cultural ties to his homeland. As well as designing other residences in the area, in 2014 he presented his first collection entitled “Design Meets Sicily”, a self-produced line created in collaboration with expert craftsmen and made entirely in Italy. The collection, which ranges from lamps to tableware and includes a number of more curious items such as a ceramic spinning top, offers a novel reinterpretation of aspects of traditional Sicilian culture in terms of design.

RELATED ARTICLE

Improving living spaces with ceramic tiles

➤ WWW.CERAMICA.INFO/EN/IMPROVING-LIVING-SPACES-WITH-CERAMIC-TILES/



A location spanning tradition and innovation

by Virginio Briatore

THE NUOVO PICCHIO RESIDENTIAL CARE CENTRE HELPS GUESTS FEEL AT HOME
IN AN INNOVATIVE SPACE THAT MAINTAINS ITS LINKS WITH TRADITION

The residential care centre for people with disabilities that was opened on 1 June 2019 in the northern Italian town of San Felice sul Panaro is designed to accommodate up to 22 guests with severe disabilities and will serve an area spanning nine municipalities in the northern region of the province of Modena. The new centre is one of the five projects carried out with the financial backing of the Nuova Polis solidarity trust set up by the chairmen of Confindustria, Confservizi, CGIL, CISL and UIL after a second earthquake struck several municipalities in the Emilia-Romagna region on 30 May 2012. It is organised on two levels, hosting daytime activities and workshop on the lower floor and guest rooms on the upper floor.

As the building is located in a traditionally agricultural area where a variety of crops are grown, architect Mario Cucinella and his practice drew from the local geography and chose the barn as their archetype for the architectural design. Because barns, along with outhouses for storing tools, vehicles and foodstuffs, were an integral part of agricultural dwellings, this building design will serve as a reassuring presence for the young people who live there.

The building is composed of four individual but interconnected units that form a single internal space while maintaining a clear distinction between the volumes on an external level. The subdivision of the volumes is further accentuated by the slight differences in heights between the volumes and the angle of the roof pitches.

Inside, wood panels are used to create an upward sloping configuration in which the size of the windows increases from bottom to top with a gradual



**NUOVO PICCHIO
RESIDENTIAL CARE CENTRE**

PROJECT

MARIO CUCINELLA ARCHITECTS
WWW.MCARCHITECTS.IT

PHOTOS

DANIELE DOMENICALI
WWW.DANIELEDOMENICALI.COM

CERAMIC SURFACES

COTTO D'ESTE
WWW.COTTOESTE.IT
BLUSTYLE
WWW.BLUSTYLE.IT

YEAR OF COMPLETION

2019



 Go to the Project Gallery for other healthcare facilities in Italy and worldwide



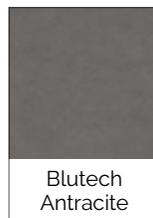
THANKS TO ITS PASSIVE DESIGN COUPLED WITH THE USE OF HIGH ENERGY-EFFICIENCY PLANTS POWERED BY THE DISTRICT HEATING NETWORK, THE BUILDING HAS BEEN AWARDED ENERGY CLASS A CERTIFICATION.

SPACES
healthcare/
recreation facilities

APPLICATIONS
interior floor coverings
external façade



Kerlite 5plus
Ultrawhite



Blutech
Antracite

ceramic surfaces

Cotto d'Este
Silk and Glossy
100x300 cm
5.5 mm thickness
Blustyle by Cotto d'Este
Blutech Antracite Naturale
30x60 cm

technical characteristics

water absorption
(ISO 10545-3): 0.1 %
modulus of rupture and
breaking strength
(ISO 10545-4): 50 N/mm²
deep abrasion resistance
(ISO 10545-6): 175 mm³

coefficient of linear
thermal expansion
(ISO 10545-8): $\alpha 7 \times 10^{-6} \text{ } ^\circ\text{C}^{-1}$
thermal shock resistance
(ISO 10545-9): compliant
frost resistance
(ISO 10545-12): compliant
chemical resistance
(ISO 10545-13): LB HB
staining resistance
(ISO 10545-14): class 3

certifications

EMAS, LEED, ISO 14001,
ISO 9001, EPD

screening function. While the form is based on the genius loci or the “spirit of the place”, the choice of exterior cladding introduces an innovative element without detracting from the use of local materials. The cladding is a continuous shell of ultra-thin porcelain laminate that envelops both the walls and the roof, hiding the gutters and downspouts and maintaining a clean and clearly recognisable form. The rainscreen cladding consists of porcelain surfaces from the Black-White collection by Cotto d’Este, produced in extremely low thicknesses and large sizes for unparalleled elasticity and strength. In total, 2,300 sq.m from the Kerlite 5plus Ultrawhite range with a Silk finish was used to create a pleasing fabric effect, while a further 150 sq.m was chosen for the exterior façade in the Glossy finish, which stands out for its soft look and surprising level of gloss for an absolute white. The panels in both finishes are 100x300 cm in size with a thickness of 5.5 cm.

The main front facing onto Via Garibaldi is a barrier-free space, a public area available for use by the town that facilitates interaction between the young people living in the facility and local residents, while the large windows help to establish a visual relationship between interior and exterior.

The garden is a therapeutic space devoted to open-air multisensorial activities including micro-gardening and the cultivation of aromatic plants. Architect Mario Cucinella commented: “The residential care centre will be a place of new-found happiness for both guests and their families, who face enormous difficulties with extraordinary courage. The architecture was the starting point for this collective journey and proved to be a powerful and above all useful tool. I would like to thank the six engineers and architects who contributed to this project: Arianna Balboni, Mirco Bianchini, Francesco Galli, Valentino Gareri, Federico La Piccirella and Clelia Zappalà. It has given them a unique opportunity for professional growth and to acquire an infectious passion for beauty.”

