

Zurich pays tribute to the master who profoundly influenced the course of contemporary fashion and portrait photography, through the exhibition entitled

“Eternal Elegance” The Timeless Photography of Gian Paolo Barbieri

an exhibition presented in collaboration with 29 Arts In Progress gallery, Milan

from 26 September 2025 to 15 January 2026.

The works of Barbieri will be hosted at the new headquarters of Zurich Italy and Zurich Bank, located at Via Santa Margherita 11, in the heart of Milan and just steps away from the iconic Teatro alla Scala. At the intersection of the international financial district and the renowned fashion quarter, this new building reflects Zurich's commitment to being at the centre of Milan's economic and cultural life, offering a flagship venue defined by prestigious architecture and sustainable design.

This collaboration arises from a shared vision that underpins both Barbieri's artistic legacy and Zurich's mission: a pursuit of excellence and a dedication to protecting what is most valuable.

With his unmistakable style, Barbieri invites us to view the world through his lens. His photographs not only capture the intrinsic beauty of his subjects but also tell intimate stories of life, resilience, and hope.

Manuela Bottega, Head of Communication, Brand and Advertising at Zurich Italy, commented: *“With the awareness that art has the power to connect people, evoke emotion and deepen our understanding of the world around us, Zurich continues to look to the future with the same care and dedication that Barbieri has brought to each of his photographs.”*

Alongside many of Barbieri's most celebrated masterpieces, the exhibition will also present a selection of previously unseen works, ranging from the 1960s to the 2000s, uncovered through in-depth research within the artist's personal archive.

Gian Paolo Barbieri succeeded in giving a distinct identity to Italian fashion, one that had never been envisioned before. He became a trusted collaborator of the designers who, through the rise of *Made in Italy*, would soon become the icons of a new cultural and fashion era. Alongside them, Barbieri helped define one of the most radiant seasons of this creative renaissance.

The exhibition, located on the ground floor of Zurich's new Milan headquarters, will also include a series of groundbreaking images showcasing inventive settings and styling—works that exemplify Barbieri's brilliant, often ironic, cultivated, provocative vision. His photographs are rich in references to art history, feature eclectic outdoor sets in exotic locations, and include cinematic allusions that echo his early experience at Cinecittà in Rome.

In his view, fashion without art is bare and empty.

In this exhibition, the women captured by Barbieri break free from the conventional poses of fashion photography, embodying a new, nonconformist elegance—one that expresses a liberated and sensual dimension of femininity.

Barbieri—recipient of the 2018 Lucie Award for Outstanding Achievement in Fashion—remains an exceptional and meticulously refined photographer. His profound familiarity with cinema and theatre is evident in his meticulous lighting, the theatrical use of makeup, and the timeless suspension of his compositions.

Gian Paolo Barbieri mesmerises, surprises, and speaks to both heart and intellect. This, after all, is the essential role of photography—and, by extension, of art.

Exhibition Details

Eternal Elegance – The Timeless Photography of Gian Paolo Barbieri

Zurich Italy & Zurich Bank

Via Santa Margherita 11 – Milan

26 September 2025 – 15 January 2026

Press Requests

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Additional Information

29 ARTS IN PROGRESS gallery | info@29artsinprogress.com

About Gian Paolo Barbieri (Milan, 1935 – 2024)

For over sixty years, Gian Paolo Barbieri was one of the most influential photographers in international fashion. He created iconic campaigns for global luxury brands including Valentino, Gianni Versace, Gianfranco Ferré, Giorgio Armani, Bulgari, Chanel, Yves Saint Laurent, Dolce & Gabbana, Vivienne Westwood and many more. His timeless images have graced the pages of *Vogue Italia*, *Vogue Paris*, *Vogue US*, *L'Officiel*, *GQ*, and *Vanity Fair* across several decades.

Ranked by *Stern* magazine among the 14 best fashion photographers in the world, Barbieri's work is included in the permanent collections of major institutions such as the Victoria and Albert Museum and National Portrait Gallery in London, the Kunstforum in Vienna, Palazzo Reale in Milan, the MAMM in Moscow, the Erarta Museum in St. Petersburg, the Musée du quai Branly in Paris, and the Nicola Erni Collection in Switzerland.

His work has been featured in major monographs such as *Artificial* (1982), *Gian Paolo Barbieri* (1988), *Tahiti Tattoos* (1989), *Madagascar* (1997), *Equator* (1999), *A History of Fashion* (2001), *Dark Memories* (2013), *Skin* (2015), and *Fiori della mia Vita* (2016).

In 2018, Barbieri received the Lucie Award for Outstanding Achievement in Fashion in New York. In 2022, the first documentary film about his life and work, *L'uomo e la bellezza*, won the Audience Award at the Biografilm Festival (Art & Music section) in Bologna and was distributed in cinemas across Italy.

About Zurich

Zurich Insurance Group (Zurich) is a global leader in the insurance industry. Founded more than 150 years ago, the Group now serves over 75 million customers in more than 200 countries and territories, delivering returns to shareholders that outperform industry averages.

In line with its purpose “*to create a brighter future together,*” Zurich offers protection solutions that go beyond traditional insurance, helping customers build resilience. Since 2020, the **Zurich Forest** project has supported reforestation and biodiversity restoration efforts in Brazil’s Atlantic Forest.

Zurich has more than 63,000 employees and is headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland. Zurich Insurance Group Ltd (ZURN) is listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange and maintains a Level I American Depositary Receipt program (ZURVY), traded over-the-counter on OTCQX.

More information is available at www.zurich.com

About 29 ARTS IN PROGRESS Gallery

29 ARTS IN PROGRESS is a prominent photography gallery representing internationally acclaimed photographers including Gian Paolo Barbieri, Mario Testino, Greg Gorman, Rankin and Michel Haddi, with a particular focus on portraiture and fashion photography. Since its foundation, the gallery has curated exhibitions in collaboration with public and private institutions such as the V&A Museum (London), Hong Kong Arts Centre, Palazzo Reale and Triennale di Milano, the Museum of Cultures (Lugano), and the Nicola Erni Collection in Switzerland. Its co-founders and directors, Eugenio Calini and Luca Casulli, lead the gallery with the aim of achieving the highest standards in fine art photography collecting.

More information is available at www.29artsinprogress.com