



The installation includes stone walls, stone furniture and even a stone "carpet". | Photo source [Stefan Scholten](#)

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UPCYCLING WASTE MARBLE TO CREATE NEW LUXURIES

  ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

An installation at Milan Design Week demonstrates that waste marble is just as good as block marble for producing luxury furnishings

Spotted: The need to reduce carbon emissions has led many designers to revise the way they think about materials, with a growing number opting to incorporate repurposed materials instead of new ones. Designer Stefan Scholten is one of these. He has created luxury out of waste with his Stone House, an installation for Milan Design Week that is constructed entirely out of waste marble and travertine.

The installation includes stone walls, stone furniture and even a stone “carpet”. Different techniques were used to create the pieces, with saw residue, broken chunks and grit all being used. For example, the “carpet” is made of waste pieces, cut into slabs and assembled into a pattern that resembles the pages of an open book, while a bench uses pieces of travertine with travertine residue for the grouting.

The waste pieces are bound together using cement, which is not the most sustainable option, given that the cement industry is responsible for around 8 per cent of global CO2 emissions. But Scholten describes it as the “least worst option.” Other options, such as epoxy resin and bio-resin, can be difficult to recycle or do not produce a high-quality finish.

While there are a lot of projects that use waste stone, and even marble, Scholten specifically wanted to work with marble in order to demonstrate that luxury can also be made more sustainably. He **explains**: “the quantity of discarded [marble] is massive. Marble is a luxury product. So far, manufacturers consider the ‘upcycled’ concept as cheap ...With The Stone House project, I invite the industry to become more sustainable and aware, while also suggesting new aesthetics.”

Upcycling has become an important part of improving the sustainability of design and architecture. We have seen this in a number of innovative collections, including a home furnishings collection made from [salvaged cork](#) and “gemstones” made from upcycled [glass bottles](#).

Written By: Lisa Magloff

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Email: studio@stefanscholten.com

Website: stefanscholten.com

Takeaway:

To achieve his designs, Scholten turned to age-old production and assembly methods, such as terrazzo, palladiana, mosaico and marmorino, but also experimented with new different combinations of colours and materials. The Stone House project was developed in collaboration with brand Stone Made Italy and renowned terrazzo manufacturer Morsetto, which takes an artisan approach and uses highly specialised workers. Although not as sustainable as it perhaps could be, due to the use of cement, the hope is that it will encourage the marble industry to see waste in a more positive light and put more effort into creating greater sustainability.