Inside the structure, Mario Cucinella Architects chose the Blutech collection from Blustyle by Cotto d’Este in a natural Anthracite colour for the floors.

RELATED ARTICLE

Ceramic. A safe choice.

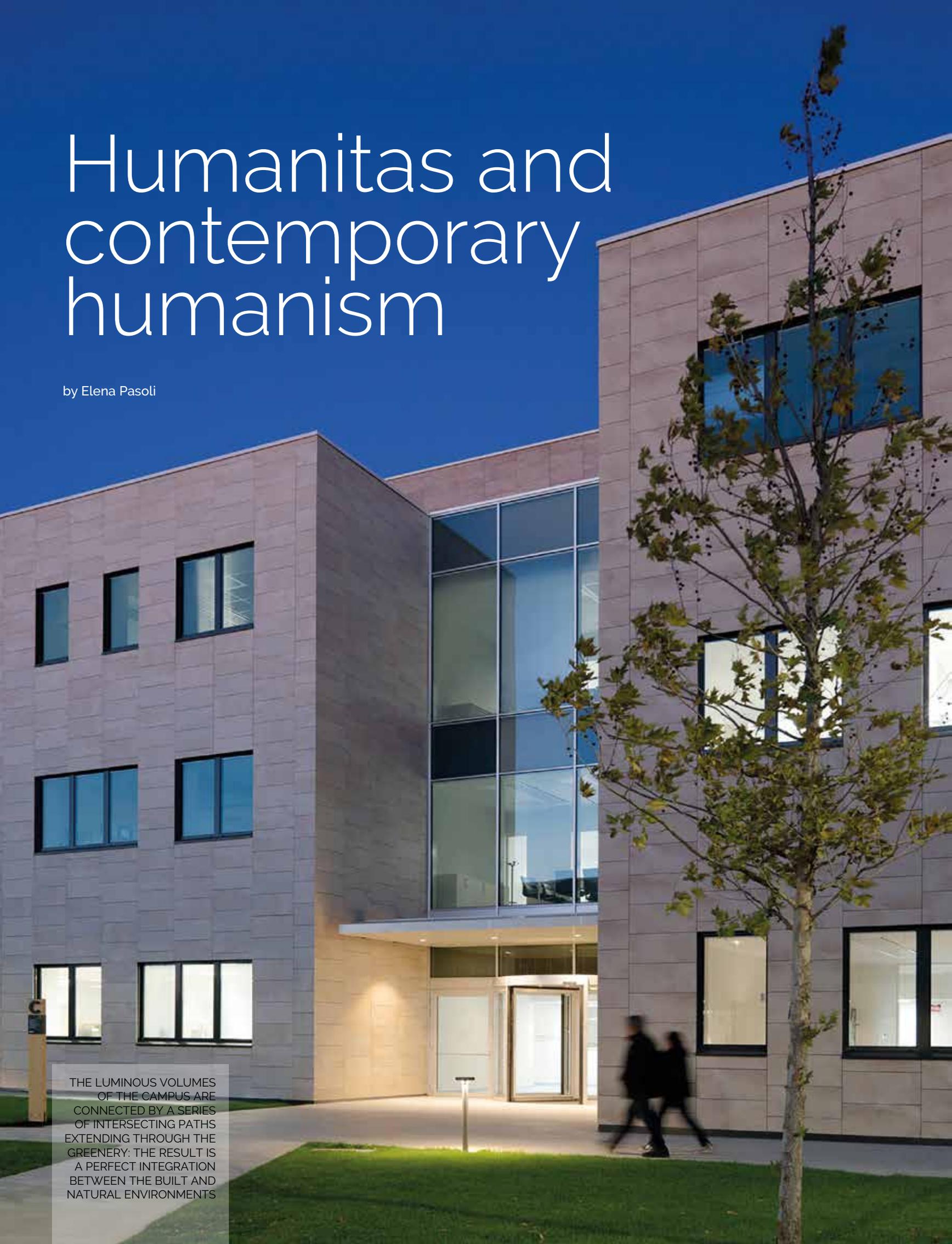
WWW.CERAMICA.INFO/EN/CERAMIC-A-SAFE-CHOICE/



Humanitas and contemporary humanism

by Elena Pasoli

THE LUMINOUS VOLUMES OF THE CAMPUS ARE CONNECTED BY A SERIES OF INTERSECTING PATHS EXTENDING THROUGH THE GREENERY: THE RESULT IS A PERFECT INTEGRATION BETWEEN THE BUILT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENTS





**HUMANITAS
UNIVERSITY CAMPUS**

PROJECT

FILIPPO TAIDELLI
WWW.FILIPPOTAIDELLI.COM

PHOTOS

ANDREA MARTIRADONNA
WWW.MARTIRADONNA.IT

CERAMIC SURFACES

CASALGRANDEPADANA
WWW.CASALGRANDEPADANA.IT

YEAR OF COMPLETION

2018

LOCATED JUST OUTSIDE MILAN, THE NEW HUMANITAS UNIVERSITY CAMPUS BRINGS TOGETHER INNOVATIVE FORM AND CONTENT TO CREATE A FASCINATING, TIMELESS VILLAGE DESIGNED ACCORDING TO PRINCIPLES OF SUSTAINABILITY

The Humanitas University Campus, a 25,000 square metre site located in Pieve Emanuele, Milan and involving a total investment of 100 million euros, is based on an outstanding project by architect Filippo Taidelli from the practice FTA. Set amongst the greenery of the Parco Sud Milano, the new international faculty of Medicine and Surgery, Nursing and Physiotherapy, a branch of the nearby Humanitas Research Hospital, features a latest-generation Simulation Centre, hi-tech classrooms and laboratories, sports areas and above all a large number of informal meeting spaces facilitating the exchange of knowledge and experience. Inspired by the Anglo-Saxon university model, this state-of-the-art campus combines cutting-edge educational facilities with environmental sustainability and is an excellent example of perfect integration between the built and natural environments, a kind of contemporary urban village immersed in the countryside on the edge of the city.



