

JR

Eye to the World

June 4 – July 3, 2021
6 Burlington Gardens
London

Opening Day:
June 4, 2021, 10 AM – 8 PM
London Gallery Weekend



Tehachapi

June 4 – August 21, 2021
540 West 25th Street
New York



Top to bottom: JR, *The Chronicles of New York City, Domino Park, USA*, 2020 © JR, courtesy Pace Gallery; JR, *Tehachapi, Daytime, Triptych, U.S.A.*, 2019 © JR, courtesy Pace Gallery

Pace is delighted to present two exhibitions of leading contemporary artist, JR—*JR: Eye to the World* in London, and *JR: Tehachapi* in New York. Marking the gallery's first London exhibition with the artist, *JR: Eye to the World* will open on June 4 on the occasion of London Gallery Weekend.

JR's practice is rooted in his deep commitment to collaborating with individuals and communities alike. His work is characterised by large-scale photographic interventions in urban environments that address cultural and political issues, often with an emphasis on social justice. Each portrait holds a multitude of stories as JR expertly balances the macroscopic with the microscopic, the individual experience with the universal. An extensive online catalogue of accompanying videos, images and texts will be found via the exhibition pages on the Pace website to coincide with the exhibition opening.

Bringing together artworks from several significant bodies of work, *JR: Eye to the World* explores JR's unique view of humanity as he transcends borders, politics, and cultural identity through the camera lens. This exhibition coincides with the artist's largest solo museum show to date, *JR: Chronicles*, opening this June at Saatchi Gallery, London. Saatchi Gallery will feature JR's most iconic works from the last fifteen years, expanding from the recent showcase in Brooklyn Museum, New York.

JR's ongoing global project, *The Wrinkles of the City*, shines a spotlight on the overlooked, be it a crumbling building or an elderly person. His interest is in the marks left behind by lived experience. In *The Wrinkles of the City, Istanbul, Ali Kamil & Sukran Kadakal, Pasted palimpsest, Turkey* (2015), JR captures an intimate portrait of an elderly fisherman and his wife embracing with their eyes closed, aged hands reaching for one another: a testament to the city's history and the citizens who built it. The title of this piece reveals that the portrait is in fact a palimpsest, a ghostly imprint, beneath which an unknown, hidden image exists, inviting viewer's imagination and hinting at the secrets of a city. In other works, such as *The Wrinkles of the City, Action in Shanghai, Wu Zheng Zhu, Chine* (2010) and *The Wrinkles of the City, La Havana, Mercedes Décalo Rodríguez, (artwork by JR, project by JR & José Parlá) Cuba* (2012), JR pasted the portraits onto dilapidated walls in Shanghai and Havana, actively connecting the citizens with their surroundings, a comment on the enduring strength of both people and architecture in the face of rapid change. Presented in dialogue with one another, the portraits that make up *The Wrinkles of the City*, despite disparate countries and stories, pay tribute to the communities that shape their cities.

JR's photographic work gives voice and visibility to forgotten or erased communities. His interest in the relationship between public and private spaces informs his ideas surrounding walls and borders, examining their impact on access and control. The ongoing migrant crisis has been a driving influence for JR. *Migrants, Coeur, Quadrichromie, Jordanie* (2018), captures an aerial image of Syrian refugee children gathered in a loose heart shaped formation in a camp in Jordan: a poetic reminder of the humanity of individuals no matter how far away.

The use of everyday papier-mâché materials and techniques borrowed from commercial billboard practices is emblematic of JR's egalitarian approach to art making. In 2019, JR and 400 volunteers descended upon the Louvre's courtyard to create *JR au Louvre et le Secret de la Grande Pyramide*. Made of 2000 strips of paper at 10 meters each, this major work created the illusion of an underground cave beneath the iconic glass pyramid built by IM Pei. Over the ensuing days and weeks, the fragile paper shredded under foot and took on new meaning. In the accompanying video, JR comments 'At this point, people are not sure what's the work, what's not the work, where the picture is, if it's beautiful or not. That's what art is about, it's when you question.' Provoking ingrained expectations is paramount to JR's practice, as he states, 'You come to the Louvre expecting a work of art to be hanging on a wall and it's not, it's on the ground and it blows away.'

