

Paris, December 13, 2024

**40 years after Christo and Jeanne-Claude realized *The Pont Neuf Wrapped* in Paris, JR dreams of a monumental project to pay tribute to the artists**



**In September 2025, Paris will celebrate 40 years since Christo and Jeanne-Claude transformed the city's iconic Pont Neuf into a monumental work of art.** From September 22 to October 5, 1985, the oldest bridge in Paris was wrapped in 41,800 square meters of fabric, secured with 13 kilometers of rope and 12 tons of steel cables, thanks to the expertise of 12 engineers and 300 specialized workers who worked with the artists.

*"I wanted to transform it, to turn it from an architectural object, an object of inspiration for artists, to an art object itself.",* Christo explained at the time. *"I wanted it to become a sculpture for the first time, but an ephemeral one".*

The project, conceived by Christo and Jeanne-Claude in 1975, required a decade of technical planning and negotiations with authorities before coming to life. Over a two-week period, **three million visitors** experienced [\*The Pont Neuf Wrapped\*](#), free to interpret its meaning in their own way—a principle central to Christo and Jeanne-Claude's artistic vision.

**To mark the 40th anniversary of *The Pont Neuf Wrapped*, the artist JR in collaboration with the Christo and Jeanne-Claude Foundation, plans to unveil *Projet Pont Neuf*, an immersive installation inspired by the artist couple's legacy. Aiming to open in September 2025, for two weeks, the Pont Neuf will be transformed into a cave in the heart of Paris. Designed to be admired both day and night, JR envisions large rock formations temporarily bridging the right and left banks of the river Seine.**

JR's vision emphasizes the origins of Paris' iconic architecture, inspired by the quarries from which the city's stones were extracted. As the Seine becomes swimmable again and nature reclaims its

place in the urban landscape, *Projet Pont Neuf* will juxtapose the raw and untamed with the refined elegance of Paris, creating a dialogue between past and present.

*"I'm very inspired by the artistic vision of Christo and Jeanne-Claude, and I share their idea that the mission of art is to make the public think", JR explains. "The debate that a monumental project in the public space can provoke is of equal value to its artistic realization. Art is a transformation, and a way of renewing the way we look at the world around us. Through the dream of Projet Pont Neuf, this is what I hope to make possible from Paris".*

Over the past months, **the *Projet Pont Neuf* has been presented to the Mayor of Paris, who has given it her support.** *"In 1985, I was fascinated by Christo and Jeanne-Claude's wrapping of the Pont Neuf. From the Pont des Arts, I had observed this impressive artwork from afar, before approaching and finally walking this metamorphosed monument. It was an unforgettable moment of poetry and beauty. We were rediscovering the bridges and the majesty of the river of Paris,"* recalls Anne Hidalgo. ***"What a wonderful idea to revive this artistic gesture thanks to JR's universe and immense talent! I'm delighted with this gift to Paris and all those who love it. This time, we'll be able to observe the work walking, by bike or strolling along the banks of the Seine: the Pont Neuf has remained the same, but Paris has changed a lot."***

Over the coming months, JR and his team, supported by the Christo and Jeanne-Claude Foundation, will continue to thoughtfully plan and work with local officials on *Projet Pont Neuf*. The goal is to offer Parisians and visitors the opportunity to experience a new monumental artwork, which both pays tribute to *The Pont Neuf Wrapped* and reinvents the oldest bridge in Paris. The project will be funded privately, not by government sources.

*"For Christo and Jeanne-Claude, the permission for The Pont Neuf Wrapped was one of the most difficult of all the projects they completed,"* says Vladimir Yavachev, Christo's nephew and director of projects for the artists. ***"It's really beautiful to see how much Paris has increased its commitment to public art in the past 40 years, as we could measure during L'Arc de Triomphe, Wrapped. Knowing JR's dedication to public art, he's an ideal artist for this tribute to Christo and Jeanne-Claude and I want to thank Paris for continuing to be a bold cultural leader."***

*The first visuals of Projet Pont Neuf by JR as well as past drawings, collages and photos of Christo and Jeanne-Claude's The Pont Neuf Wrapped, can be downloaded [on this press space](#).*

### **2025 Anniversary Year**

2025 will also mark the 90th anniversary of Christo and Jeanne-Claude's birth, both born on June 13, 1935, as well as **key anniversaries of two other iconic projects realized by the artists:** the 20th anniversary of [The Gates](#) in New York in February and the 30th anniversary of [Wrapped Reichstag](#) in Berlin in June.