 **Go to the Project Gallery for other educational buildings in Italy and worldwide**

The Campus is divided into three luminous, warm-coloured volumes with large windows facing onto a square at the centre of a series of intersecting paths extending through the greenery: a large multifunctional building which houses the canteen, library and communal offices, characterised by double and triple heights and large terraces); the teaching centre; and the research laboratories. A residence accommodating 250 students was also opened a few months ago. The key concept underpinning the entire project is that of environmental sustainability, which is achieved through the design of the volumes themselves and the use of cutting-edge materials and technologies. The layout of the sloping volumes of different height not only serves to create a pleasant and functional environment but also helps mitigate solar gain in summer and limit heat losses in winter. Furthermore, the glazed internal courtyards facilitate natural lighting and blur the distinction between interior and exterior while minimising the



Amazonia
Dragon beige



Pietre di Sardegna
Porto Cervo



Amazonia
Dragon brown

SPACES

educational buildings

APPLICATIONS

interior floor coverings
exterior façades

ceramic surfaces

Casalgrande Padana
porcelain tile
> **Amazonia**
Dragon Beige, Dragon Brown
> **Pietre di Sardegna**
Porto Cervo
45x90 cm

technical characteristics

water absorption
(ISO 10545-3): $\leq 0.1\%$
modulus of rupture and
breaking strength
(ISO 10545-4): $> 45 \text{ N/mm}^2$

deep abrasion resistance
(ISO 10545-6): $\leq 150 \text{ mm}^3$
coefficient of linear thermal
expansion (ISO 10545-8):
compliant
thermal shock resistance
(ISO 10545-9): compliant
crazing resistance
(ISO 10545-11): compliant
frost resistance
(ISO 10545-12): compliant
staining resistance
(ISO 10545-14): class 5
slip resistance (DIN 51130):
R10 Naturale,
R12 A+B+C Grip

certifications

LEED, EMAS, ISO 14001



THE VIBRANT
COMBINATION OF
THE NATURAL LIGHT
AND THE SURFACE
COVERINGS ENHANCES
THE QUALITY OF ALL THE
BUILDINGS, FROM THE
HI-TECH CLASSROOMS
AND LABORATORIES
TO THE INFORMAL
MEETING SPACES
AIMED AT FACILITATING
THE EXCHANGE OF
KNOWLEDGE AND
EXPERIENCE.

use of electricity for lighting. Along with the use of photovoltaic and thermal solar panels, another highly effective technological solution consists of porcelain rainscreen panels from the Pietre Native line by Casalgrande Padana, chosen in a palette of warm, material tones that lend movement and vibrancy to the facades according to the incident light, enhancing the powerful sense of alternation with the windows and the large glazed entrance. The choice fell in particular on the colours Dragon Beige and Dragon Brown from the Amazzonia collection and the colour Porto Cervo from the Pietre di Sardegna collection, all in a 45x90 cm size. “Right from the beginning I realised that Casalgrande Padana was not just a supplier but a valuable technical consultant with a high degree of sensitivity towards my aesthetic vision and enormous flexibility in translating the façade concept into reality throughout the entire design process,” architect Filippo Taidelli told us. “The artistic goal was to create an unconventional rainscreen cladding using stone-effect tiles in a vertical layout. The way the surface of the chosen tiles changes in different weather conditions coupled with the mounting system allowed us to achieve a dynamic relationship between the colours of each volume of the building while maintaining a common snakeskin texture that unifies the entire complex. The use of ceramic tiles in conjunction with cutting-edge technology further improves the aesthetic quality of the natural finish. Today’s tile producers are no longer content to simply mimic a natural stone or concrete effect but actually improve the ease of maintenance of the surface in terms of self-cleaning and application of force. And thanks to their hardness and low thickness, when used in conjunction with the flexible substructure these products are able to achieve astonishing effects in terms of form, surface dimensions and low weight, giving the architect a new creative tool.”

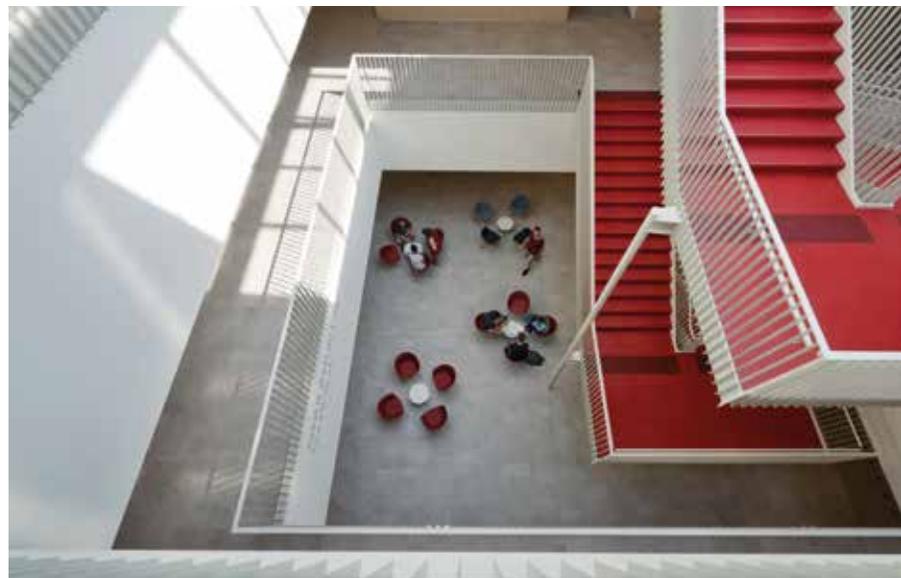
In recognition of the important role played by porcelain tile throughout the entire complex, architect Filippo Taidelli was named winner of the “Shopping and business centres” category of the eleventh edition of the international Grand Prix Casalgrande Padana competition for this project and that of the Humanitas Hospital Congress Centre. Both projects were recognised for their sophisticated compositional sensitivity in combining the quality of the spaces and the surface coverings.

