

# CAN ART CHANGE THE WORLD?

FOUNDATION

HISTORICAL  
REPORT  
2009-2024





An aerial photograph of a train passing through a densely packed slum. The train's side is covered in large-scale portraits of women. The surrounding area is filled with small, makeshift houses with corrugated metal roofs. People are visible walking along the dirt path next to the train.

**“EACH TIME I DO A  
PROJECT I WONDER...  
CAN ART CHANGE  
THE WORLD?”**

– Artist JR  
TED Talk, 2011



# CAN ART CHANGE THE WORLD?



## ABSOLUTELY.

We are building a future where anyone can use art to reimagine the world with joy, belonging, and shared humanity.

Inspired by the work and legacy of artist JR, the *Can Art Change the World?* Foundation harnesses the power of art to unite and support communities worldwide. We fund and create educational and artistic programs that nurture personal growth, promote community healing and incite social change through art.



# THE HISTORY OF THE CAN ART CHANGE THE WORLD? FOUNDATION

The *Can Art Change the World?* Foundation is a non-profit created by French artist JR to empower communities through art, culture and education. We were founded in 2009 with the intent to bring continuity to his projects by creating autonomous spaces and programs where communities can create, connect, and learn together.



28 Millimètres, Favela by night, *Women Are Heroes*, Action in Favela Morro da Providência, Rio de Janeiro, 2008

**2008**

*Women are Heroes*

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

In 2008, while creating his *Women Are Heroes* project in Brazil, JR developed deep relationships with the families of the Morro da Providência favela in Rio de Janeiro. As he neared the end of the project, he was eager to maintain creative connection with the community in a way that would outlast his pastings on the walls.



**CAN ART  
CHANGE  
THE WORLD?  
FOUNDATION**

**2010**

The Foundation was  
Incorporated in Europe

Our 501(c)(3) non-profit was founded to bring continuity to programming that was emerging organically from JR's projects.



Casa Amarela

**2009**

*Casa Amarela*

*Providencia was Opened*

With Brazilian photographer Maurício Hora, JR co-founded Casa Amarela Providência – the first program of the Foundation – a community center of Culture, Education and Arts for residents of all ages within the Morro da Providência territory. JR purchased a house at the top of the favela and, with the help of the community, painted it yellow, and it became Casa Amarela (The Yellow House).

**2011**

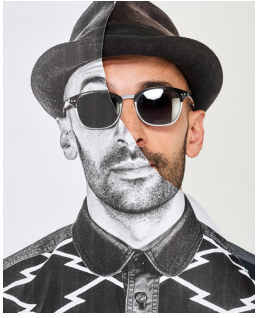
JR Won the TED Prize and the Inside Out Project was Launched

In 2011, JR won the TED Prize and officially proposed the question to the world, *Can Art Change the World?* JR used his achievement to launch the Inside Out Project, a participatory art platform that supports individuals and groups in making a statement by displaying large-scale black and white portraits in public spaces of meaning.



'What is the truth?' Photographer: Brendan McCleary, Melbourne, Australia, 2021





The *Can Art Change the World?* Foundation formed naturally from French artist JR's practice of creating monumental works of public art with communities around the globe.

He saw first hand how the act of creating together fosters dialogue, builds relationships, and empowers individuals to enact the change they want to see.

**CAN ART  
CHANGE  
THE  
WORLD?  
FOUNDATION**

**2018**

The Foundation was Incorporated in The United States



**2019**

Ecole Kourtrajmé, The Film School, was Founded  
The film school was founded by Ladj Ly in 2018 to support emerging artists, who have been marginalized, in cultivating their creative voices through more accessible education. In 2019, JR launched an arts and image section, supported by the Foundation.

**2007-2014**

*Women are Heroes, Kenya*

In October 2007, JR went to the Kibera slum in Nairobi, Kenya to photograph and interview the women who became the first participants in the *Women are Heroes* project. The choice of Kibera and this railway line was symbolic. During the post-election events of 2008, the rioters had ripped apart the rails. JR returned there in January 2009 and covered the whole train that travels through Kibera with the eyes of the women photographed.