Next February, the 20th anniversary of *The Gates* will be celebrated in New York with [a series of special events](#). Starting February 12, a **large-scale augmented reality experience** will allow visitors to relive a section of *The Gates* in Central Park accessible through the Bloomberg Connects app. At the same time, [Christo and Jeanne-Claude: The Gates and Unrealized Projects for New York City](#) will open at **The Shed**, showcasing *The Gates* and other projects the artist couple envisioned for their beloved city.

### **About Christo and Jeanne-Claude**

Christo and Jeanne-Claude were born on the same day: June 13, 1935; he in Gabrovo, Bulgaria, and she in Casablanca, Morocco. Jeanne-Claude passed away in 2009, and Christo died in 2020, both in New York City, where they had moved in 1964. Christo and Jeanne-Claude realized monumental projects around the world, including [Wrapped Coast](#), *One Million Square Feet*, *Little Bay*, Sydney, 1968–69; [Running Fence](#), Sonoma and Marin Counties, California, 1972–76; [Surrounded Islands](#), Biscayne Bay, Greater Miami, Florida, 1980–83; [The Pont Neuf Wrapped](#), Paris, 1975–85; [The Umbrellas](#), Japan– USA, 1984–91; [Wrapped Reichstag](#), Berlin, 1971–95; [The Gates](#), Central Park, New York City, 1979–2005; [The Floating Piers](#), Lake Iseo, Italy, 2014–16; [The London Mastaba](#), Serpentine Lake, Hyde Park, 2016–18; and [L'Arc de Triomphe, Wrapped](#), Paris, 1961–2021.

Christo and Jeanne-Claude worked together since their first outdoor temporary work of art: *Stacked Oil Barrels and Dockside Packages*, Cologne Harbor, Germany, 1961. Before he escaped to the West, Christo studied painting, sculpture, architecture, and decorative arts at the National Academy of Art in Sofia for four years. All early works, such as *Wrapped Cans*, *Wrapped Oil Barrels*, *Packages*, *Wrapped Objects*, and *Store Fronts*, as well as all preparatory drawings, collages, and scale models are works by Christo only. All public projects and indoor installations, both realized and unrealized, are collaborative works by Christo and Jeanne-Claude.

Christo and Jeanne-Claude met in Paris in 1958, and three monumental works marked their special relationship with the French capital: [Wall of Oil Barrels - The Iron Curtain](#), Rue Visconti, Paris, 1961–62; [The Pont Neuf Wrapped](#), Paris, 1975–85; and [L'Arc de Triomphe, Wrapped](#), Paris, 1961–2021. This last project was realized posthumously under the direction of Vladimir Yavachev, nephew and director of projects of Christo and Jeanne-Claude. During its sixteen-day presentation to the public, it attracted 6 million visitors, while 685 million people - one-twelfth of the world's population - experienced it via the media and social networks. Tourism to Paris also increased by 19.3% during the presentation.

### **About JR**

Through his monumental artworks, JR invites passers-by to question and reconsider their preconceptions. After his first project, [Portrait d'une Génération](#) (2004–06), which challenged the stereotypes surrounding youth from Parisian suburbs, his scope of action expanded rapidly. He

pasted portraits [of Israelis and Palestinians on both sides](#) of the separation wall (2007), the eyes of women [on train cars in Kibera](#), Kenya (2009), and erected a [giant child gazing across the border](#) between the United States and Mexico (2017). These unusually large-scale installations share the same mission: to amplify the voices of ordinary people and spark dialogue.

JR's artistic approach is both humanistic and unifying. From creating [a trompe-l'œil at the Louvre](#) with 400 volunteers (2019) to organizing a pasting project with incarcerated men in [a maximum-security prison in California](#) (2019), he strives to involve as many people as possible, with the goal of fostering mutual understanding and contributing to societal change. His global participatory art project [Inside Out](#) has already enabled more than 600,000 people to express themselves through large-scale black-and-white portraits.

JR's projects explore a variety of media and artistic practices. Among his most notable achievements: a [performance involving 154 dancers](#) on a thirty-meter-high scaffolding at the Palais Garnier in Paris (2023), the Oscar-nominated documentary *Visages, Villages*, co-directed with Agnès Varda (2017), and a video mural examining the issue of firearms in American society, featured on the [cover of Time magazine](#) (2018). He also creates works exhibited worldwide, including at the Venice Biennale (2022), the Brooklyn Museum (2019), the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2019), and the NGV Triennial (2020).

JR is represented by Perrotin, Galleria Continua, PACE, Nara Roesler, and Simon Studer.

### **Press contacts**

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