Stone-effect porcelain from the Chalon collection in the colour Chalon Grey, also by Casalgrande Padana, was chosen for the interiors, where polychrome masses continue the play of volumes of the exterior. This effect is maintained on the external walkways, further emphasising the sense of continuity that runs through the entire project.

RELATED ARTICLE

The Italian ceramic industry embraces CSR and UN Global Goals

➤ WWW.CERAMICA.INFO/EN/THE-ITALIAN-CERAMIC-INDUSTRY-EMBRACES-CSR-AND-UN-GLOBAL-GOALS/



The Haus der Musik

DESIGNED BY ERICH STROLZ AND DIETRICH UNTERTRIFALLER ARCHITEKTEN, THE POWERFUL NEW MUSICAL COMPLEX IS A SIMPLE VOLUME THAT ENGAGES WITH THE CITY AND ITS INHABITANTS

by Laura Milan



© Roland Halbe

ABOVE:
THE FRONT FAÇADE
OF THE HAUS DER
MUSIK WITH THE
MAIN ENTRANCE,
THE DIFFERENT
ARRANGEMENTS OF
TRANSPARENT AND
OPAQUE SECTIONS
AND THE INTERNAL
CHANGES OF SCALE

Shortlisted for the 2019 Mies van der Rohe Award, Europe's most prestigious architecture prize, the new Haus der Musik in the Austrian city of Innsbruck has finally given the Tyrolean capital a unique, distinctive complex entirely devoted to music. Completed in 2018, it was designed for the client Innsbrucker Immobilien GmbH & Co. by award-winning local architect Erich Strolz together with the Bregenz branch of the firm Dietrich Untertrifaller Architekten, an international practice which also has branches in Vienna, Munich, Paris and St. Gallen. A major new public complex, it houses numerous institutes and associations that were previously scattered across the city.

The project stems from an international competition won by the architects in 2014 and occupies a key site in the cultural centre of Innsbruck adjacent to a number of important buildings, including the University, the neoclassical Tiroler Landestheater (Tyrolean state theatre) and heritage-listed trees.

The Haus der Musik is a 4,000 square metre complex distributed over three main levels and open on four sides. Its architecture stands out for its pure volumes with generous views and open perspectives, creating a sense of accessibility to the public and the city.

The envelope is one of the key elements of a building that stands out for its powerful contrasts. Transparency and opacity, light and dark emerge from a composition whose individual elements are organised vertically as though on a musical score. The façades consist of a sequence of large unscreened glass walls that open both outwards and inwards, large closed surfaces in colours ranging from black to dark brown, and areas that combine both aspects, where long vertical slats cover the windows behind in an elegant brise-soleil system.

The elegance and apparent simplicity of the exterior belies the complex spatial organisation of the interior, where continuous changes of scale allow for the coexistence of a multiplicity of functions and spaces accessible from the large multilevel glazed lobby.



HAUS DER MUSIK

PROJECT

ARGE STROLZ
WWW.UNVERBLUEMT.CC
DIETRICH UNTERTRIFALLER BREGENZ
WWW.DIETRICH.UNTERTRIFALLER.COM

CERAMIC SURFACES

MARCA CORONA
WWW.MARCACORONA.IT

YEAR OF COMPLETION

2018



SPACES
cultural venues
recreation facilities

APPLICATIONS
interior floor coverings



Matrix
Silver

ceramic surfaces

Marca Corona
porcelain tile
Matrix Silver
45x90 cm

technical characteristics

water absorption
(ISO 10545-3): $\leq 0.1\%$
modulus of rupture
and breaking strength

(ISO 10545-4): $\geq 40 \text{ N/mm}^2$
deep abrasion resistance
(ISO 10545-6): $\leq 150 \text{ mm}^3$
coefficient of linear thermal
expansion (ISO 10545-8):
 $\leq 7 \text{ (MK)}^{-1}$
thermal shock resistance
(ISO 10545-9): compliant
frost resistance
(ISO 10545-12): compliant

chemical resistance
(ISO 10545-13): A LA HA
staining resistance
(ISO 10545-14): compliant
slip resistance
(DIN 51130): R10

certifications
LEED

Combining concerts and shows with educational and research activities, the Haus der Musik is organised around a central hub consisting of the main wood-panelled 550-seat concert hall with its views onto the green foliage of historic trees, a more intimate chamber hall (Kammerspiele), a variety of smaller rooms, various rehearsal spaces and the external department set up by the Mozarteum Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Innsbruck in 1981. It also has service spaces for the nearby Tyrolean Symphony Orchestra and other spaces housing regional musical associations and the Festival of Ancient Music (Festwochen der Alten Musik), which has been held in the city every August since 1976.

The building also houses a ground-floor bar and restaurant, administration offices and a music library, which along with the event spaces on the upper levels faces onto the panoramic terrace with its views of the Alps and the city rooftops.

Ceramic slabs from Marca Corona were chosen both for the panoramic terrace and outdoor surfaces, where they create safe and aesthetically attractive pavings, and for the interior floors (Matrix collection, colour Silver, with thicknesses ranging from the 20 mm HiThick for the exteriors and 10 mm for the interiors), helping to maintain the sense of contrasting materials and colours that continues inside.

