

MUSEUM FRIEDER BURDA

Press Release

Exhibitions 2014

JR

March 1–June 29, 2014



The French artist JR (*1983) is one of the most innovative representatives of contemporary art on the international scene. He lives and works in Paris, whereby he consciously keeps his true identity a secret. He applies his oversized black-and-white photographs in the form of monumental posters to buildings, stairways, and walls worldwide. JR thus works in a wide variety of places and in different cultural and historical contexts. He makes the architecture and culture of a city the theme of his works. This is expressed in the faces of the people whom JR takes close-up photographs of with the use of a 28mm lens. Based on this idea, the artist has carried out large-scale projects in Europe, North America, South America, Africa, and Asia, including at Times Square in New York and in Marseille, the European Capital of Culture 2013, always with a sociocritical approach and with reference to those being portrayed in terms of form and content.

“My art does not change the world, but I hope it inspires people to change how they look at the world and at other people,” says JR. His work is demanding, “I only have to think about the logistics!” But more than anything else, it is a lot of fun. The most wonderful moment in the life of an artist: “When we paste a new poster onto a wall!” This is what the artist has to say about his work.

The Museum Frieder Burda is focusing on various ongoing projects by JR. These include *FACE 2 FACE* and *WRINKLES OF THE CITY*, documented with the aid of photographs and videos by the artist. In the case of *INSIDE OUT*, visitors can have their portraits taken in a photo booth and in doing so become part of the staging in the museum. And *UNFRAMED BADEN-BADEN*, a large-scale project in Baden-Baden’s urban space, addresses the theme of German-French history and the two countries’ friendship.

On JR’s Work

JR’s most important motivation is interaction with other people. His works raise questions about freedom and identity and in how far art can change people’s perception. However, his creative actionism also draws attention to injustices in the slums of Africa or Brazil. Characteristic of JR’s art are the stories he tells with his photomontages and his talent for bringing together isolated worlds and turning this into a festive event.

Equally characteristic is how JR candidly approaches others, sparks their enthusiasm, and produces a type of art that does not involve them in an abstract way but genuinely affects them. While one or the other project may fail, his delight in discovering and experimenting knows no limitations. JR creates relationships. He is a conductor who lends a face to “anonymous” existences or forgotten stories and is outfitted with extraordinary creativity. JR subsequently processes his artistic projects in public space with the aid of various media.

JR at the Museum Frieder Burda

The Museum Frieder Burda is focusing on the following projects. The photographs and videos on display open up a retrospective view of JR's artistic development up to the present.

PORTRAIT OF A GENERATION

In 2006, the banlieues of Paris are shaken by unrest. JR takes photographs of youths and puts up posters with their portraits at night in the posh Marais district with the help of friends. Middle-class Paris is shocked to now be looking these “gangsters” directly in the eye, who furthermore introduce themselves by name. The city administration later legalizes the action and invites JR to put additional motifs from *Portrait of a Generation* on public buildings.

FACE 2 FACE

In 2007 JR takes pictures of Israelis and Palestinians with the same professions and puts up posters featuring enormous close-ups of their faces side by side along the West Bank separation barrier. The message is obvious: the hostile groups cannot be distinguished on the basis of their facial expression. One or the other has to smile when JR comments on the project: as an Israeli, how can he explain the portrait of a Palestinian on the wall of his house to his family and his friends?



WOMEN ARE HEROES

2008–10 In 2008, JR ventures into the oldest slum in Rio de Janeiro, Morro da Providência, with an expensive Leica camera around his neck and a bold plan in his mind: he wants to lend a face to those who otherwise have to remain anonymous: everyday heroes, such as the women of Morro da Providência. He wants to bring art into this life-threatening place that is firmly in control of drug gangs. He pastes posters on the shacks that are the height of the wall—black-and-white photographs of eyes and faces, close-ups of women from the favela.

The settings for *Woman Are Heroes* are, besides Rio de Janeiro, cities and villages in India, Cambodia, Kenya, and Sierra Leone. Places that are normally only good for shocking reports in the media. JR and his small team of aids also have to survive dangerous situations. Yet the project is ultimately successful, thanks to the “power of art,” says JR. It opened doors and hearts—an uplifting experience for the photographer and those he took pictures of.



JR's first artistic film, *Women are Heroes*, a portrait of women in the twenty-first century, was nominated in the category of Caméra d'Or at the Festival de Cannes 2010. It initially screened in French cinemas. JR spends the money it takes in for new projects and for "following-up" on old ones: he establishes a cultural center in Morro da Providência, for example, in which children can practice being "favela photographers."

WRINKLES OF THE CITY, Berlin

Wrinkles of the City documents encounters JR has with older inhabitants of big cities that have undergone enormous change since the end of World War I. The artist establishes a relationship between the faces of the "elderly" and the fragmented architecture of the city marked by the scars of its history, economic expansion, and sociocultural transformation. In large-format portraits pasted onto the walls of buildings, JR shows the wrinkles and furrows in these faces as signs of the time, as traces of life that are indissolubly associated with the city's history.



INSIDE OUT

2011 JR wins the TED Prize (the 2007 award winner was Bill Clinton), which includes \$100,000 in prize money, for his creative visions to change the world. He uses the prize money to carry out a new, worldwide photo project with which he wants to turn the world inside out. Anyone can participate: one need only send a black-and-white portrait to www.insideoutproject.net. Posters are made out of the portraits and then returned to those who sent them in, who like JR can paste them to the walls and roofs of buildings in their own communities. More than 160,000 people have participated in *INSIDE OUT* to date. With this project, JR succeeded—the first artist ever to do so—in pasting posters to the entire surface of Time Square in the heart of New York. A photo booth will be installed in the Museum Frieder Burda. Visitors can have their portraits taken and become part of the staging at the museum.

