

From: Times Square Alliance

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For Immediate Release

**Times Square Alliance Announces Jean Cooney
as Director of Times Square Arts**

New York, N.Y. May 2, 2019 – The Times Square Alliance announced today the appointment of Jean Cooney, the current Deputy Director of Creative Time, as the Director of Times Square Arts. Cooney will be responsible for overseeing the Alliance’s public art program, following 7 years at Creative Time, where she played a lead role in the organization’s major artist commissions, public programming, engagement initiatives, and cultural partnerships.

Times Square Arts, the public art program of the Times Square Alliance, collaborates with contemporary artists and cultural institutions to experiment and engage with one of the world’s most iconic urban places using the Square’s electronic billboards, public plazas, vacant lots, commercial venues, and the Alliance’s own online landscape. Times Square Arts has collaborated with over 150 artists since 2010, producing and presenting projects by leading contemporary artists including Laurie Anderson, Nick Cave, Mel Chin, Yoko Ono, Tania Bruguera, Wangechi Mutu, and Pipilotti Rist, and emerging artists such as RaFia and Virginia Lee Montgomery. Times Square Arts has partnered with major cultural institutions, performing arts organizations, and commercial galleries, including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the New Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Performa, Public Art Fund, Electronic Arts Intermix, The Armory Show, Paula Cooper Gallery, and Lehmann Maupin.

Tim Tompkins, President of the Times Square Alliance, said, “The Alliance’s aspirations for the second decade of its public art program will only be enhanced by Jean’s talent and passion and her experience shaping one of the world’s leading public art entities, Creative Time. Not only did my memory of Creative Time’s installations on 42nd street in the 1990s inspire the creation of our arts program 15 years later, Creative Time’s continued engagement with both New York’s diverse cultural community and the key issues of our time reflect the direction we want our program to go. Jean brings extensive experience in producing and presenting significant works of public art and related programming. I, Deputy Director of Public Art Andrew Dinwiddie and the entire Alliance team look forward to working with her on new, creative, and challenging projects and partnerships.”

Jean Cooney, new Director of Times Square Arts, said, “I am thrilled to take on the unique opportunity of presenting public art in one of New York City’s most iconic, history-rich, kinetic, and complicated spaces with Times Square Arts. I could not imagine a more exciting platform than Times Square for public interventions, civic engagement, and for artists to dream big, be playful, and dig into the most pressing issues of our ever-evolving cultural moment.”

“With her history of realizing artist's dream projects in NYC and beyond, Jean is uniquely well positioned to take on the complexities — and opportunities — of presenting art in Times Square, the most iconic public square in the world,” said Anne Pasternak, Brooklyn Museum’s Shelby White and Leon Levy Director.

“After playing such a critical role at Creative Time, joining Times Square’s public art program feels like a natural step forward. This emblematic city enclave couldn’t be in better hands!” said Elvira Dyangani Ose, Director, The Showroom, London.

“Jean’s commitment to artists and their projects is impressive. She has an incredible capacity to communicate with artists, connect with the often personal and idiosyncratic patterns of artistic thinking, and balance the idealistic desires of a concept with the pragmatics of its execution — all of which makes her a very trusted person, a remarkable curator, and someone artists truly want to work with,” said Charles Gaines, Artist.

“Jean has an incredible talent for working with artists and public art. Always positive and profound and smart — she was an exceptional project manager on my project *A Subtlety* with Creative Time with whom I had an enviably great experience. I have no doubt she will bring the same initiative to her position as Director of Times Square Arts, much to the benefit of artists and the vast community Times Square Arts reaches,” said Kara Walker, Artist.

Jean continues the innovative work of past Times Square Arts directors who have served since the program formed in 2008. Sherry Dobbin, Director of the program from 2012 – 2017 and currently Managing & Curatorial Director at Futurecity, said, “Jean Cooney's new leadership of Times Square Arts brings a history of producing seminal works with Creative Time that have activated cherished and forgotten places throughout greater New York City. These works have engaged great contemporary artists who delve deep into context to create seemingly simple moments that capture our brains and hearts simultaneously. Her sensitivity to unearth either theatrical or intimate presentation is exactly what Times Square demands: to best symbolize the brilliant authenticity of New York City as iconic global destination of limitless and continually surprising potential.”

