

De Castilia 23 (Unipol)
is one of the official INTERNI MATERIAE and Design Week 2026 locations from 20 to 26 April

**URBAN UP | UNIPOL PRESENT:
LIGHT OUR FIRE
IMPRESSIVE 1,100 SQ.M. KINETIC SCULPTURE
CREATED BY “STUDIO AZZURRO”**

*De Castilia 23's facade will turn into the earth's incandescent core to
represent primordial energy and creative power*

**We are asked to collectively reflect on energy, the future and our responsibility towards the planet
while individually reflecting on the importance of fanning
the inner flame that burns within.**

A message underscored by Unipol Tower which will light up in orange at the same time

Milan, 17 April 2026. Urban Up | Unipol presents **LIGHT OUR FIRE**, a site specific kinetic sculpture created by “Studio Azzurro” to mark 2026 Milan Design Week; it will be **visible from today to 26 April** on *De Castilia 23*, the Group-owned building renovated by Urban Up | Unipol.

With **LIGHT OUR FIRE**, *De Castilia 23* will play a leading role in “INTERNI MATERIAE”, INTERNI's exhibition-event on international design and architecture, once again the official location of Design Week.

The **Earth's incandescent core** will feature on the building's facade, **representing primordial energy** and creative power to indicate Fire, the final element of the tetralogy which began 3 years ago with Water (2023), Air (2024) and Earth (2025). Humans have used fire for thousands of years for heat, to transform metal, make the first forays into technology and basically smooth the path of progress. Greek mythology tells us that Prometheus took fire from the gods to give to humanity. This sparked awareness and passion as it brought development while nonetheless demanding responsibility: power that gives benefits will always be accompanied by consequences and risks. This insight gave rise to **LIGHT OUR FIRE**. The image of the Earth's burning core is therefore a call - never as urgent as the present - to **reflect on energy, the future, our responsibility towards the Planet** and to carefully fan the flame that burns inside. The **Unipol Tower will be lit up in orange at the same time so that both Group buildings can “interact”** to bolster the key message and call for reflection.

LIGHT OUR FIRE is not just an aesthetic work comprising **492 slim panels that rotate and vibrate with air and light, but a conduit through which the appeal is made to think and reflect**. One of the most complex issues that touches on geopolitical, social, technological and environmental spheres nowadays is the question of energy. In its 2025 World Energy Outlook, the International Energy Agency (IEA) defined the current period as one of the worst in past decades, predicting austerity

scenarios in the near future that could match those of the 1970s. A number of paradoxes and contradictions have emerged over the past few months: despite the explosion in the demand for energy, partly to support the spread of digital transformation and AI, this technology can play an important role in reducing emissions and energy consumption. Even though billions of people have to fight for access to basic energy sources in developing countries (lack of power grids), access to power is guaranteed to everyone in advanced economies but energy poverty is on the increase: although households are hyperconnected, they cannot afford to heat their homes or provide sufficient lighting due to record high prices. Issues on which to reflect and gaps which are only set to widen over the next few years are “illustrated” in an evocative **photography exhibition** on the ground floor of *De Castillia 23* with free entrance during design week: 20 photos by **Marco Garofalo** taken from the “*Ritratti di energia. Storie di persone, luoghi e dignità*” (Energy portraits. Stories of people, places and dignity) and “*Energy Portraits, the Global South*” projects that record the profound social inequalities in the world through the power and authenticity of pictures.

Massimiliano Morrone, Chief Real Estate Officer of the Unipol Group said “*we have used the Urban Up brand to renovate the buildings owned by the Group in urban and peri-urban areas in recent years since we believe that we can contribute towards economic growth and connectivity in cities by modernising our assets, sparing the land and encouraging a virtuous asset enhancing circle. Cities that consume between 60% and 80% of global energy and produce 70% of carbon emissions can achieve considerable economies of scale by increasing energy efficiency, provided that businesses and public entities play their part, including through infrastructural investments*”.

