

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**May 9, 2013**



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**TIMES SQUARE ARTS BRINGS JR'S GLOBAL INITIATIVE *INSIDE OUT* TO A GIANT BILLBOARD IN THE CROSSROADS OF THE WORLD**

**Witkoff Group/Maefield Development Joint Venture Donated the Billboard to the Times Square Alliance, Allowing JR's *INSIDE OUT PROJECT* to Take Over Times Square**



Photo by Marc Azoulay

**(May 9, 2013, NEW YORK)** – Times Square Arts, the public arts program of the Times Square Alliance, is pleased to announce that the **Witkoff Group/Maefield Development Joint Venture** has donated the giant billboard on its building in Times Square to French artist JR's global initiative **INSIDE OUT PROJECT**, a large-scale participatory art project he started in 2011, and which he brought to Times Square last month. The installation coincides with [NYCxD](#), New York City's inaugural citywide event to showcase and promote design of all disciplines.

The 100-foot-high by 140-foot-long billboard at 701 Seventh Avenue (at 47<sup>th</sup> Street), which wraps around the building, now features nearly 500 black-and-white self-portraits of New Yorkers and tourists that were overlaid on a backdrop designed by JR and printed as 3'X4' posters. The self-portraits were taken in a specially designed photo booth stationed in Times Square as part of JR's [INSIDE OUT NEW YORK CITY](#) project, which launched in the Crossroads of the World on

April 22 and runs through May 10. As part of the project, the self-portraits have been pasted on the ground in Duffy Square in the center of Times Square or in the home community of the portrait's subject. The goal of the project is to allow each portrait-taker to express through his or her face a message to the world.

**Tim Tompkins, President of the Times Square Alliance**, said: "Times Square's billboards have long reflected American society generally – its desires and ambitions and its commercial obsessions. With JR's *INSIDE OUT*, the billboards are now reflecting American society in a different, more precise way: hundreds of human faces, with hundreds of personal expressions, projecting the diversity of this great city."

**Scott Alper, Principal of the Witkoff Group LLC**, added: "Times Square has moved far beyond a space just to visit. It is now a place to stay, shop, work, and live that surpasses the premier city destinations of the world. The urban experience, design, art, and culture advocated by the Times Square Alliance are essential to the ever-expanding life of Times Square and we at the Witkoff Group/Maefield Joint Venture believe in its mission. This installation by French artist JR is an opportunity to bring public art at an urban scale to the world in an important week for New York."

"The 701 Project is a catalyst development for Times Square, bringing the design, brand and investment attention it deserves. The first project of this magnitude in 25 years directly on the Square, 701 will meaningfully contribute to the making of a world class place for all New Yorkers and their guests," said **Paul Boardman of Maefield Development**.

In October of 2012, Maefield Development, Infinity Urban Century, The Witkoff Group and New Valley, an investment unit of Vector Group LTD (NYSE: VGR), announced that they acquired the \$430 million Times Square Gateway Center development site. The purchase clears the way for construction of a 340,000 square-foot, 36-story, multi-use development that will anchor the northern end of Times Square, with a new retail experience, a hotel tower, and the nation's largest single LED screen. When fully complete in three years, the \$800 million project will feature 130,000 square feet of best-in-class multi-story retail space facing the Square, a 24,000 square-foot state-of-the-art LED sign wrapping around its façade at 100 feet of height, a dramatic rooftop and entertainment venue overlooking the Square, and a world-class 500-room hotel tower.

In addition to the *INSIDE OUT NEW YORK CITY* photo booth truck and billboard installation, JR is also the focus of May's [\*Midnight Moment\*](#), the nightly digital art gallery on the electronic billboards of Times Square from 11:57 to midnight. *Midnight Moment* is a monthly presentation of the **Times Square Advertising Coalition (TSAC)** and **Times Square Arts**. The short film, JR's first digital pasting, is a mashup of *INSIDE OUT*'s global art actions and uses footage from the documentary film, *INSIDE OUT: THE PEOPLE'S ART PROJECT*, which premiered at the Tribeca Film Festival on April 20<sup>th</sup>. The three-minute film specially made for the Times Square screens is showing nightly at 11:57 pm throughout the month of May.

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**Times Square Arts, the public arts program of the Times Square Alliance**, presents leading contemporary art and performances in multiple forms and media to more than 400,000 daily visitors to New York City's Times Square, making it one of the highest profile public arts programs in the United States. Since its inception, Times Square Arts has featured works by a diverse group of more than four dozen prominent and emerging artists. Working in partnership with cultural institutions and festivals, the program is further supported by Rockefeller Brothers Fund and Rockefeller Foundation's Cultural Innovation Fund, which works to spur and support cultural innovation in New York City's creative sector. Visit [www.TimesSquareNYC.org/arts](http://www.TimesSquareNYC.org/arts) for more information. Follow us on Twitter:

**The Witkoff Group** is a fully integrated real estate investment firm that owns a diverse portfolio of commercial real estate assets in the US. Founded by real estate investor Steve Witkoff, the firm specializes in acquiring undervalued properties in key central business district locations. The Witkoff Group joined forces with New Valley, LLC, the real estate investment subsidiary of Vector Group Ltd. The company owns a 50% ownership interest in Douglas Elliman Realty and is seeking to acquire additional operating companies. It also holds investments in several significant real estate projects in California and New York.