

MUTINA

MUTINA UNVEILS NEW COLLABORATIONS WITH NERI&HU AND THE JOSEF & ANNI ALBERS FOUNDATION

On the occasion of **Milano Design Week 2026**, Mutina presents two new internationally significant collaborations with **Neri&Hu** and **The Josef & Anni Albers Foundation**. These encounters represent true moments of cultural convergence, expanding the brand's language and reaffirming its role within the contemporary design landscape.

For over twenty years, Mutina has collaborated with **internationally renowned designers and architects** through an ongoing dialogue on materiality, continuously exploring the very concept of **beauty**. Each project emerges from the encounter between **Italian artisanal tradition** and a deeply **contemporary vision of design**, where surfaces are never mere coverings, but instruments of **spatial storytelling**.

Form is the generative principle behind the collaboration with **Neri&Hu**, expressed through two complementary collections: **Weaving** features ceramic coverings inspired by the art of bamboo weaving, while **Hé** is a new Editions line consisting of tableware objects that reinterpret traditional Chinese ritual geometries.

Colour, on the other hand, lies at the heart of the collaboration with **The Josef & Anni Albers Foundation**, which gives rise to **Homage to the Square**, a collection inspired by Josef Albers' perceptual theories. In this project, ceramics become a field of chromatic interaction: layered tones, optical vibrations, and plays of light transform each surface into a dynamic and ever-changing visual experience.

Both projects will be presented through a special installation at **Casa Mutina**, reaffirming the space not merely as a showroom, but as a place for reflection and dialogue between **art, architecture, and design**.

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NERI&HU X MUTINA WEAVING

THE COLLABORATION

Neri&Hu is an architecture and design studio founded in **Shanghai** in **2004** by **Lyndon Neri** and **Rossana Hu**. Internationally recognised for their ability to reconcile **tradition and innovation**, they pursue a **multidisciplinary approach** grounded in the idea that design should not merely serve a function, but generate meaning. Their work draws on historical, philosophical and craft references to construct sophisticated forms capable of restoring cultural depth to contemporary living.

The collaboration with **Mutina** stems from a shared vision of design as a **research practice**, in which ceramics becomes an ideal field of experimentation: an ancient material, steeped in history, that lends itself to being reimagined both as an architectural surface and as an object for use.

From this encounter comes **Weaving**, a collection of ceramic coverings inspired by the art of bamboo weaving. **"Like a single strand of wicker,"** they state, **"each element is a unit of potential. Only when interwoven with others does it transform into a cohesive surface."**

As in the spaces designed by Neri&Hu, Weaving translates ceramic material into a silent yet powerful presence, capable of entering into profound resonance with its surroundings. It is an exercise in **cultural translation**: a tribute to craft memory that interlaces heritage and innovation through the conscious use of form.

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THE COLLECTION

Inspired by the ancient Chinese art of bamboo weaving, **Weaving** (织系列) is a collection of ceramic coverings designed by **Neri&Hu** for Mutina, reinterpreting a craft tradition for contemporary living.

The collection abstracts the delicate **weave** into a refined graphic language, exploring the rhythmic **interaction between solids and voids**, in which material form and negative space generate a dynamic balance. The strategic use of **colour** enhances this depth, granting the voids a second level of visual perception and adding three-dimensionality to the surface.

Weaving is a collection made of **full-body coloured porcelain stoneware**. The modules are 9 mm thick and come in different shapes and sizes, which, when combined, allow for the creation of three different interlocking patterns, each inspired by **a different craft technique: Pattern A: San Jiao** (三角, "triangle"), **Pattern B: Si Fang** (四方, "square") and **Pattern C: Ba Leng** (八棱, "octagon"). Each pattern establishes a specific rhythm of density and transparency, enabling architects and designers to construct diverse spatial narratives—from delicately textured surfaces to more assertive graphic compositions.

Weaving is available in a range of natural matte tones and multi-colour blends that evoke the characteristic shades of bamboo at different stages of maturation.

The production of the collection is the result of **synergy between artisanal ceramic expertise and state-of-the-art manufacturing technologies**. Each element is produced using **dedicated moulds** specific to each format, in order to ensure maximum precision in the three-dimensional rendering of the surfaces. **Manual extraction from each mould** is carried out with artisanal care to preserve the integrity of the structure and the definition of the edges, whose slight irregularities make each piece unique.

Each element is **mounted on mesh**, like a true **mosaic**, in order to achieve a high level of precision and to simplify **installation**.

The collection is suitable for both **wall** and **floor** applications, **indoors** and **outdoors**. All elements are characterised by a distinctive texture and a **natural shade variation**, achieved through a controlled variation of the clay mixture and slight temperature fluctuations during the firing cycle. This process gives the collection a sense of movement typical of woven structures, generating a visual effect of depth and dynamism.

Weaving pays tribute to a timeless tradition through meticulous work of **translation**. The art of weaving is elevated to a **modular design system** in which cultural heritage shapes contemporary expression, making each surface a testament to **the beauty of interconnection**.

NERI&HU

Lyndon Neri, Hon. FAIA and **Rossana Hu** are the founders of **Neri&Hu Design and Research Office**. Through objects and spatial projects, they pursue a multidisciplinary approach that seeks to enrich **contemporary life** while maintaining a critical connection to collective history. Active in academia, they have taught at several international universities and, in 2004, founded **Design Republic** in Shanghai, a platform combining retail, exhibitions and cultural initiatives dedicated to design.

