



THE MONIER LOOK

A New Look at Roof Tiles

Raffaello Rosselli turns the purpose of roof tiles on their head, with a thoughtful use of reclaimed Monier Terracotta tiles.

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Strength
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Get the look: The architectural vision

For architect Raffaello Rosselli, nothing ever goes unquestioned when he is designing a project. He considers all materials and challenges all pre-conceptions before moving forward with his ideas, which in turn leads towards innovative solutions.

Raffaello was the architect responsible for the design of the spectacular new offices of Luigi Rosselli Architects (Raffaello's father), fondly known as The Beehive. A functional and light-filled modern studio that provides collaborative working spaces, it has been heralded because of its striking façade, constructed of reused terracotta roof tiles, most of which are Monier.

"I wanted to explore the idea of looking at a conventional building material in a new way," says Raffaello. "Finding the beauty in what others might consider to be

mundane is fascinating to me – as is finding new uses for discarded materials."

Because terracotta tiles have enduring qualities, as well as the ability to withstand changes in temperature and weather conditions, they have proven to be a great choice for the façade. Their colour also never fades, which is why the tiles still maintain a unified appearance after many years.

"I also think it's amazing to uncover the beauty behind the tiles," says Raffaello. "It's rare to see roof tiles up close, but this concept allows staff and visitors to see the craftsmanship and details that go into the production of terracotta roofing."

The studio is located in Sydney's Surry Hills and the stacked terracotta tiles create a curvaceous line that sits comfortably into their surroundings, heralding their inventive and reimagined

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RAFFAELLO ROSSELLI
ARCHITECT

new life in a starring role rather than supporting player.

Inside the building, tiles are also used in the studio library, juxtaposed between architectural tomes and becoming a sculptural element in their own right.

Raffaello says that the terracotta tile appealed to him because of its raw elemental materiality, with no tile exactly alike, as they are all cast in clay and hand-fired.

"This project attempts to add value to reused materials and change the public's often negative perception of material reuse," he says.



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4 ways to reduce environmental impact

1 Reconsider original building materials

The reuse of terracotta roof tiles in the building allowed this durable material to have a second life.

2 Re-purpose existing fittings

The internal fit-out of the new studio provided multiple working positions offered by custom-built joinery, which was largely re-purposed from the former studio, another component of the upcycling drive on this project.

3 Maximise available green space

The curved design of the front of the building allowed a large paperbark tree in front to be retained, preserving the limited greenery in this highly urban environment.

4 Be a role model for reused materials

Raffaello was conscious that as an architect it was important to be a leader in showing that the reuse of materials could be done in a creative and complex way, rather than as an afterthought. In this design the tiles are the hero, rather than being hidden away.