In parallel with the exhibition in London, Pace in New York will also display work from JR's recent project in Tehachapi, California. An installation from JR's *Tehachapi* series including photographic works, a wall pasting, and a video will be presented in the Library at 540 West 25th Street. In 2019 JR began a series of projects with inmates at the maximum-security prison in the Californian mountains. One aspect of the project included JR photographing the inmates, recording their stories, and collaborating with them to paste their portraits in the prison yard, which

resulted in the triptych *Tehachapi, Daytime, Triptych, U.S.A.* (2019), on view in New York. In 2020 he returned to the prison to enlist the inmates in a new project: to wheat paste a black and white photograph of the bottom half of the Tehachapi Mountains on the inside of the prison's high walls. In *Tehachapi, Mountain, February 7, 2020, 6.48p.m., U.S.A.* (2020), on view in London, JR captures where the mountain top perfectly aligns with the pasted image in a fleeting moment of calm as the sun sets behind the mountains and a prisoner runs across a deserted basketball court. Here, JR's signature anamorphosis technique explores the interplay of reality and illusion, expansion and confinement.

JR (b. 1983, France) exhibits freely in the streets of the world, catching the attention of people who are not typical museum visitors. He creates "Pervasive Art" that spreads uninvited on the buildings of Paris, the favelas in Rio, the separation wall in the Middle-East or the border between the US and Mexico. JR received the TED Prize in 2011, after which he launched his Inside Out project, an international participatory art project that allows people worldwide to get their picture taken and paste it in public spaces to support an idea and share their experience. In 2013, JR presented his first museum retrospective in the Watari Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo and the Contemporary Arts Center of Cincinnati, followed by Museum Frieder Burda in Baden-Baden in 2014 and the HOCA Foundation in Hong-Kong in 2015. In 2016, he was invited by the Louvre to create a site-specific artwork where he made the famous Louvre pyramid disappear through a surprising anamorphosis. He has additionally directed short movies including *Les Bosquets*, 2014 and *ELLIS*, 2015 starring Robert De Niro as well as feature documentaries including *Faces, Places*, 2017 co-directed with the French filmmaker Agnès Varda and nominated for the Academy Awards in 2018. In fall 2018, JR partnered with TIME to photograph and film 245 Americans in an effort to capture the full scope of the nation's gun debate in one mural. In 2018, JR held his first major solo exhibition in a French institution at Maison Européenne de la Photographie in Paris, France. A landmark survey exhibition, *JR: Chronicles* was held at the Brooklyn Museum, New York in 2019-2020, which will now open in London's Saatchi Gallery on 4 June – 3 October, 2021.

Pace is a leading international art gallery representing some of the most influential contemporary artists and estates from the past century, holding decades-long relationships with Alexander Calder, Jean Dubuffet, Barbara Hepworth, Agnes Martin, Louise Nevelson, and Mark Rothko. Pace enjoys a unique U.S. heritage spanning East and West coasts through its early support of artists central to the Abstract Expressionist and Light and Space movements.

Since its founding by Arne Glimcher in 1960, Pace has developed a distinguished legacy as an artist-first gallery that mounts seminal historical and contemporary exhibitions. Under the current leadership of President and CEO Marc Glimcher, Pace continues to support its artists and share their visionary work with audiences worldwide by remaining at the forefront of innovation. Now in its seventh decade, the gallery advances its mission through a robust global program—comprising exhibitions, artist projects, public installations, institutional collaborations, performances, and interdisciplinary projects. Pace has a legacy in art bookmaking and has published over five hundred titles in close collaboration with artists, with a focus on original scholarship and on introducing new voices to the art historical canon. The gallery has also spearheaded exploration into the intersection of art and technology through new

business models, exhibition interpretation tools, and representation of artists engaging with technology.

Today, Pace has nine locations worldwide including London, Geneva, a strong foothold in Palo Alto, and two galleries in New York—its headquarters at 540 West 25th Street, which welcomed almost 120,000 visitors and programmed 20 shows in its first six months and an adjacent 8,000 sq. ft. exhibition space at 510 West 25th Street. Pace was one of the first international galleries to establish outposts in Asia, where it operates permanent gallery spaces in Hong Kong and Seoul, as well as an office and viewing room in Beijing. In 2020, Pace opened temporary exhibition spaces in East Hampton and Palm Beach, with continued programming on a seasonal basis. In fall 2021, Pace will continue to expand its European presence with the opening of a larger gallery space in London.

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