



## OSTERIA FRANCESCANA MODENA, ITALY

Lighting design:  
**Daide Groppi**

As all keen foodies will know, Massimo Bottura's three Michelin-star Osteria Francescana was last year declared to be number one in the World's 50 Best Restaurants listing.

The former osteria's two main rooms accommodate 30 diners and there is also a private room. The art and artistry of the food is echoed in the watercolour menus and art selection. Works on display include landscapes by Olafur Eliasson and Maurizio Cattela's *Turisti*, a satirical sculpture involving embalmed pigeons, first shown at the 2011 Venice Biennale. The recent renovation included a new entrance designed by local artisans, with a ceiling of opaque glass created by interior designer Catia Baccolini.

The 'entertainment and living space' and the dining rooms have individual decor and art, so that each needed its own lighting solution. These defined the specific character of each room and also the transition areas that connect them. Throughout, however, it is a bravely dark scheme with dramatic contrasts and great restraint in the use of luminaires.

Groppi lit the main rooms of the restaurant with his spindly, long-stemmed Sampei floor fittings, taking as his reference the light in Caravaggio's paintings and the way they 'are always used in a theatrical way and characters seem to be coming out from darkness'.

Small Mira LED wall fittings, with their pared-down, tube and block geometry, light some of the artworks on show, while the tiny Nulla recessed ceiling fitting (just 18mm in diameter) illuminates the transition areas, the hall and the corridor leading up to the main rooms of the restaurant, as well as the *Turisti* pigeons. Groppi describes the Nulla as 'the denial of design. Just a tiny hole in the ceiling represents the light without a source, which again refers to the light in Caravaggio's paintings'. **FX**