

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST



Work by Mel Bochner. Courtesy of New York Media.

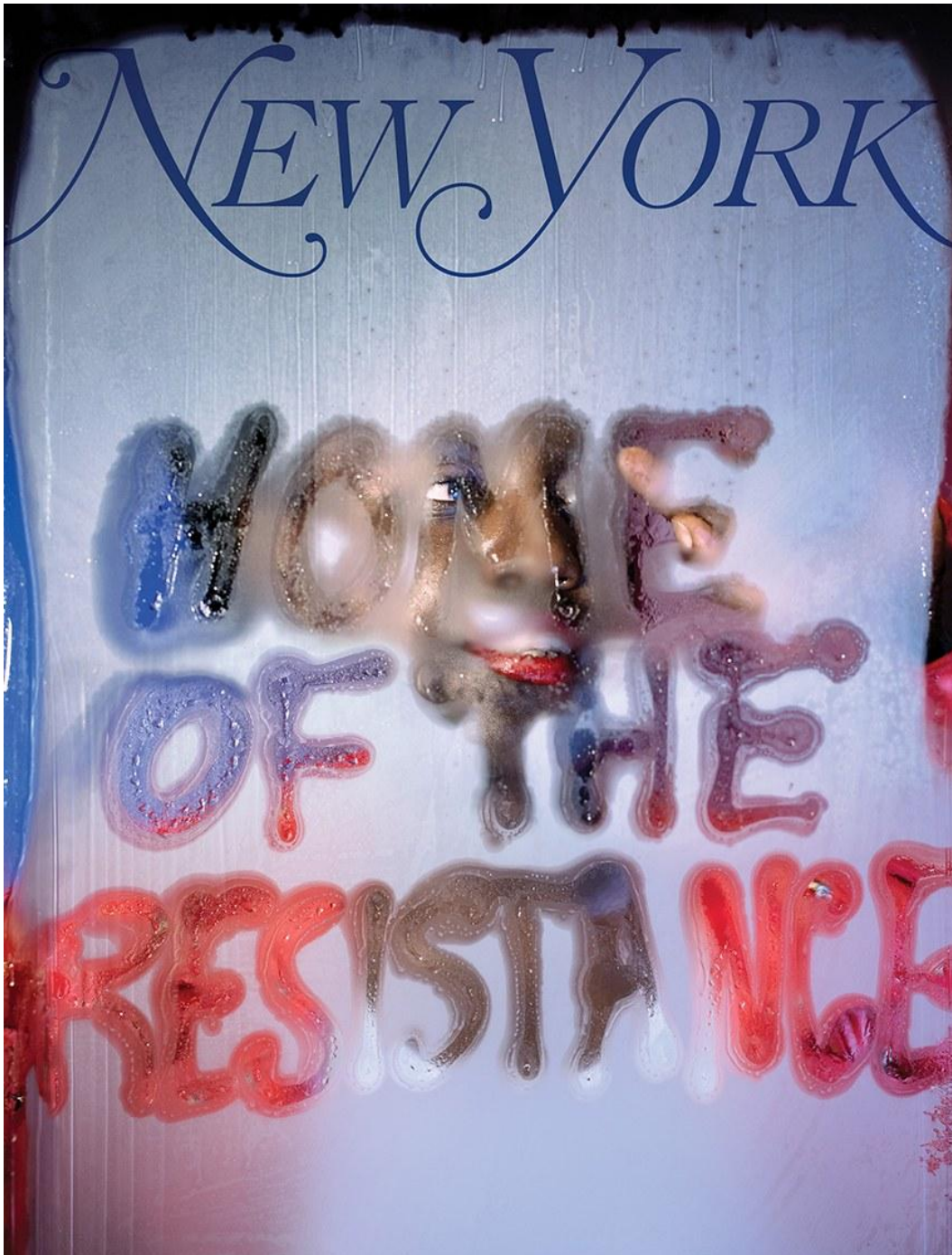
Yoko Ono, Mel Bochner, Marilyn Minter, and Other Top Artists Come Together for Yearlong Public Art Show

50 top artists designed covers for *New York* magazine that will be displayed
around New York City throughout the year

