

De Castillia 23 is the Official Unipol Group Location for Design Week 2023, April 17-23

## URBAN UP | UNIPOL PRESENTS THE INSTALLATION H2O Help BY MARIA CRISTINA FINUCCI

With a maxi slogan illuminated on the façade and a large installation out front,  
De Castillia23 invites the public to not remain indifferent to the global water emergency

Milan, 17 April 2023

For Milano Design Week 2023, **Urban Up** presents **H2O Help**, a site-specific installation by **Maria Cristina Finucci on display from April 17-23 in the area in front of De Castillia 23**, the Group-owned building redeveloped by Urban Up | Unipol. With **H2O Help**, **De Castillia 23 will be a protagonist of INTERNI DESIGN RE-EVOLUTION**, the reference event for international design and architecture and official location of the Isola Design District.

H2O Help: two simple but alarming words to deliver a strong message and turn the spotlight on the theme of the water emergency and the importance of water conservation that affects the whole world, from the city to the country, which it is symbolically impossible to remain comfortably and passively “seated” in front of.

Given the **importance of its message**, the **installation was deemed worthy of patronage** by HS4A (Human Security for All), a **global campaign led by the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security (UNTFHS) and the World Academy of Art and Science (WAAS)** promoting global responses to the complex challenges that threaten human security, including those caused **by climate change**

This initiative is one of many activities aimed at pursuing **Sustainable Development Goal 11 “Sustainable cities and communities”** adopted by the United Nations, which engages Urban Up | Unipol on two fronts: in urban regeneration and green design, inspired by the principles of sustainability at the core of the De Castillia 23 redevelopment, and in communication, through artistic and cultural initiatives aimed at raising awareness of ESG issues.

## THE INSTALLATION

The installation welcomes visitors with a sort of 70-metre-long living creature formed by a series of “water cushions”. Whoever takes a seat may not immediately notice that just a few steps ahead the living organism, complete with visible veins and arteries, is breathing heavily, showing everyone its struggle for survival. Its agony seeks to communicate humanity’s discomfort in the face of one of the most serious problems today: water scarcity. How so? Part of the installation is illuminated to form the words H2O Help, and that’s not all. The composition that forms the letter “O” is lit in red, the colour for danger. At night the message is further amplified by the two words lit up against the dark façade of De Castillia 23, which, illuminated from dusk till dawn, will also be visible from Piazza Gae Aulenti.

The installation forms a huge deconstructed sofa where visitors can freely sit every day until midnight, and is made up of water tanks of two different types: flexible cushions, connected by blue and red water pipes that symbolise blood vessels, and rigid, semi-transparent white boxes that act as lighting fixtures thanks to built-in LEDs. One of the tanks is red, equipped with an air inlet system to simulate a heavy-breathing heart.

## INFORMATION:

WHERE: Via De Castillia 23

WHEN: 18-23 APRIL

On 19<sup>th</sup> April at 8:30pm, a special happening will be held at the installation: the crowd seated together on the installation will be immortalised in a large photo taken from above, metaphorically participating in a collective cry for help to save the planet.

## DE CASTILLIA 23

De Castillia 23 is a real estate asset owned by Unipol Group. The redevelopment project brought an old building left unfinished and abandoned for years back to life, returning a place worthy of the surrounding innovation and contemporaneity to the city of Milan.

The design solution proposed by Progetto CMR, the firm chosen by Urban Up | Unipol for the redevelopment of the property in via De Castillia, not only paid attention to aesthetic aspects but also aimed to improve the building’s functionality, energy performance and overall efficiency in a true example of well-rounded green and sustainable architecture.

The project is characterised by a prismatic and elegant façade which dialogues with the neighbouring buildings: a ‘double skin’ which improves performance by mitigating part of the direct solar contribution, allowing a 70% reduction in the use of artificial lighting. In addition, the balconies and external surfaces are clad in dark porcelain stoneware treated with TX active titanium dioxide coating, an antismog product that uses photocatalysis to fight the pollutants present in the air.

The redevelopment project won the “Bim&Digital Award 2018” for Commercial, tertiary and large-scale buildings and the “CTBUH - Tall Building – Award of Excellence 2022”.

**MARIA CRISTINA FINUCCI**

Maria Cristina Finucci is an architect and artist. She has created monumental installations in symbolic locations around the world to raise awareness about the fate of our planet. In 2013, she founded the Garbage Patch State with the support of UNESCO, of which she is President. In 2022, she established the Finucci Foundation, a non-profit that promotes greater collective awareness of ocean pollution, the destruction of the planet and social inequalities through art.

**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 €13.3bn, of which €7.9bn in non-life and €5.4bn in life (2021 figures). Unipol adopts an integrated offer strategy and covers the entire range of insurance and financial products, operating primarily through the subsidiary UnipolSai Assicurazioni. The Group is also active in direct MV insurance (Linear Assicurazioni), transport and aviation insurance (Siat), health insurance (UniSalute), supplementary pensions and it also covers the bancassurance channel (Arca Vita, Arca Assicurazioni and Incontra). It also manages significant diversified assets in the debt collection (UnipolReC), real estate, hotel (Gruppo UNA), medical-healthcare and agricultural (Tenute del Cerro) sectors. Unipol Gruppo S.p.A. is listed on the Italian Stock Exchange.

**Urban Up - Unipol Projects Cities**

Urban Up is a Unipol Group real estate project aimed at enhancing some of the most important Italian architectures owned by the Group through renovations and redevelopments that combine a vocation for innovation with respect for tradition. The Urban Up project, first launched in the city of Milan with the redevelopment of some symbolic buildings due to their history and position in the Lombard capital, continues in a number of Italian cities with interventions aimed at promoting its trophy assets while regenerating urban neighbourhoods, expressing the value of sustainability in the real estate sector by adopting design solutions inspired by environmental protection.

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