Erich Strolz commented: "Situated in one of the most prominent spots in the center of Innsbruck, the "House of Music" is designed as an open house with generous insights into the interior. In close conjunction with the Landestheater, it creates a new urban center, surrounded by the historical neighboring buildings. The large volume establishes a new exciting composition with a high potential for identification, while at the same time sensitively responding to the urban context. The transparent plinth zone with the foyer facing onto the square as well as the open stage area of the Great Hall on the upper floor create a fascinating dialogue between the urban space and the cultural events inside. The Great Hall becomes an open-air stage, the square an auditorium."

RELATED ARTICLE

We are what we design



WWW.CERAMICA.INFO/EN/SUSTAINABILITY-VIDEO/

THE UNITY BETWEEN INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR IS DETERMINED BY THE COLOURS AND PATTERNS OF THE FLOORS, WHICH LEAD TO A ROOF TERRACE LOOKING OUT OVER THE BEAUTIFUL URBAN LANDSCAPE OF THE CITY CENTRE



PROJECT **Architecture** Olbia

From the land to the sea

MATTER AND SPIRIT MERGE IN A RENOVATION PROJECT
FOR AN OLD CHURCH IN OLBIA, WHICH NOW RESONATES
WITH NEW LIGHT THANKS TO ITS ARCHITECTURE

by Virginio Briatore

In this large-scale project to renovate the San Ponziano parish church in Olbia, the main entrance was moved from the landward side of the building to the side facing the sea, allowing new light and life to flood inside.

The radical project was the work of the firm A1Engineering headed by architects Sandra Deiana and Giovanni Antonio Spano and is a splendid example of a partnership between the municipality and the church.

The idea of creating a more vibrant and usable urban space stems from an agreement in which the municipality undertook to grant ownership of a portion of the adjacent building to the church on the condition that the entire complex was redeveloped. The church is named after St. Pontian, the pope who died in exile on the island of Molaria in the Gulf of Olbia, and was originally built in the 1970s as a chapel for the adjoining nursing home.

Built with modest materials and damaged by corrosive sea spray, the church had aged badly over the years and fallen into a state of severe neglect and disrepair.

And as so often happens in agricultural communities that eke out an existence from the land, the church had been built with its back to the sea, meaning that light was able to enter only through small, high-up windows and through the west-facing entrance door. This characteristic – a kind of “original sin” in design terms – condemned it to being a dark, cold and before long dilapidated space.

Through their bold intervention, the architects introduced air, strength and light, breathing fresh life into this small new world.



