



## Perfect Darkness is an apartment installation that shows how to make the most of tiles



Augusta Pownall | 18 April 2019 | [4 comments](#)

Design studio H+O has fitted out an [apartment](#) in Milan's Brera district, showing how [tiles](#) can be used to create bold contemporary interiors.

H+O, a collaboration between Italian architect and designer [Elisa Ossino](#) and Danish creative director Josephine Akvama Hoffmeyer of tile brand [File Under Pop](#), unveiled the domestic interior during [Milan design week](#).

Designed as the antithesis of the "cold" showroom, the apartment will serve as an exhibition space for the duo's work, but could also function as a home.

For Milan design week, the pair entirely redecorated the space and installed furniture and artwork by nine other studios and brands, for an installation called Perfect Darkness, which will remain in place for the next 10 months.

The designers hope the space will also serve as a salon for a series of talks, dinners and cultural activities.



"At this moment it's much more interesting for people to see a real apartment. Showrooms are so cold and the home is something special," Ossino told Dezeen.

"When you go to see furniture or design it's because the home is where you live and where you spend most of your time, so it's very important to create a refuge. That's why we decided to create a real home."

On the third floor of a building set back from Via Solferino, the apartment has a single bedroom and bathroom, and four interlinked rooms that run along the front of the space and each look over an internal courtyard.

These are a kitchen complete with a red, tiled storage column, as well as a living room, dining room and narrow office space between the two. The bedroom and bathroom are tucked away at the back of the apartment, leading off the wedge-shaped entrance hall.





Each room has its own particular atmosphere with walls and ceilings painted in earthy tones with paint by File Under Pop, and many tiled surfaces.

"The idea was to find a special place to create some experimental interiors projects and also create a collection of tiles that we designed together," explained Hoffmeyer. "In our mind was the idea to use tiles as an architectural element to create an interior space."

The pair have always loved old-fashioned [tiles](#), but wanted to create a collection that could be used in a contemporary way. To achieve this, they inset three-dimensional geometric patterns into the surface of the tiles rather than printing on a design.

"When you work industrially you have to make 400 square metres of each tile, in one colour in one format so we had to work very precisely," said Hoffmeyer. "We always loved the handcrafted work, but we really wanted to make it democratic."

Ossino and Hoffmeyer bought the apartment last summer and have been working on it since October, to prepare for Milan design week.

"We were a bit worried because the apartment was completely wrong, with the walls and all the floors covered with 1960s wood laminate," explained Ossino. "But we saw we saw the beauty of this and the possibility to transform it completely."

They pulled up the floors to reveal original 17th-century [terrazzo](#) floors beneath that run throughout the main rooms of the apartment.

In the bedroom, the floors and walls are a deep olive green, with the mattress installed on a white tiled base. White perforated brick-like tiles create a permeable screen to the entrance hall beyond. Work by Danish fashion designer [Stine Goya](#) hangs on the wall.

"It's an old way of filtering the light, used in Mediterranean culture," said Ossino. "We like to create a screen and use tiles in that tradition but absolutely seen in a contemporary way."

The narrow bathroom is tiled from floor to ceiling with spotted tiles: "The idea was to make a sort of optical space, like an installation," Ossino explained. "So when you go inside the bathroom you forget that this is a bathroom and it becomes like an art installation."

The living room walls are covered with reddish-brown terracotta tiles with a subtly three-dimensional diamond pattern, designed by H+O.