“The Alliance’s dedicated arts program — unique among Business Improvement Districts — brings great artists and important cultural partners to the Crossroads of the World so they can respond to and alter our perceptions of Times Square in the most creative ways. I was honored to participate in the selection process for a new director of the arts program and see Jean as a leader who will bring innovative thinking as well as

new collaborators while building upon an already thriving and strong foundation,” said Ellen Albert, Vice-Chair of the Alliance Board and a member of the Times Square Arts Advisory Committee.

Jean Cooney spent 7 years at Creative Time as Project Manager, Director of Public Projects and, most recently, Deputy Director, playing a lead role in the organization’s major artist commissions, the Creative Time Summit, public programming and engagement initiatives, and cultural partnerships. During her tenure, Jean was central to some of Creative Time’s most iconic public projects, including Nick Cave’s *HEARD•NY* in Grand Central Terminal, Kara Walker’s *A Subtlety* at the former Domino Sugar factory, and Duke Riley’s *Fly By Night* at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. She has worked with some of the leading contemporary artists of our time, including Nick Cave, Kara Walker, Sophie Calle, Simone Leigh, Pedro Reyes, Phil Collins, Xenobia Bailey, Marc Bamuthi Joseph, Trevor Paglen, and Suzanne Lacy.

In the spirit of Times Square Arts’ commitment to forging great cultural partnerships, Jean brings a history of doing just that, bringing her history of working with a diverse range of arts institutions and social justice organizations, including the Brooklyn Museum, New York Public Library, MTA Arts for Transit, Weeksville Heritage Center, the Fortune Society; and in New York City’s most iconic spaces, including Central Park, Grand Central Terminal, Green-Wood Cemetery, the Brooklyn Navy Yard, and the Brooklyn Army Terminal; as well as abroad at the Venice Biennial and Art Basel.

Jean has extensive experience working with artists, communities, and city agencies to stage public projects addressing some of the most complex and timely issues of our current social and political landscape, including work related to race, gender, the criminal justice system, public health, immigration, and environmental justice. Her production expertise spans a diverse range of artistic mediums, including performance, large-scale sculpture, participatory installation, video, and publications; and she has worked with artists’ projects that used unconventional materials and modes of presentation — including sugar, pigeons, boats, an ice cream truck, a haunted house, a school-turned-nightclub, a radical medical clinic, sandcastles, and a gravesite.

Jean holds a Master’s degree in Visual Arts Administration from New York University, and a B.A. in International Relations from Boston University.

About Times Square Alliance

The Times Square Alliance works to improve and promote Times Square — cultivating the creativity, energy, and edge that have made the area an icon of entertainment, culture, and urban life for over a century. Founded in 1992, the Alliance keeps the neighborhood clean and safe, promotes local businesses, manages area improvements, and produces major annual events including New Year’s Eve, Solstice in

Times Square, and Taste of Times Square. As the custodians of Times Square, the Alliance works every day to improve the quality of life for the neighborhood residents and businesses while driving economic growth in New York City. TimesSquareNYC.org

About Times Square Arts

Times Square Arts, the public art program of the **Times Square Alliance**, **collaborates with contemporary artists and cultural institutions to experiment and engage with one of the world's most iconic urban places.** Through the Square's electronic billboards, public plazas, vacant areas, and popular venues, and the Alliance's own online landscape, Times Square Arts invites leading contemporary creators to help the public see Times Square in new ways. Times Square has always been a place of risk, innovation, and creativity, and the Arts Program ensures these qualities remain central to the district's unique identity. Generous support of Times Square Arts is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Arts; the Rockefeller Brothers Fund; the National Endowment for the Arts; the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; and public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council. Visit TSq.org/Arts for more information. Follow us on Instagram at [@TSqArts](https://www.instagram.com/TSqArts).