 Go to the Project Gallery for other places of worship in Italy and worldwide



SAN PONZIANO PARISH CHURCH

PROJECT

SANDRA DEIANA
GIOVANNI ANTONIO SPANO
WWW.A1E.IT

CERAMIC SURFACES

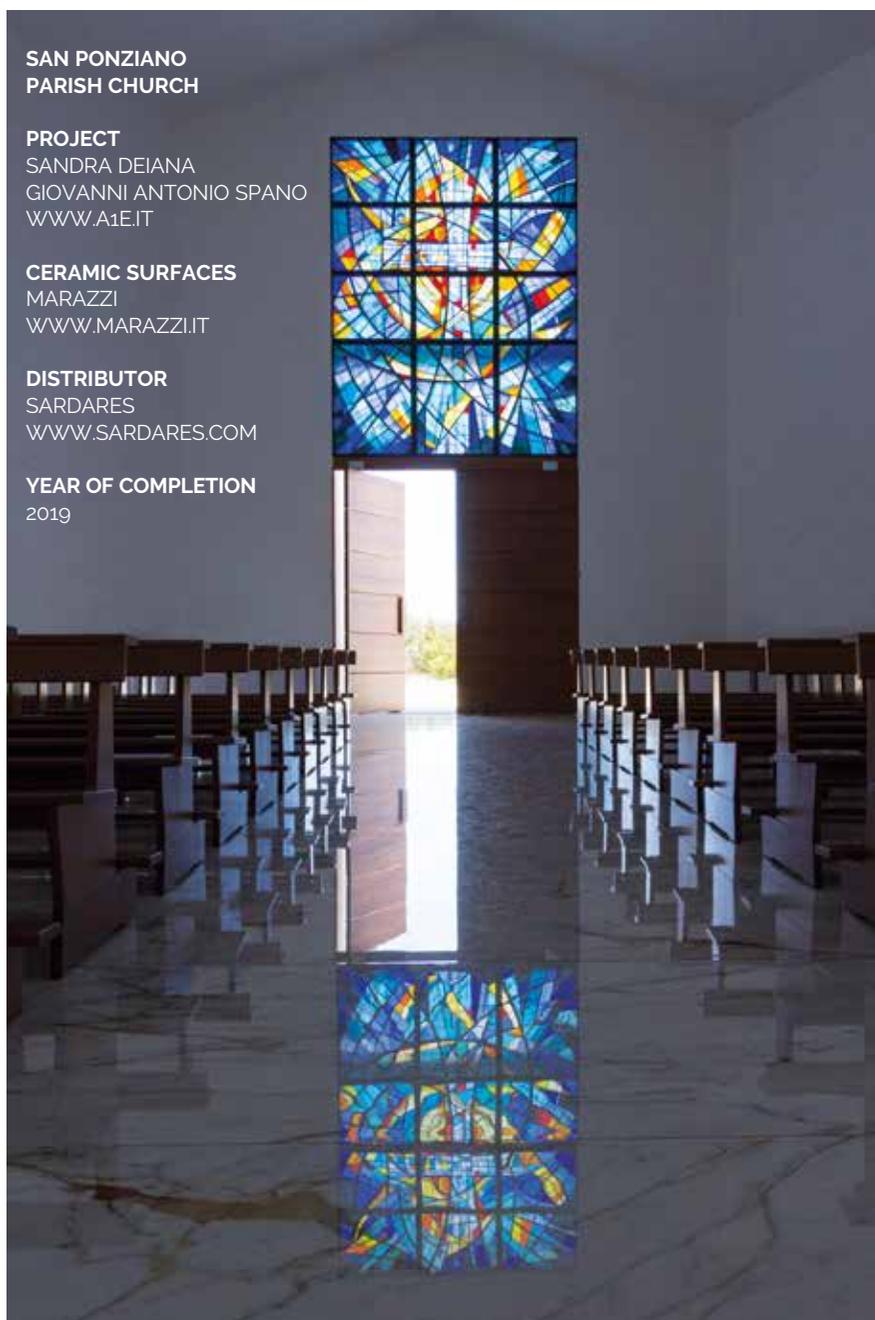
MARAZZI
WWW.MARAZZI.IT

DISTRIBUTOR

SARDARES
WWW.SARDARES.COM

YEAR OF COMPLETION

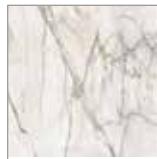
2019





SPACES
places of worship

APPLICATIONS
interior floor coverings
furniture cladding
(altar and ambo)



Grande Marble Look
Golden White Lux



Grande Marble Look
Saint Laurent

ceramic surfaces

Marazzi
porcelain tile
Grande Marble Look
Golden White Lux
Saint Laurent
120x240 cm

technical characteristics

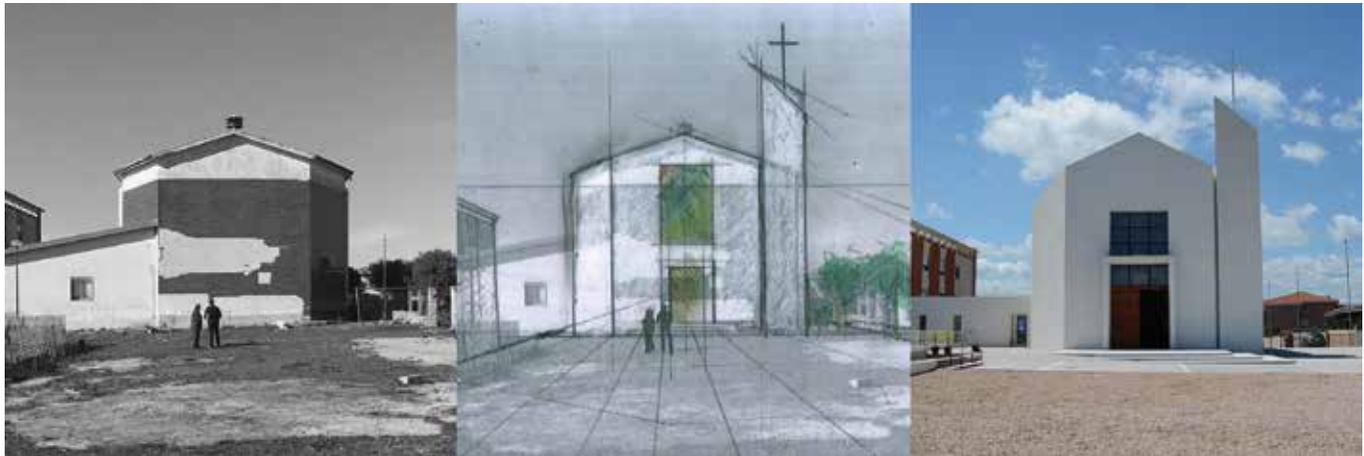
water absorption
(ISO 10545-3): $\leq 0.5\%$

modulus of rupture and
breaking strength (ISO
10545-4): $\geq 35 \text{ N/mm}^2$
deep abrasion resistance
(ISO 10545-6): 120-150 mm³
coefficient of linear thermal
expansion (ISO 10545-8):
compliant
thermal shock resistance
(ISO 10545-9): compliant

frost resistance
(ISO 10545-12): compliant
chemical resistance
(ISO 10545-13): A LA HA
staining resistance
(ISO 10545-14): class 5
slip resistance
(DIN 51130): R9

certifications

ISO 14001, Greenguard



The key decision was to move the entrance to the eastern wall, where it opens onto a square with a belvedere looking out over the city. The windows were enlarged and fitted with panes of stained glass reminiscent of the colour of the sea, creating a sense of vitality and luminosity inside the building.

The altar and ambo are both made of wood and clad with ceramic tiles (Grande Marble Look, Saint Laurent from Marazzi), giving these two elements a sense of lightness as they literally appear to float above the floor tiles, chosen from the same series but in a pale colour (Golden White Lux).

And of course every self-respecting parish church needs its own visual landmark, an element for attracting attention. In this respect, a bell-tower proved a welcome addition, projecting the church skywards while maintaining a sense of decorum suited to a respectable neighbourhood.

The architects changed the proportions of the façade in accordance with tradition, while the chosen

colours and materials – lime, granite, wood and the marble effect of the ceramic slabs – are all typical of Sardinian rural churches.

This big little church, which serves the Poltu Quadu neighbourhood with its approximately 8,000 parishioners, is now a beacon that welcomes travellers arriving in Olbia.

But it is perhaps not from afar or from outside that it expresses the reason for its existence, which instead is linked to an ancient magic described by the architects as follows: “The wall behind the altar has a cross-shaped window through which light penetrates inside the church and, depending on the time of day and period of the year, reflects on the ceramic floor creating stunning plays of light.”

The church is well designed in terms of energy efficiency and lighting. Illuminated from below, at sunset it reflects its light over the entire city and is visible from anywhere along the waterfront, which is undergoing redevelopment and will become one of the most attractive areas of the city of Olbia.