When: from 20 to 26 April 2026

Where: via Gaetano De Castillia 23, Milan

LIGHT OUR FIRE

LIGHT OUR FIRE is an immense modular sculpture, 37 metres in diameter and covering a total surface area of over 1,100 sq.m. The 492 slim red and orange panels comprising it are made of an innovative polycarbonate material deriving from a continuous recycling process that ensures 100% reusability. They are supported by 104 brackets set into the facade to which long steel cables are hooked enabling the panels to rotate and vibrate with air and light. The circular chromatic fabric reflects the earth’s core: oranges sparkle in the centre, surrounded by intense shades of red to resemble the pulse of an incandescent heart in the middle of the city.

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION

Urban Up | Unipol presents a selection of 20 photos taken by photographer **Marco Garofalo** from the “*Ritratti di energia. Storie di persone, luoghi e dignità*” and “*Energy Portraits, the Global South*” projects for Milan Design Week 2026. While Urban Up uses the kinetic LIGHT OUR FIRE sculpture on *De Castillia 23* to interpret the idea of Fire as a source of energy, the photographs ask us to reflect on the idea of energy justice and inequality in the access to energy in Italy and abroad.

The **RITRATTI DI ENERGIA. STORIE DI PERSONE, LUOGHI E DIGNITÀ** section celebrates the tenth anniversary of the *Banco dell’Energia* (energy bank) Foundation; it captures the essence of several big projects that have been tackling energy poverty in Italy (including Milan, Rome, Bergamo, Potenza, Cagliari, Turin, Foggia and Naples among others) since the Foundation was established 10

years ago. The full exhibition can be viewed in Via Dante in Milan up to 26 April. The *Banco dell'Energia* Foundation is a non-profit entity that collects funds to support vulnerable people and households, with a special emphasis on energy poverty. Since 2016, over 15 million euros have been collected and distributed to help over 17,000 people.

The **ENERGY PORTRAITS - THE GLOBAL SOUTH** section of the exhibition uses pictures and witness accounts to show the difficulties encountered in accessing energy in countries that include Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, Bolivia, India and Poland among others. The project takes a realistic, humane look at the issue, weaving together stories, places and perspectives to highlight a global challenge that is still all too often ignored. Close to one billion people still live without access to electricity, while almost two billion depend on wood or biomass to cook and warm themselves. Global energy poverty is this: an unspoken inequality throughout the world that affects the life quality of millions of people.

De Castillia 23

After years of neglect, the building was completely upgraded once it was taken over by the Group with a design solution proposed by Progetto CMR which maintained the original cement structure to avoid the CO2 emissions that would result from demolition. All the outside surfaces were covered in dark porcelain stoneware - Cloudy Core Active and Sharp Core Active by Fiandre - and treated with a titanium dioxide coating, Tx active, which can employ the photo alkaline principle to combat air pollutants. The prismatic facade increases energy performance by reducing some of the effects of direct sunlight in both summer and winter reducing artificial lighting requirements by 70%.

Urban Up - Unipol Projects Cities

Urban Up is a real estate project developed by the Unipol Group created to enhance the value of some of the most important properties of the Group's Italian architectural portfolio; it achieves this by targeted renovation plans that combine innovation with a healthy respect for tradition. The project was launched in the city of Milan with renovation of some of its most iconic buildings and has expanded to several other Italian cities; refurbishment is carried out to both promote its trophy assets and regenerate suburban areas, deploying the value of sustainability in real estate by adopting environmentally friendly solutions. www.urbanupunipol.com

Unipol Gruppo

Unipol is one of the biggest insurance groups in Europe and the leading company in Italy in the non-life insurance sector, (especially in the MV and health businesses), with total premiums of €15.1bn, of which €8.7bn in non-life and €6.4bn in life (2023 figures). Unipol has an integrated offer strategy covering the entire range of insurance products. The Group is also active in direct MV insurance (Linear Assicurazioni), transport and aviation insurance (Siat), health insurance (UniSalute) and supplementary pensions and covers the bancassurance channel (Arca Vita and Arca Assicurazioni). It also manages significant diversified assets in the following sectors: property, hotel (Gruppo UNA), medical-healthcare (Centro Medico Santagostino) and agricultural (Tenute del Cerro). Unipol Gruppo S.p.A. is listed on the Italian Stock Exchange.

Unipol Group

Media Relations
Fernando Vacarini
pressoffice@unipol.it

Barabino & Partners

Massimiliano Parboni	Giovanni Vantaggi
T. +39 335 8304078	T. +39 328 8317379
m.parboni@barabino.it	g.vantaggi@barabino.it