UNFRAMED

2010 JR's *Unframed* project places photographs from private photo albums or municipal archives into a new context. Collages will be on display in Baden-Baden's urban space that address the rapprochement and friendship between Germany and France.


Curator of the exhibition: Patricia Kamp

Baden-Baden, November 2013

Museum Frieder Burda

Lichtentaler Allee 8b, 76530 Baden-Baden, Germany, www.museum-frieder-burda.de
Tel: 07221/39898-0, Fax: 07221/39898-30

Opening hours: Tuesday through Sunday 10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m., closed on Mondays
(except on holidays)

 Visit us on facebook.

Additional information and image material:

www.museum-frieder-burda.de under “Presse”

You require the following in order to download photographs:

User: presse, password: 22102004

Press contact:

Kathrin Luz

+49 (0)171 3102472

presse@museum-frieder-burda.de



In Focus—The Collection

March 1–June 29, 2014

Parallel to the exhibition *JR*, a showcase exhibition featuring German Expressionists from the Collection Museum Burda will be on display in the museum's mezzanine. This is in response to the large number of visitor requests to also be able to view works from the collection. In the future, we will present centerpieces from the collection, beginning with German Expressionism. The decision to begin with the Expressionist part of the collection was no accident—the Collection Frieder Burda has its roots in Expressionism. At the heart of the collector's interest in art is his fascination with and enthusiasm for color and the emotional means of expression of painting, which is exemplified by the Expressionists.

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On JR's Work in Baden-Baden's Urban Space

German-French Encounters and Friendships in Baden-Baden

In 2012, the European Union received the Nobel Peace Prize. In its statement, the committee expressly underscored the German-French reconciliation after World War II as an outstanding result of European integration: "Today, war between Germany and France is unthinkable." In the process of rapprochement, even enormous setbacks could be overcome thanks to visionary politicians such as Charles de Gaulle, Konrad Adenauer, Robert Schuman, and Jean Monnet. Yet the German and French people did not wait for big politics in order to approach one another. Off the political stage, it was above all encounters between people as well as personal involvement and network initiatives that advanced partnerships and ultimately led to the reconciliation of what were once archenemies.

Based on the history of Baden-Baden with its French past, the project **UNFRAMED** aims to commemorate what has been achieved and encourage a future in which the networks of civil society, personal involvement, and the courage to raise one's own voice are perhaps more important than ever before. In view of the numerous areas of conflict in the world, for which the photo artist JR raises awareness with his projects, the history of the German-French friendship is exemplary of never giving up hope for peace.

JR—Appeal to the Citizens of Baden-Baden to Participate in UNFRAMED

The artist appeals to all of the citizens of the city of Baden-Baden and its immediate surroundings to assemble pictures and memories that give an account of occurrences in Baden-Baden. Personal photographs are being sought that tell stories of reconciliation and the growing German-French friendship from 1940 to 1970, independent of the political events of the time. The artist will use private snapshots and photographs from the municipal archive as source material for his large-format black-and-white collages and documentations in urban space.

The following options are available for submitting your image material, including your personal story and your complete contact information:

- You may personally bring it to the museum during the regular opening hours (Tuesday through Sunday 10.00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.);
- send it by mail to the Museum Frieder Burda, Keyword "JR," Lichtentaler Allee 8 b, 76530 Baden-Baden, Germany;
- send it via email to JR@museum-frieder-burda.de; or
- upload it to the Museum Frieder Burda's facebook page.

The artist reserves the right to make a selection from among the submitted material. Additional information about JR is available at www.jr-art.net as well as from the Museum Frieder Burda: Tel.: 07221 39898-0.

The Artist JR



- 1983 Born in France
- 2006 Hôtel de Ville, Paris (solo exhibition)
11 Spring, Manhattan, New York (group exhibition)
Project in Wuppertal (solo exhibition)
Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris (solo exhibition)
Espace des Blancs Manteaux, Paris (group exhibition)
- 2007 Venice Biennale (group exhibition)
Foam – Photography Museum, Amsterdam
Les Rencontres d'Arles, France
Artitud, Berlin (group exhibition)
- 2008 TATE Modern Museum, London (group exhibition)
Rath Museum, Geneva (solo exhibition)
Women Are Heroes, project in Brussels (solo exhibition)
Los Surcos de la Ciudad, project in Cartagena, Spain
(2009 Les Rencontres d'Arles, Arles (group exhibition))
Projekt in Île Saint Louis, Louis-Philippe Bridge, Pavillon de l'Arsenal,
Paris (solo exhibition)
Casa França Brasil e Arcos da Lapa, Rio de Janeiro (solo exhibition)
- 2010 Women Are Heroes, Cannes Film Festival, France
Contemporary Art Biennale, Shanghai (group exhibition)
18Gallery – Magda Danysz, Shanghai (solo exhibition)
Musée de l'Elysée/Festival Images Vevey, Switzerland (solo exhibition)
MCASD, San Diego (group exhibition)
Galerie Springmann, Düsseldorf (solo exhibition)
Lazinc, Los Angeles (solo exhibition)
- 2011 JR receives the TED Prize
UNESCO Prix du Jeune Artiste for the intercultural dialogue between
Arabian and Western cultures
The film *Women Are Heroes* is shown in French cinemas
MOCA, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles
- 2012 *Unframed* project
The Wrinkles of the City project
Inside Out project