With the help of the Foundation, 2000 square meters of rooftops were covered with photos of the eyes and faces of the women of Kibera, in Kenya. Most of the women had their own photos on their own rooftop and for the first time the material used is water resistant so that the photo itself would protect the fragile houses in the heavy rain season.



28 Millimetres, Rooftop view, Women Are Heroes, Action in Kibera Slum, Kenya, 2009.

**2018**

Le Refettorio Paris – A Social Restaurant was Opened

Refettorio Paris is an inspiring community kitchen located in the crypt of the church of la Madeleine, in Paris. Refettorio, a cultural project initiated by chef Massimo Bottura, offers a welcoming dinner time food service to people experiencing different social vulnerabilities or marginalization, transforming surplus ingredients – that would otherwise be wasted – into delicious meals. The Refettorio space in Paris was designed by JR. During the last two years, the Refettorio has expanded its activity to museum visits, twice a week, before dinner at the Refettorio.



Refettorio, Paris



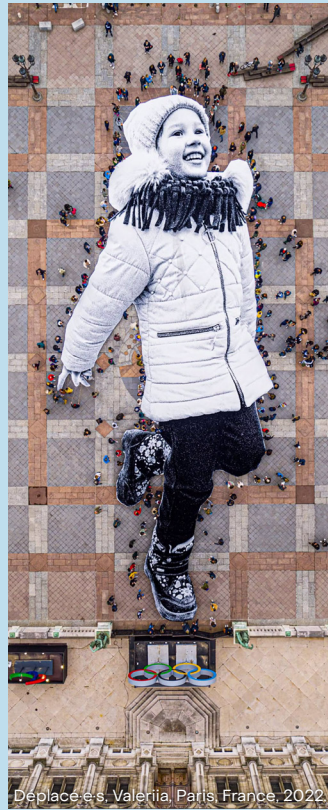


Aerial view of the pasting, The Yard, Tehachapi, California, USA 2019.

## 2019

### Tehachapi Correctional Institution Project

JR received permission to work in a maximum-security prison located in Tehachapi, California. JR and his team photographed incarcerated men and they were given a chance to tell their story in front of a camera for the world to hear. JR also photographed formerly incarcerated individuals, victims of harm and prison staff – collecting a total of forty-eight portraits and stories from the prison system for the project.



Déplacé-e-s, Valeriia, Paris, France, 2022.

## 2022

### Déplacé-e-s Project, Valeriia & Can Art Change the War?

In March of 2022, JR and his team walked across the border from Poland into Ukraine carrying a giant 45-meter-long rolled-up tarp with an image of five-year-old Valeriia – who was photographed crossing into Poland to seek refuge from the war in Ukraine.

Joined by one hundred volunteers, JR unfurled Valeriia's image in Lviv, Ukraine. With each person holding a section of the tarp, the community moved through the city lifting the young girl's image up to the sky..

Leaving Ukraine, JR saw firsthand how difficult it was for women and children to get to safety due to the long queues at the border. In response, he launched two NFTs of Valeriia to raise funds for Ukrainians fleeing their country. Through the Foundation, all of the proceeds went to creating a network that brought food, warmth, and comfort to the thousands of refugees at border crossings.

## 2018-2019

### The Gun Chronicles: A Story of America Project and Campaign

For *The Gun Chronicles: A Story of America*, JR worked with *Time* magazine and traveled to St Louis, Dallas and Washington, DC to meet with 245 representatives of a wide and complex spectrum of views on firearms in the United States. The video-mural was projected in dozens of museums and locations across the United States, with the aim of fostering conversations around this sensitive issue.



Integral mural, Gun Chronicles: A story of America, United States, 2018.

## 2021

### Collège Citoyen de France was Founded

Collège Citoyen de France is an institution that finds, develops, and supports tomorrow's public authorities. The Collège Citoyen de France was founded in 2021, with support from the Foundation, and teaches art and creation as a tool to educate future leaders.



## 2024

### A New Global Prison Art Program was Founded

Inspired by the Tehachapi project and accompanying documentary released in 2024, a new global prison art program was founded to utilize the work, methods and vision of JR to deliver transformative programming and educational experiences that create community, belonging and artistic storytelling in prisons around the world.