THE KEY IDEA WAS TO SHIFT THE ENTRANCE FROM THE LANDWARD SIDE OF THE BUILDING TO FACE THE SEA. TOGETHER WITH ITS SQUARE LOOKING OUT OVER THE SEA, THE CHURCH HAS BECOME THE HUB OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PRODUCT DECLARATION (EPD)

Italy, Germany and Spain: comparing the environmental performance of ceramic tiles

by Francesca Ebaldi

THE THREE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES
HAVE DEVELOPED INDUSTRY-
AVERAGE EPDS ALLOWING FOR A
COMPARISON BETWEEN PRODUCT
SUSTAINABILITY PARAMETERS

The EPD (Environmental Product Declaration) is a tool that expresses a product's environmental performance data in a comprehensible and comparable way. Along with general information on the production process, the product's environmental performance and impacts are investigated by means of a Life Cycle Analysis (LCA) covering all stages from raw materials procurement and manufacture through to end of life and recycling.

In 2015, Confindustria Ceramica provided its member companies with a sector EPD study, an example that was followed in 2016 by the corresponding German association (Bundesverband Keramische Fliesen e.V.) and two years later by the Spanish association (ASCER).

The Italian study included data from 76 companies and 84 factories accounting for about 82.6% of Italian production, whereas the German study covers 70% of national production (9 companies and 11 factories) and the Spanish study just 40%.

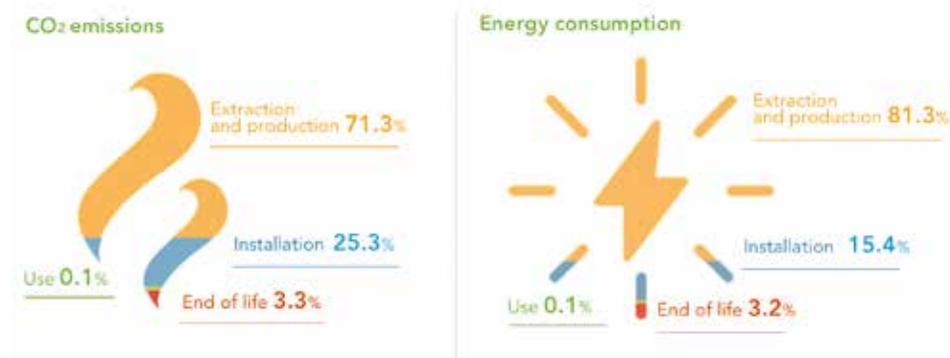
Table 1 provides a comparison based on various environmental parameters recorded by the three sector documents relating to the production stage (raw materials supply, raw materials transport and ceramic product manufacture: body preparation, spray drying, drying, firing, glazing, packaging etc.). This study concentrated on this stage because it has the largest environmental impact (figure 1): the categories analysed are strongly influenced by energy processes and raw materials consumption.



Watch the video about the sustainability of Italian tiles

The impact categories for which the tile producer companies in the various countries (Italy, Germany, and Spain in the first, second and third columns, respectively) are found to have a better environmental performance than others are marked by a larger number of sun symbols, which represent a lower environmental impact and lower level of harmful emissions. The only exception is the use of renewable primary energy resources (PERT), which obviously improves with higher values. In this case, the Italian ceramic industry boasts the highest value out of the three countries. Italy also attains the best performance in terms of the use of fresh water (FW).

FIGURE 1: SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE ITALIAN SECTOR EPD



Source: EPD (Environmental Product Declaration) - Guida Sintetica Confindustria Ceramica 2017

EPD Studies by the ceramic manufacturers' associations of Italy, Germany and Spain



TABLE 1: COMPARISON BETWEEN ITALY, GERMANY AND SPAIN

Area	Impact category	Italy	Germany	Spain
	GWP	Global warming potential ^a	3 circles	3 circles
	ODP	Potential for depletion of the ozone layer in the stratosphere	3 circles	3 circles
	AP	Potential for acidification ^b of soil and water	2 circles	1 circle
	POCP	Photochemical ozone creation potential ^c	3 circles	3 circles
	EP	Eutrophication potential ^d	3 circles	3 circles
	FW	Use of fresh water	3 circles	3 circles
	PERT	Use of renewable primary energy resources	3 circles	3 circles
	PENRT	Use of non-renewable primary energy resources	3 circles	3 circles
	NHWD	Non-harmful waste disposed	3 circles	3 circles
	HWD	Harmful waste disposed	3 circles	3 circles

- a. Carbon footprint: gas emissions and greenhouse effect.
- b. Acidification: A phenomenon whereby atmospheric precipitation has a below-normal pH. It can harm forests, crops, aquatic ecosystems and constructions.
- c. Photochemical ozone creation: The production of compounds that under the action of light are able to trigger an oxidation reaction leading to the production of ozone in the troposphere.
- d. Eutrophication: Nutrient enrichment of watercourses, resulting in excessive growth of vegetation in aquatic ecosystems and consequent oxygen depletion. Eutrophication potential is mainly attributable to the release of phosphates and nitrates into water.

Compared to Germany, Italy also has a higher performance in terms of global warming potential (GWP) and similar levels of acidification potential (AP), ozone depletion potential (ODP), eutrophication potential (EP) and photochemical ozone creation potential (POCP). Compared to Spain, Italy achieves better results for ozone depletion potential (ODP) and the two waste categories (HWD and NHWD), but has similar levels of global warming potential, (GWP), eutrophication potential (EP) and the use of non-renewable primary energy resources (PENRT).

