

Milano Design Week: Stone Grove design by Kengo Kuma & Associates with Quarella

There is great excitement for the 'Salone Internazionale del Mobile' in Milan, one of the most important trade fairs globally for professionals in the home and furniture sector. The fair is also enriched by the inevitable and highly anticipated 'Fuori Salone' events, an opportunity to enjoy a preview of the upcoming trends.

And Quarella could not miss the opportunity to **consolidate its commitment to the world of interior design, as always with a focus on sustainability**. This type of project design and vision brought the company closer to **Japanese architect Kengo Kuma**. They decided to create an installation with him, as part of the event INTERNI CROSS VISION, that is not just a work of art, but a project involving quartz-based products and marble-based products that dignify what would normally be discarded in quarries.

'Formally natural and spatially wild', this is how Kengo Kuma defines the **Stone Grove** project located in the Cortile d'Onore of the University of Milan. Made with modular elements in engineered marble and quartz, it offers a contemporary reinterpretation – with alternative materials – of the principles of Ikebana (the art of arranging flowers and plant elements according to precise aesthetic and symbolic criteria).

The artwork is laid on a floor consisting of granulates of engineered marble and quartz, which then merges with the composition of the vertical modules, enhancing the manufacturing process and material characteristics. Composed mainly of granular natural stone of various sizes that is then mixed with natural pigments and resins to create a strong and long-lasting material: that is how engineered marble and quartz is used to create an installation with strong architectural significance.

Technical details

The installation is based on the assembly of self-supporting modules, each made with three or four rods of engineered stone, 3 m maximum length, 15 cm wide, and 2 cm thick (overall dimensions of the artwork 6 m x 6 m x h 2.7 m).

This composition forms a sort of stone garden representing the different textures and finishes of Quarella products made with quartz or with waste materials from marble quarries.

The quarry waste material, which would otherwise not be used by the marble industry, is transformed into granules of various sizes and shapes, collected and bound together with a minimal amount of resin.

This particular recipe produces a resistant material that performs even better than traditional stone and obviously reduces waste. A virtuous process that promotes sustainable behaviours.

DON'T IMAGINE THE FUTURE, LIVE IT

Quarella's installations will unfold throughout the city of Milan, describing not only various projects, but also a journey of styles, images, and proposals that encapsulate the soul of the company.

- **15-28 April 2024 – Interni CROSS VISION “Stone Grove” by Kengo Kuma** (University of Milan, Via Festa del Perdono, 7)

- **16-21 April 2024 – MARMO+**

with MVK+ITALIA at Casabrera (Piazza San Marco, 3)

- **16-21 April 2024 – Salone del Mobile** – Stand A23-25 Hall 15 ORIZZONTE kitchen by Pianca (Fiera Rho)

About

QUARELLA - Q.R.B.G. S.R.L.

Quarella has been the leading Italian company in the production and sale of engineered marble and quartz since 1965. Innovative from the beginning, Quarella has developed highly qualified production know-how within its Verona plants for the production of interior surfaces in engineered marble and quartz. Quarella's collections meet the needs of the most demanding international designers involved in the creation of large complex works and bespoke projects.

Quarella's materials are mainly based on natural stone and stand out for being sustainable from their origin, as they come from the waste material of quarries which is transformed and rehabilitated into new life, interpreting textures and finishes of contemporary and innovative design.

For over 50 years, Quarella has been a supplier of slabs, blocks, and tiles for the national and international distribution, putting its experience and production capacity at the service of the international project market.

KENGO KUMA

Kengo Kuma (1954) decided to dedicate himself to architecture at a young age, after seeing the National Stadium for the 1964 Tokyo Olympics at Yoyogi designed by Kenzo Tange. He studied architecture at the University of Tokyo (earning a Master's degree in 1979) and founded Kengo Kuma & Associates in 1990. As a professor at the Graduate School of Architecture at the University of Tokyo, he founded the Kuma Lab to research new materials and conduct a course on advanced digital design and manufacturing. His multi-award-winning studio aims for an architecture that naturally blends with the surrounding environment, proposing a gentle and human-scale vision of the project. The office is constantly looking for new materials to replace concrete and steel and seeks a new approach in a post-industrial society.

He founded Kengo Kuma & Associates in 1990. He is currently a university professor and professor emeritus at the University of Tokyo after having taught at Keio University and the University of Tokyo. KKAA projects are currently underway in more than 40 countries. Kengo Kuma proposes an architecture that opens new relationships between nature, technology, and human beings. His major publications include *Zen Shigoto* (Kengo Kuma – The Complete Works, Daiwa Shobo), *Ten Sen Men* (“point, line, plane”, Iwanami Shoten), *Makeru Kenchiku* (Architecture of Defeat, Iwanami Shoten), *Shizen na Kenchiku* (Natural Architecture, Iwanami Shinsho), *Chii-sana Kenchiku* (Small Architecture, Iwanami Shinsho), and many others.