Pasting in the courtyard, The Yard, Tehachapi, California, United States, 2019. Photo: Marc Azoulay



# OUR PROGRAMS

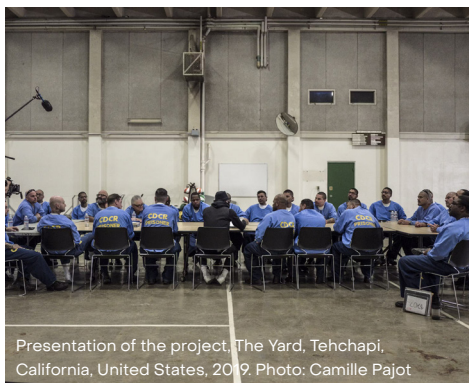
## A CLOSER LOOK

The *Can Art Change the World?* Foundation has been collaborating with communities since 2009. Today, our Foundation supports programs and initiatives that engage specific communities and mobilize the public by intertwining art forms such as photography, dance, cinema, gastronomy and more. Our work physically gathers people together to learn, connect, and create.

### A NEW GLOBAL PRISON ART PROGRAM

Inspired by JR's project in the Tehachapi Maximum Security Prison, and the *Tehachapi* documentary released by JR in 2024, a new program emerged for the *Can Art Change the World?* Foundation. A Global Prison Art Program uses educational and artistic programming to create opportunities for rehabilitation and healing for those in and connected to our world's criminal legal system.

This program was created to continue to utilize the work, methods and vision of JR to deliver transformative programming and educational experiences that create community, belonging and artistic storytelling in prisons around the world.



Presentation of the project, The Yard, Tehchapi, California, United States, 2019. Photo: Camille Pajot



First meeting with prisoners, The Yard, Tehchapi, California, United States, 2019. Photo: Camille Pajot



"IOP Tehachapi", Photographer: JR, Tehchapi, California, United States, 2019.

85% of incarcerated individuals who participated in structured art programs reported a positive impact on their emotional well-being and increased motivation to improve their lives post-incarceration. (The Prison Arts Coalition (2021).



Pasting in the courtyard, The Yard, Tehchapi, California, United States, 2019. Photo: Marc Azoulay



# INSIDE OUT

## THE INSIDE OUT PROJECT IS THE PEOPLE'S ART PROJECT.

As a program of the *Can Art Change the World?* Foundation, the Inside Out Project harnesses the power of art, storytelling, and community collaboration to amplify local voices, inspire social awareness and incite change in communities around the world.

The Inside Out Project is a tool for communities to turn their stories into art. The platform acts as a vehicle for people across the world, with different identities and perspectives, to share about diverse themes, issues and passions across the human experience.



Since 2011, more than **60% of all Inside Out Project Group Actions** around the world happen in education settings, with students from ages 3 to 21. As of today, Inside Out has collaborated with **over 544 schools**.



As of today, the Inside Out Project has been used by over **half a million participants — across 150 countries and territories** around the world — to create local change in communities, globally.

The Inside Out Project has reached every continent in the world, with over **2,500 Actions** created so far.





## CASA AMARELA IS A COMMUNITY CENTER OF CULTURE, EDUCATION AND ARTS FOR RESIDENTS OF ALL AGES WITHIN THE MORRO DA PROVIDÊNCIA TERRITORY.

As a program of the *Can Art Change the World?* Foundation, Casa Amarela cares for the whole person, and supports the holistic well-being, growth and healing of community members through a diverse set of arts-based, educational, wellness and culturally responsive programming – as well as territory and local culture appreciation initiatives.

In Rio's favelas, community art programs have decreased youth involvement in crime by 24%, giving them constructive alternatives (RioOnWatch, "Favela Arts Programs as a Tool for Social Transformation", 2018)



### 210 FAMILIES

in Morro da Providência impacted by Casa programming annually.

### 140 PARTICIPANTS

spend on average 25 hours per week at Casa Amarela.

### 20-25 PROGRAMS

run weekly

### 1200 PROGRAMS

run annually

"Here at Casa Amarela I feed myself, I fill my belly so I don't get hungry."

– Esmeralda Fernandes Setembrino, 6 years old



"Casa Amarela is an opportunity. It is an outlet. It is empowerment for women. Casa Amarela is having a good impact on the children. It is bringing prospects for the future – and security for our women. It is bringing knowledge, care and job opportunities."