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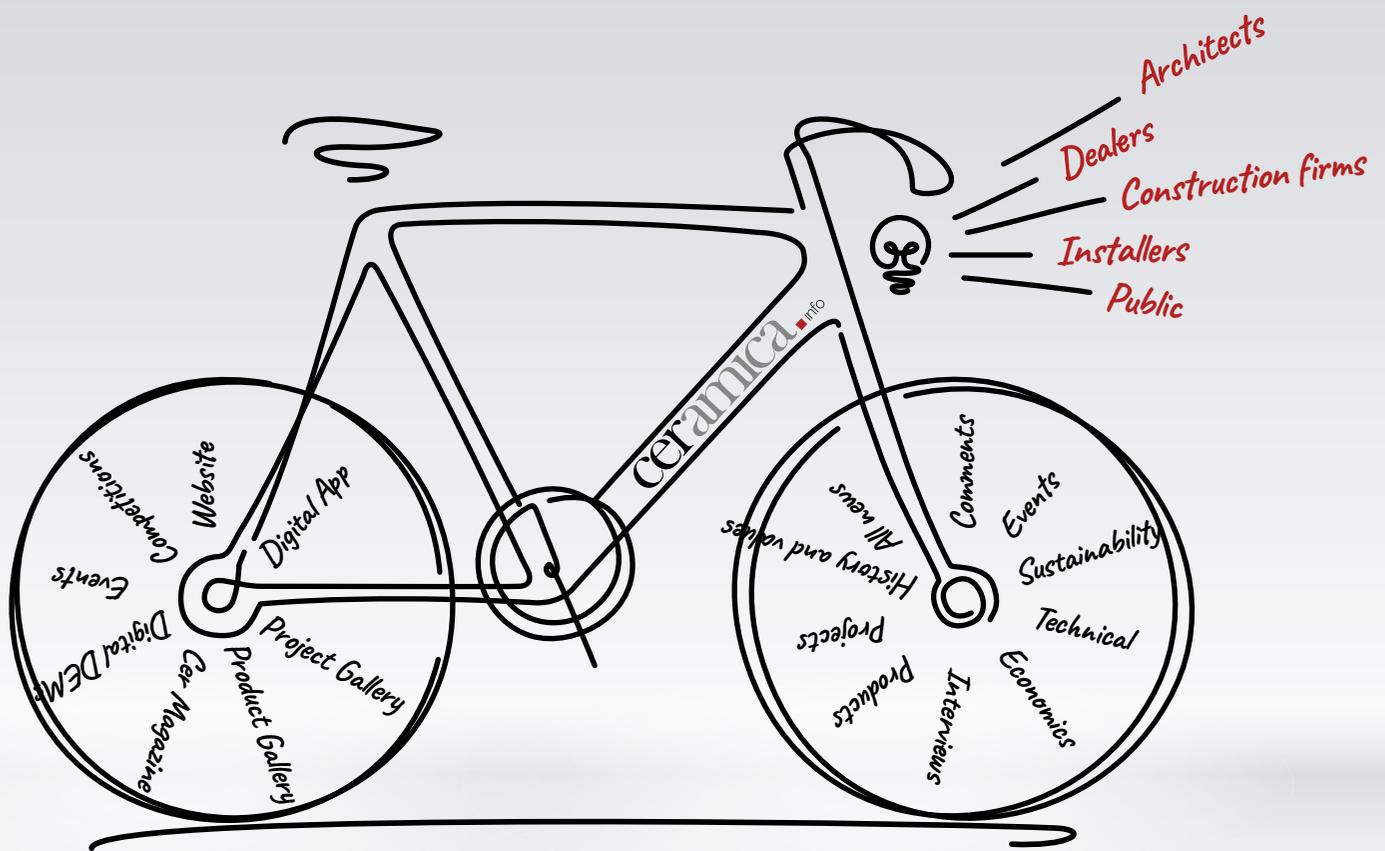
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The technical criteria for choosing ceramic tiles

HOW TO CHOOSE CERAMIC TILES WITH THE RIGHT TECHNICAL AND PERFORMANCE CHARACTERISTICS ACCORDING TO THE STRESSES THEY WILL BE EXPOSED TO

by Livio Salvadori

Ceramic tiles should be selected according to two criteria: first technical and subsequently aesthetic. The order of the two steps can be inverted (first aesthetic and then technical) provided the tiles have the necessary performance characteristics (mechanical, chemical and hygrometric) to enable them to withstand the anticipated levels of stress. For example, in a location exposed to high surface mechanical stresses, tiles with appropriate surface mechanical characteristics must be chosen regardless of their size, colour, finish and decoration.

This means it is not sufficient to choose good-quality products that meet the requirements established by the reference standards: they must meet the specific technical requirements of each place of use. The same applies to the other layers of material making up the tiling (particularly mortar or adhesive) and the design solution adopted.

A few examples will make this concept clearer.

For exteriors, ceramic slabs with declared and certified frost resistance should be chosen.

Ceramic tiles intended for use on a factory floor must have a compact body with suitable mechanical characteristics and if possible an extra-large thickness to ensure a higher breaking load.

They must also be highly resistant to abrasion and chemicals (including acids and alkalis) and have a hard, compact surface to limit the penetration of dirt and to facilitate cleaning and sanitising operations. In areas at high slip risk, the chosen tiles must have a non-slip surface (i.e. with suitable roughness or relief).



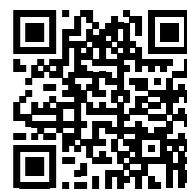


For floors in high-traffic public spaces, the chosen products should have the highest levels of hardness and resistance to abrasion, staining and chemicals, as well as being easy to clean. In areas with direct access to the outdoor environment, caution should be exercised before choosing tiles with a glossy glazed finish as they are liable to get scratched and lose their shine prematurely due to the constant presence of abrasive dirt brought in on shoes. Similar considerations apply for the entrance zone of a home with direct access from outdoor areas (garden, courtyard, road, etc.). And as already mentioned, kitchen floor and wall tiles must have high chemical resistance, as well as excellent surface mechanical characteristics in the case of the floor tiles.

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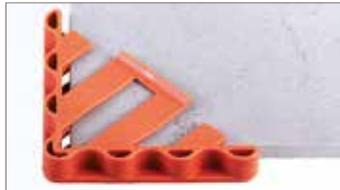
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