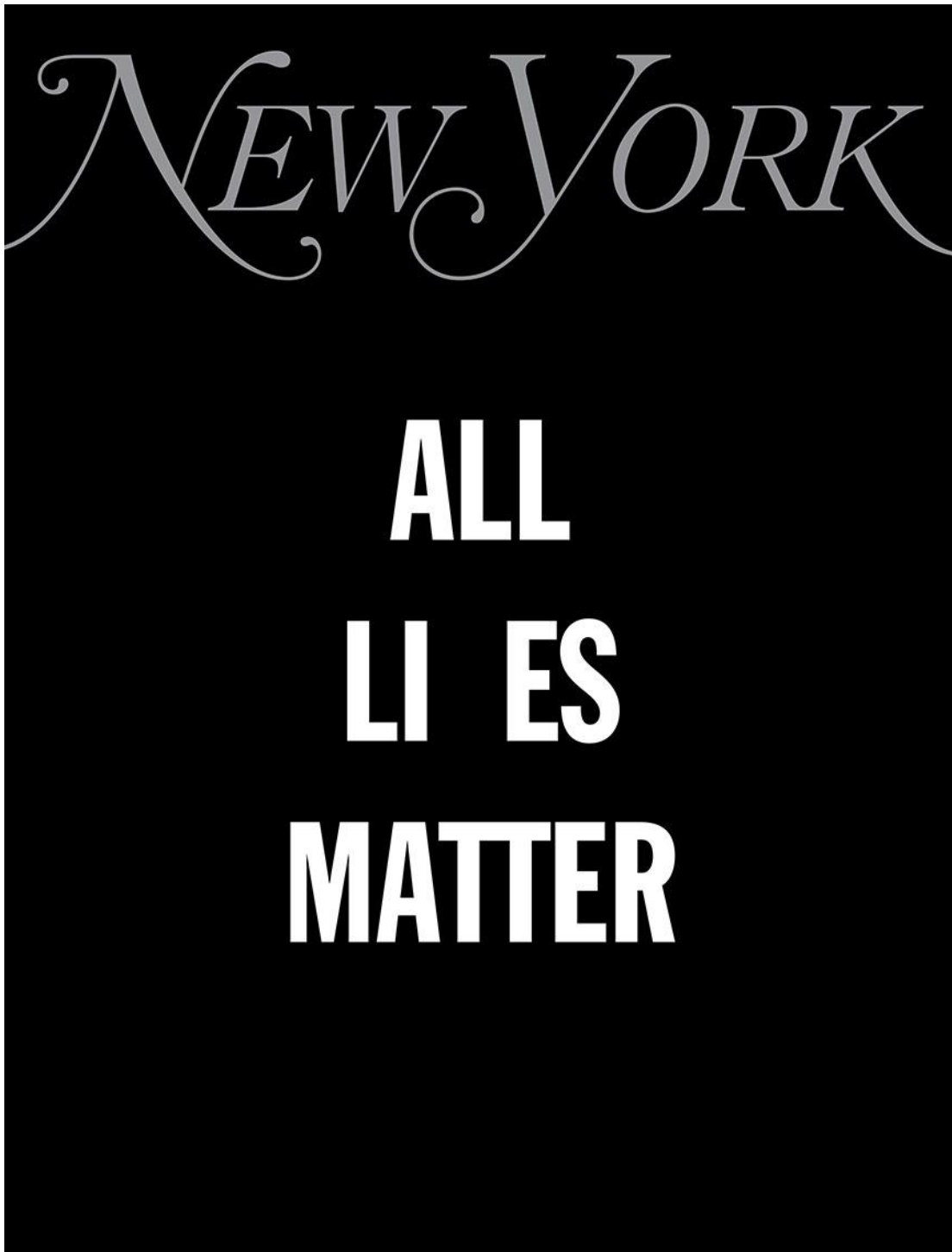
By Katherine McGrath

January 24, 2018

This past fall marked the start of *New York's* 50th anniversary, and to celebrate, the magazine is painting—well, plastering—the town. This week saw the kickoff of the year-long celebration, appropriately named "My New York," with a public art project featuring specially commissioned *New York* covers, created by 50 of the top artists working in New York City today. The covers, to be installed in stages throughout the year, will be displayed around town in a variety of formats and sizes, from wild postings on boarded-over construction sites and the sides of buildings to dive-bar bathrooms and public parks. "We looked for real estate, in the loosest sense of the word," says David Haskell, business and strategy editor for New York Media, "where we can put these covers and give people a momentary experience of surprise, pleasure, anxiety: all of the emotions that you hope to elicit from a public art project."



Marilyn Minter's *New York* cover.