– Jennifer Falcão da Silva, 37 years old, attends Casa Amarela at least 3 times per week



# AND, WE'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN...

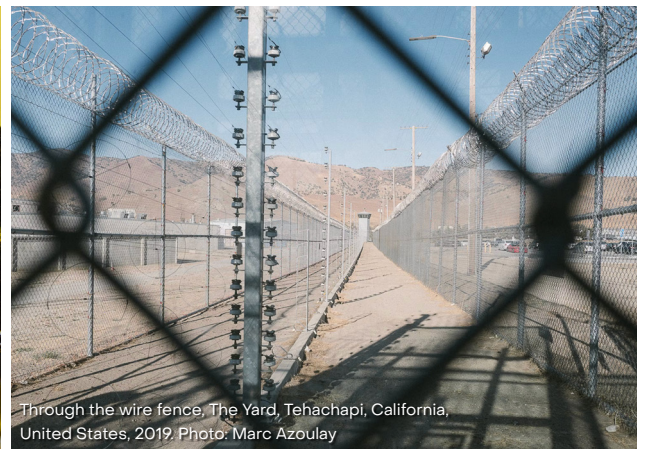
Our programs and initiatives harness the power of art to unite and support communities worldwide. Through public art, meals, health services, photography, dance and so much more, our educational and artistic programs nurture personal growth, promote community healing and incite social change.



"The Guardians of Stone and Daily Life," Group Leader, Odette van Rensburg, Harare, Zimbabwe, 2014



"Sassoon Dock," Photographer, Karan Kaul, Mumbai, India, 2017



Through the wire fence, The Yard, Tehachapi, California, United States, 2019. Photo: Marc Azoulay





28 Millimètres, Kids, Women Are Heroes, Action in Favela Morro da Providência, Rio de Janeiro, 2008.



## ABOUT JR

Founder of the *Can Art Change the World?* Foundation

“Technology, politics, business....they change the world. But, what about art? Can art change the world?”

–Artist JR, TED Talk, 2011

French artist JR creates monumental public art projects that inspire passersby to ask questions and confront their own perceptions. After his first major project *Portrait of a Generation* (2004–06), which challenged stereotypes of Parisian suburban youth, he began working internationally. Whether it be pasting the faces of Israeli and Palestinian people on both sides of the Separation Wall (2007), the eyes of women on train cars in Kibera, Kenya (2009), or a giant toddler peeking over the US–Mexico border fence (2017), JR’s larger-than-life installations amplify the stories of everyday people and inspire dialogue. From creating a

trompe-l’oeil at the Louvre with 400 volunteers (2019) to pasting alongside incarcerated men in a California maximum-security prison (2019–22), he seeks to involve everyone in the act of artistic creation, hoping to create conversations and drive social change. As of January 2024, his global participatory art project *Inside Out* has empowered more than half a million people to stand up for what they believe in through large-scale black-and-white portraits. A multimedia artist at his core, JR’s accomplishments include a performance with 154 dancers on thirty-meter-high scaffolding on the Palais Garnier in Paris (2023), the Academy Award-nominated documentary *Faces, Places* co-directed with Agnès Varda (2017), and a video mural exploring the issue of guns in the USA featured on the cover of *Time* magazine (2018). JR also has a rigorous studio art practice, creating gallery artworks that are exhibited internationally. He has had major retrospectives at the Brooklyn Museum (2019) and *Maison Européenne de la Photographie* (2018) as well as shown artworks and installations at the Venice Biennale (2022), the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2019), and the NGV Triennial (2020).



28 Millimètres, Train Passage 5, Women Are Heroes, Action in Kibera Slum, Kenya, 2009.






Aerial view, The Picnic, Tehachapi, California, 2019. Photo: JR



 [CanArtChangeTheWorld.net](http://CanArtChangeTheWorld.net)

 [CanArtChangeTheWorld.net/support](http://CanArtChangeTheWorld.net/support)

 [Hello@CanArtChangeTheWorld.net](mailto:Hello@CanArtChangeTheWorld.net)

11 Spring St, 1FL New York, NY 10012