



Ceramic Tiles of Italy

Mario Botta Designs Poster for Cersaie 2009

“Architecture is gravity, form and matter that accommodates people and life. Ceramic originates from Mother Earth. With this image I wanted to recall where we come from, what we are made of, where we live. And also where we are going: the future is already here.” With these words Mario Botta describes the poster for Cersaie 2009, the tenth created by a great contemporary master of architecture and design.

The concept expressed by Botta is taken from the architect's first work using ceramic tiles and exhibited at the Triennale during the Milan Furniture Fair: “Il Guscio”, or the “Shell”. The basic idea is that ceramic is a natural material made of earth and fire that until now has had fairly limited use. Through this image, the architect wanted to create a space entirely enveloped by ceramic in a plastic fashion like a “maternal uterus”, through which we can reclaim our origins.

Mario Botta is the tenth architect commissioned to design the Cersaie poster and carries on a tradition that began in 2000 with Ettore Sottsass and continued with Alessandro Mendini (2001), Massimo Iosa Ghini (2002), Denis Santachiara (2003), Hani Rashid (2004), David Palterer (2005), Antonio Citterio (2006), Toyo Ito (2007) and Thom Mayne (2008). All of these architects share a common drive to push architecture forward, which dovetails with Cersaie and Ceramic Tiles of Italy's mission.

Born on April 1, 1943 in Mendrisio, Ticino, Mario Botta did an apprenticeship at the Carloni and Camenisch firm of architects in Lugano, then attended the “liceo artistico” (artistic high school) in Milan and continued his studies at the University Institute of Architecture in Venice, where he graduated in 1969 with supervisors Carlo Scarpa and Giuseppe Mazzariol. During his time in Venice he had the opportunity to meet and work for Le Corbusier and Louis I. Kahn. He began his professional work in Lugano in 1970. He designed the first single-family houses in the Ticino Canton and subsequently carried out numerous projects all over the world. He has always been strongly involved in teaching and in recent years founded the Mendrisio architecture academy.

His work has won major international awards including the Merit Award for Excellence in Design from the AIA for the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the IAA Annual Prix 2005, International Academy of Architecture of Sofia for the Kyobo tower in Seoul, the International Architecture Award of the Chicago Athenaeum Museum of Architecture and Design and the European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage / Europa Nostra Award for the remodelling of the Teatro alla Scala in Milan. Numerous exhibitions have been devoted to his work.

Some of his most important projects include: Theatre and Cultural Centre, Chambéry; the Watari-um art gallery in Tokyo; the Villeurbanne mediatheque; SFMOMA Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco; the Cathedral of the Resurrection in Evry; the Jean Tinguely museum in Basel; the Cymbalista Synagogue and Jewish heritage centre in Tel Aviv; the MART Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Rovereto; the Kyobo tower in Seoul; the Tata CS administration buildings in New Delhi and Hyderabad; the Fondation Martin Bodmer Library and Museum in Cologne; restoration of Teatro alla Scala, Milan. Works in progress include the new casino in Campione

d'Italia, the Bechtler art museum in Charlotte, the Tsinghua University art gallery and museum in Beijing, the Leeum offices in Seoul, the Naples underground stations, the new auditorium in Rimini, and the architecture museum in Mendrisio.

The 27th edition of the international show will be held in Bologna, Italy, from September 29 to October 3, 2009.

Cersaie's global scope was underscored at the last edition of the event as international attendance rose to exceed 30% for the first time; the addition of a new two-level hall allowed 1,074 exhibitors from 34 different countries (including 230 foreign companies) to participate; and 662 journalists (297 non-Italians) attended the trade fair.

A high-resolution image of the poster for Cersaie 2009 can be downloaded from sites www.cersaie.it and www.italiatiles.com

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