



Ceramic Tiles of Italy

CERAMIC TILES OF ITALY ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF 2008 DESIGN COMPETITION

(Spring 2008) When American designers work with Italian materials great things happen. Confindustria Ceramica and the Italian Trade Commission are delighted to announce the winners of the 2008 Ceramic Tiles of Italy Design Competition. The competition, which is celebrating its 15th anniversary, recognizes extraordinary North American architects who create design masterpieces that employ innovative uses of Italian ceramic tile. Prizes are awarded for excellence in Residential, Commercial and Institutional architecture. This year's projects are more inventive than ever, emphasizing the innate diversity and sustainability of Italian ceramic tile.

An international jury critiqued the artistic and technical aspects of each project. They considered the creative uses of tile, and how it fits into the overall design aesthetic. After an intensive selection process, the winner of the Commercial category was determined to be BKA Architects. The firm cleverly used Italian ceramic tile to design a fluid pattern on the floor of the Samsonite Corporate Headquarters, with the renowned luggage brand's logo serving as the centerpiece. The Institutional award went to Richard Fleischman + Partners Architects for the Cleveland Job Corps Center for the Department of Labor, a project that innovatively used tile as the main exterior surface of a nine building campus. This year two awards were given in the Residential sector. One honored Division1 Architects for the Roberts Residence, which made extensive use of Italian ceramic tile on both the exterior and the interior of the house. The other recognized Koji Tsutsui for his fabulously modern Industrial Designer House.

Commercial Winner: BKA Architects, Inc.

Project: Samsonite Corporate Headquarters

Tiles: Floor Gres

Contractor: Middlesex Carpet Co., Inc.

Distributor: Stone Source / Daltile

Massachusetts-based firm **BKA Architects** was declared the winner for the Commercial division for the Samsonite Corporate Headquarters. The highlight of the project was the company logo inlaid in the floor of the central lobby. The design was created using contrasting colors of 24" x 24" porcelain tile from Floor Gres Ceramiche. "The swirling floor pattern was designed to draw people through the lobby into Samsonite's new Corporate Headquarters," said David Seibert, Senior Vice President and Senior Designer of BKA. The 65,000 sq. ft. project reflects the exceptional outcome of the collaboration of a prominent architecture firm with an important client.

Also receiving recognition in this category is **Gieseke Rosenthal Architecture + Design (GRA+D)** from Columbus, Ohio for its well-executed Northstar Cafe. The project possessed many admirable sustainable features to help preserve energy and water, which meshed with the client's eco-friendly attitude. GRA+D carefully curated all of the materials in this restaurant, which provides high quality meals made from locally grown and organic ingredients, to ensure their green attributes. For the dining room walls, they played with slender 1" x 6" tiles to create visual interest and a chic setting. Large format 12" x 24" Italian porcelains were also used on the kitchen and restroom walls.

Institutional Winner: Richard Fleischman + Partners Architects, Inc.

Project: Cleveland Job Corps Center for the Department of Labor

Tiles: Impronta Ceramiche

Contractor: Impronta Ceramiche

Distributor: Virginia Tile

Richard Fleischman + Partners Architects from Cleveland, Ohio stood out as the winner of the Institutional category. Their design for the Cleveland Job Corps Center displayed a progressive and exceptionally creative application of Italian porcelain tile. Impronta Ceramiche tile in 12" x 12" and 12" x 24" formats were used as the exterior surface for all the buildings in the sprawling 25-acre campus. The site was selected by the Department of Labor to be the location of an accredited high school and community college program. The colorful tiling is the main visual feature of the complex. It expresses the supportive and inviting nature of the Job Corps's mission. Fleischman has become a leading architect in the Ohio area because of his innovative design and commitment to sustainability.

Residential Winners:

Division1 Architects

Project: Roberts Residence

Tiles: Caesar

Contractor: Act, Inc.

Distributor: Best Tile

Division1 Architects from Silver Spring, Maryland was chosen as a Residential winner for the Roberts Residence. The firm prides itself on distinctive and innovative design solutions, and they delivered just that. The Roberts Residence features 12" x 24" Ceramiche Caesar tile on a portion of the exterior facade and much of the interior. In addition to conventional use as flooring, the tiles were used in many innovative applications including on a bridge, the wall of the fish tank, and the bathrooms. The project location was known for its extreme topography, and Division1 expertly made use of Italian porcelain tile across the various elevations. The jury was also impressed by Division1's other submissions, the Harris Residence and the commercial project A Place to Cleanse.

Koji Tsutsui Architect & Associates

Project: Industrial Designer House

Tiles: Refin

Contractor: Heisei Kensetsu

Distributor: Riviera, Inc.

Koji Tsutsui of San Francisco was selected as a winner for their Industrial Designer House. The structure, which stands in a suburb of Tokyo, boasts sleek white interior flooring of Refin's Stile series. The Refin tile is the central design motif and symbol of continuity in the project. Tsutsui honed his skills through working with Pritzker Prize winning architect Tadao Ando for over 6 years. In 2001, Tsutsui left Tadao Ando Architect & Associates to pursue his own work. Tsutsui's many projects have garnered critical international acclaim for their understated sophistication and pure design aesthetic.

Legend Award: Michael P. Johnson Design Studios, Ltd.

Projects: Bradley Residence; Ellsworth Residence

Tiles: Cooperativa Ceramica D'Imola

Contractor: Artisan Tile, Inc.

Distributor: Imperial Tile Imports, Ltd.

In recognition of his commitment to innovative design using Italian ceramic tile, the extraordinary architect and two-time Ceramic Tiles of Italy Design Competition winner Michael P. Johnson of

Michael P. Johnson Design Studios is being honored with the Ceramic Tiles of Italy Legend Award. The Scottsdale, Arizona based architect's two projects, the Bradley Residence and the Ellsworth Residence, once again wowed the jury with their minimalist sophistication and modern aesthetic. In the Bradley Residence, 12" by 24" Imola porcelain tile was used as both interior and exterior flooring. The bright white tile enhances the colorful artwork and accents contained in the space. The Ellsworth Residence is visually striking because it seems to emerge like an oasis in the middle of the Arizona desert. Johnson used 24" x 48" Imola tiles to create a pristine and open appearance. In both projects the use of tile supplied sustainable benefits, because when flooded with sunlight through the South facing glass panels, they provide a heat sink, thus reducing both heat cost and energy consumption.

For more information on Ceramic Tiles of Italy visit the new gateway www.italiantiles.com - with links to four key industry sites: www.italiatiles.com (the official website of Confindustria Ceramica), www.italytile.com (the official website for the Ceramic Tile Department of the Italian Trade Commission), www.s-tiles.it (a tool that tracks the Italian tile industry's commitment to sustainable design) and www.tilecompetition.com (a digital guide to the Ceramic Tiles of Italy Design Competition).

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