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THE JOSEF & ANNI ALBERS FOUNDATION X MUTINA HOMAGE TO THE SQUARE



THE COLLABORATION

The Josef & Anni Albers Foundation is the institution dedicated to preserving and promoting the artistic legacy of two central figures of twentieth-century modernism—pioneers in the exploration of colour, form and perception. From its dialogue with Mutina comes **Homage to the Square**, a new ceramic surface collection inspired by **Josef Albers's** iconic painting series. The project originates from the encounter between two kindred visions, both rooted in experimentation and in a shared reflection on the relationship between perception, form and space. The collection, made in collaboration with The Josef & Anni Albers Foundation, will be presented during **Milan Design Week 2026** at **Casa Mutina Milano**.

Josef Albers devoted much of his research to the interaction of colours, studying their variations through rigorous and repetitive geometric structures. According to the artist, colour is never isolated, but lives and changes in relation to its context. **“In mathematics, one plus one plus one equals three,”** he used to say, **“but in art it equals three or more.”** The whole is greater than the sum of its individual parts, because these, in dialogue with one another, generate unexpected effects.

Mutina reinterprets this theory, transforming ceramic surfaces into dynamic fields of chromatic interaction. The collection draws inspiration from the hues of the celebrated **Homage to the Square** series—tones that shift and transform with light, compositional rhythm and context.

As with Albers, **geometry** for Mutina is a means of investigating perception. Over time, the company has developed a coherent visual language composed of chromatic stratifications, refined textures and a design approach focused on substance, balance and longevity. **Form, colour and material** coexist within an open system, in which each element gains meaning in relation to the others.

This affinity also extends to a shared philosophy of living. As evidenced by images of the spaces inhabited by Josef and Anni Albers, the essential is never about subtraction, but about precision. The collection reflects this idea, translating ceramic material into a silent yet powerful presence, capable of responding to the specific needs of each context.

Homage to the Square is therefore more than a collection—it is an exercise in resonance, a tribute to a method and a way of thinking that continues to speak to the present. A project that intertwines art and design through the use of colour and the mysteries of its perception.

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THE COLLECTION

The **Homage to the Square** collection translates **Josef Albers's** theories into a coherent and refined ceramic grammar, balanced between geometric rigour and chromatic sensitivity.

The individual elements, measuring **15x15 cm**, are made of **unrectified porcelain stoneware** (retaining the natural variations of the firing process) and feature two main patterns, both structured around the **repetition (and variation) of the square module**.

Dash is characterised by a glossy section set within a matte frame, with four smaller glossy squares positioned at its extremities. Together, the glossy surfaces capture light and reflect its nuances. **Dot**, by contrast, offers a more essential yet equally sophisticated tactile experience, created through the interaction between the matte surface and the small squares placed at the corners, whose polished finish produces a refined material contrast. The alternation of matte and glossy glazes, combined with the natural irregularities resulting from the manufacturing process, creates an engaging interplay of surfaces and reflections, making each element a unique and precious piece.

Homage to the Square is available in a palette of seven tones—**Sea, Evergreen, Chocolate, Ice, Citron, Sage and Peach**—inspired by Josef Albers's paintings and his studies on chromatic interactions. Each shade has been selected to evoke the same visual vibration and emotional intensity that characterise the artist's work. To achieve this, extensive research was conducted into glazes, pigments and ceramic applications, in order to obtain, on the same tile, different tonal values while maintaining the same level of saturation and definition.

Finally, the two patterns, conceived to be used either individually or in combination, allow for a wide degree of **compositional freedom**. The arrangement of each element influences the rendering of colour and thickness, which interact with one another to create compelling perceptual effects. The possible configurations invite a **personal interpretation of space**, offering decorative solutions that are at once expressive, elegant and highly impactful.

More than a surface collection, Homage to the Square is a contemporary tribute to one of the most brilliant minds of visual modernism—as well as an invitation to rediscover, through ceramic, the art of balance between form and perception.

THE JOSEF & ANNI ALBERS FOUNDATION

The Josef & Anni Albers Foundation perpetuates the vision of Anni and Josef Albers through exhibitions, publications, education, and outreach concomitant with the Alberses' personal values. The aim of the Foundation, as established by the Alberses in 1972, is "the revelation and evocation of vision through art".

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For over twenty years, Mutina has shaped **the essence of ceramics through dialogue with some of the leading designers, architects and artists of our time**. Encounter lies at the heart of the company's philosophy, which sees human and creative interplay as its most valuable resource. For this reason, Mutina operates at the intersection of **design, architecture and art**, challenging conventional production logics and exploring new spatial and material languages.

Drawing on an in-depth knowledge of **materials and production techniques**, Mutina brings together the quality of **Italian artisanal tradition with the precision of innovative industrial technologies**, shaping an authentic and timeless product. This balance is the result of a **savoir-faire** developed over the years, which has redefined ceramics as a medium of research and expression.

Alongside its surface collections, this approach extends to the **Editions**. Produced in limited runs, they are handcrafted objects in which ceramics become both an expressive medium and a collectible artefact. The company's relationship with contemporary art finds its fullest expression in **Mutina for Art**, the non-profit project that supports experimentation and cultural exchange, expanding the company's field of research beyond the product itself.

Sensitivity to form, drive for innovation and openness to cross-disciplinary dialogue have always been central to Mutina's design philosophy. Today, this vision is distilled into a single, constant aim: **to shape beauty**.

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