

GUITAR PORTRAITS

A monumental installation by HENRY LEUTWYLER
TIMES SQUARE New York, 12–25 May 2025
Presented by BIENNALE IMAGES VEVEY
& MONTREUX JAZZ FESTIVAL

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From 12 to 25 May 2025, Biennale Images Vevey and the Montreux Jazz Festival will take over Times Square with a monumental photographic installation by Henry Leutwyler. Produced in collaboration with Switzerland Tourism and Montreux-Vevey Tourisme, this original work pays tribute to ten musical legends through their guitars and celebrates the artistic vitality of Switzerland's Vaud Riviera at the heart of New York City.



Biennale Images Vevey and the Montreux Jazz Festival have joined forces to highlight the Vaud Riviera in one of New York's most iconic locations. Following a custom-made artistic installation at Times Square in 2024, Images Vevey continues its ambition to share its expertise internationally. From 12 to 25 May 2025, a new monumental video installation entitled *Guitar Portraits* will be displayed on the giant Times Square screens. Created especially for the site by Swiss photographer Henry Leutwyler, the piece showcases ten legendary guitars once owned by musical icons such as Prince, Janis Joplin, and Jimi Hendrix.

Where photography meets music

With his artistic background and deep passion for music, Swiss photographer Henry Leutwyler—based in New York since 1995—was a natural choice for this collaboration between Biennale Images Vevey and the Montreux Jazz Festival in the iconic setting of Times Square.

Raised in the Vaud region, this singular artist exemplifies both rare perseverance and raw talent beyond conventional academic paths. Twice rejected by the photography school in Vevey (1981 and 1982), he began by opening a studio in Lausanne, endured bankruptcy, trained in Paris, and eventually settled in New York. There, he has photographed some of the most emblematic figures of our time: Michelle Obama, Julia Roberts, Martin Scorsese, and Rihanna, to name a few. His portraits have graced the covers of prestigious publications such as *The New York Times*, *National Geographic*, *TIME*, *Fortune*, *Life*, and *Esquire*, among many others.

In his personal projects—especially *Document* (published by Steidl)—Leutwyler creates portraits of historical figures through the objects they once owned. This unique approach, now his signature, is also at the heart of the *Guitar Portraits* series.



A perfect match: a work tailored for a legendary location

As is typical of Images Vevey's approach, this installation was specifically designed for its exhibition site. In this project, Leutwyler's work naturally resonates with Times Square, a dynamic crossroads of visual and sonic experiences, and the very epicentre of the city where his career took flight. While the full series includes nearly 800 guitars photographed in studio, ten have been selected for this installation—those of Paul McCartney, Bono, The Edge, Janis Joplin, Bob Marley, Deacon John, Jimi Hendrix, and also Prince, Bob Dylan, and Bo Diddley, all three of whom gave memorable performances at the Montreux Jazz Festival.

A strategic collaboration to promote the Riviera

This unique collaboration between Biennale Images Vevey, the Montreux Jazz Festival, Montreux-Vevey Tourisme, and Switzerland Tourism reflects a shared goal: to promote Swiss creativity on an international scale and to highlight the expertise of both institutions. By combining photography and music—two cultural hallmarks of the Vaud Riviera—this project enjoys exceptional two-week visibility in one of the most visited locations on the planet. Through this initiative, two renowned organisations known for their innovation and hospitality unite to celebrate creativity and affirm their region's identity.



About Henry Leutwyler

Born in 1961 in Lenzburg (Switzerland), Henry Leutwyler is an Italian-Swiss photographer currently based in Manhattan. His unconventional path and deep commitment to the photographic medium have led him to develop a body of work that blends portraiture and still life, with each image capturing the essence of a person or object. His series are regularly featured in top-tier media outlets and exhibited internationally. He also collaborates with major brands such as Balenciaga, Nike, Issey Miyake, Tiffany & Co., Shiseido, and Birkenstock. His work was showcased at Biennale Images Vevey in both 2018 and 2024.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

GUITAR PORTRAITS

A series by Henry Leutwyler presented by Biennale Images Vevey and the Montreux Jazz Festival.

- Artist: Henry Leutwyler
- Title: *Guitar Portraits*
- Artistic direction: Stefano Stoll/Images Vevey
- Display period: 12 – 25 May 2025 (two weeks)
- Location: Times Square, New York (corner of 46th Street and 7th Avenue)
- Frequency: Twice per hour, at hh:02 and hh:32, 24/7
- Installation size: 18 stories tall (approx. 55 metres) / 790 m²
- A co-production by Images Vevey and Montreux Jazz Festival,
in partnership with Switzerland Tourism and Montreux-Vevey Tourisme

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IMAGES
VEVEY

PHOTOS (GUITAR PORTRAITS)

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INSTALLATION VIEWS (TIMES SQUARE–12.05.2025)

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BIENNALE IMAGES VEVEY

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PRESS CONTACT MONTREUX JAZZ FESTIVAL

EDUARDO MENDEZ

Avenue des Alpes 80b
1820 Montreux, Switzerland
presse@mjf.ch
T : +41 21 966 45 16

PRESS CONTACT IMAGES VEVEY

AMANDINE MARCHAND

Chemin du Verger 10
1800 Vevey, Switzerland
presse@images.ch
T : +41 21 922 48 54
M : +41 79 887 93 34