

Terrazzo, from the Italian word for terraces, was created several hundred years ago in Europe when Venetian workers discovered a new use for discarded marble remnants. Since that time it has become a logical, practical solution for contemporary design and construction. The beauty and versatility of terrazzo offers today's architects & designers a contemporary flooring and wall material for interior and exterior design use.

Fifteenth century Venetian marble workers began to use odd - size marble pieces, remaining from the custom made marble slabs, to surface the terraces around their living quarters. The uneven, rough surfaces created when the spells were set in clay to anchor them, convinced the workers that flattening the surface would produce a smoother surface more comfortable for walking. And so they began to rub the surfaces with hand stones achieving a smoother, flat surface.

The workers soon advanced their technique for rubbing the surfaces by designing a long handle with a weighted end to which they could fasten their rubbing stones. Now they were able to rub the terraces in a more comfortable stand-up position, using their body weight to provide the pressure to abrade the surface faster. This tool was named the "Galera". With this crude equipment and back - breaking labour they achieved a smoother, flat surface but still lacking the true marble colour that only resulted when the surface was wet.

As years passed, workers discovered that the milk from their goats brought out the true colour of the marble when applied to the surface and this true colour of the marble was retained in its dry condition. This may be the initial terrazzo sealer! Ingenious individuals devised a method of using wood strips to divide different colours of marble. These strips would be removed and this void would be filled with another material. These same people learned that by adding marble dust to this material, it resulted in various colours. Thus, they could now create a design to this material.

In later years 3/4 inch colourful marble cubes, known as Mosaic Tesserae, were used as the division strips for separating colours. These became a permanent part of the floor and added further aesthetics. Marble strips 3/4 inch by 3/4 inch, one to three feet in length were developed providing another permanent dividing strip.

Brass divider strips became available in the mid - twenties replacing or offering a second choice to the marble cubes or strips. In the thirties white metal strips were developed, and during World War I I, due to the essential need for metal, plastic strips were developed. Not only were these strips designed to separate colours, but they played an essential role in the control of localizing shrinkage in the terrazzo topping preventing cracks from marring the aesthetics of this beautiful surface. Soon advanced technology gave this industry various gauges of all these strips, resulting in the creation of elaborate and intricate patterns and designs.

In 1924 improvements on the Galera concept of rubbing the terrazzo smooth led to the development of electric grinding equipment to achieve a fine finish. The technology of Carborundum stones on a rotating head, aided in advancing the grinding and polishing procedures to today's standard. After years of using grey Portland cement, white Portland cement was also introduced into this industry, expanding the horizon of terrazzo colours with the mineral colour pigment

additives. Now the spectrum of colour for terrazzo was unlimited. And during this time numerous chemical companies were developing cleaners and sealers to enhance the beauty of terrazzo.

In recent years (about 25 to be exact) new developments were achieved with the discovery of epoxies, polyesters, latex and acrylics. Another concept of terrazzo also emerged during this period known as rustic terrazzo. This system creates a unique surface especially designed for footpaths, plazas, terraces, pools and stairways with unlimited use for decks and wall surfaces, you can choose from nature's colour gallery of stone created millions of years ago - the selection is virtually limitless. The unique difference of this concept is the texture created on the finished product. Thus, from thick to thin, terrazzo is now available to fit all requirements.

Today the flooring meant for Kings and Princes of the Church is available to everyone. Terrazzo, a flooring material known and proven by history to be virtually indestructible is priced competitively with other hard surface flooring materials - affordable to all.

“a logical, practical solution for contemporary design and construction”

From the roots of antiquity where it served the old world, terrazzo is considered by the modern day architect/designer as a contemporary flooring and wall material for interior and exterior use in the modern structures of our time. Terrazzo has proved itself through history as the sensible choice for your floor surfaces that require resistance to heavy abuse while still retaining beauty and low maintenance cost factors. It is a flooring material that with proper care will never need replacement during your lifetime. Whether for the rush of thousands of feet with the floor that takes the hurry in an airport, train station or supermarket or a floor made for contemplation and joy in a quiet church in a school planned for education of our children or a hospital where footsteps can mean life itself nowhere else in any kind of flooring today can you create so much visual beauty with so much long range economy.

When you build for lasting strength you can also create the lasting beauty of timeless terrazzo.