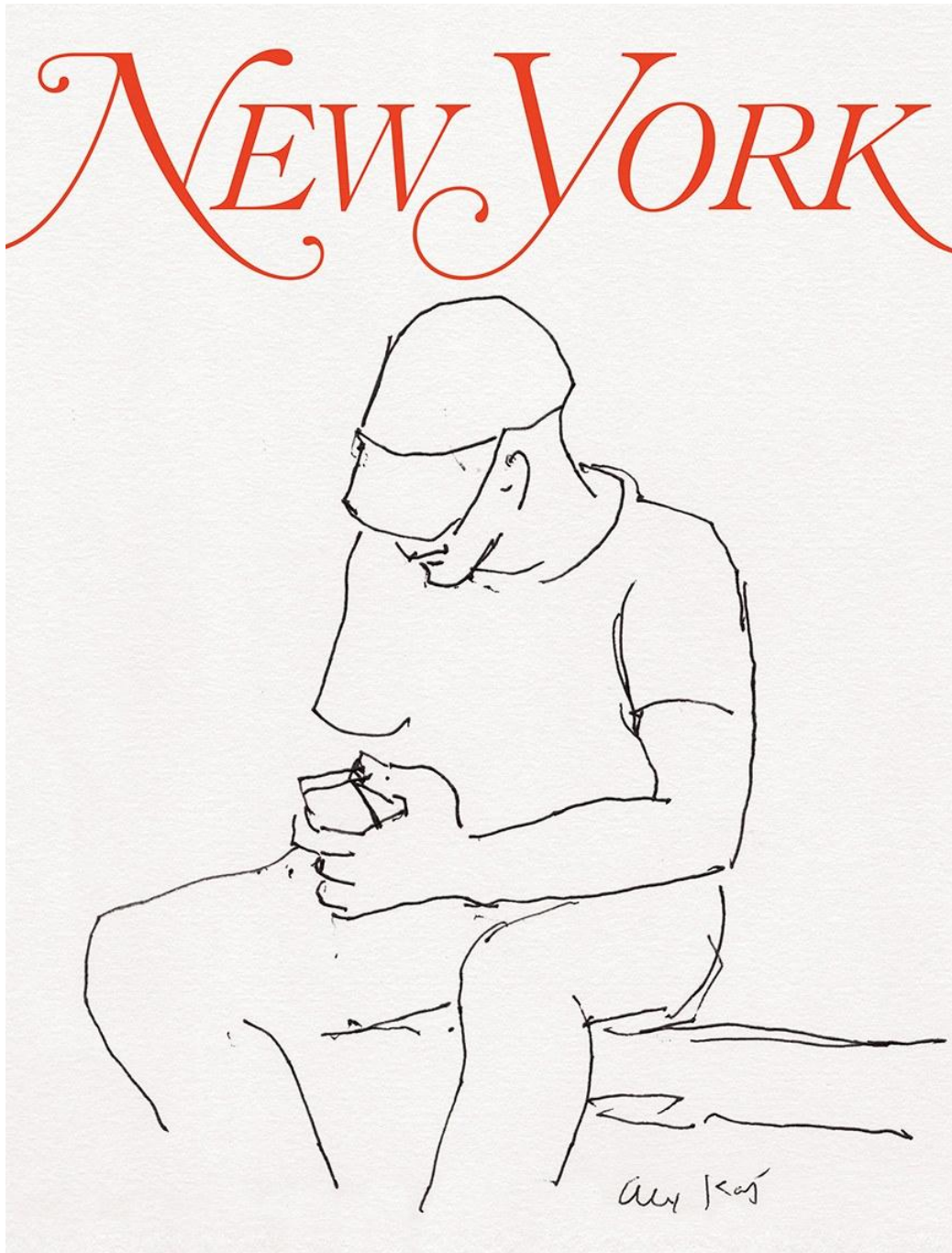


The artists were given one simple prompt: What does New York City look like to you right now?

Work by Hank Willis Thomas. Courtesy of New York Media.

The first eight covers, up now, feature work by Mel Bochner, Yoko Ono, Barbara Kruger, Rob Pruitt, Hank Willis Thomas, Alex Katz, John Giorno, and Marilyn Minter. Covers by Kerry James Marshall, Will Cotton, and Maurizio Cattelan, among other well-known New York artists, will be unveiled later in the year. (The artists receive a small honorarium, according to Haskell, and the bulk of the project is being funded by New York Media, although other sponsors are helping to fund aspects of the campaign.)

The project stemmed from a series of special covers Alex Katz created for the anniversary issue, for which the magazine asked him to revisit some of his work from earlier in his practice. Katz, now 90 years old, is perhaps best known for his brightly colored figurative and landscape paintings, but when he was a student at Cooper Union in the '40s, he created simple black-and-white sketches of his fellow passengers on the subway. To create a special anniversary issue cover, he revisited that practice, and the magazine was so taken by the resulting work that they expanded it into the collective public exhibition that it is today. The artists were given little direction save for a simple but useful prompt: Describe what the city looks like to you right now. The resulting work is a mix of politically and culturally oriented art that, together, reads as a visual love letter to the city.



Alex Katz's cover for the anniversary issue that gave way to the collective project. The magazine's editors asked him to revisit his prior practice of sketching subjects on the subway.

Work by Alex Katz. Courtesy of New York Media.

Artist cover contributions are not a new venture for the magazine; past issues have featured work by KAWS, Barbara Kruger, and others. But while the artists involved in "My New York" are of particular note to the New York art scene, Haskell stresses that the recognizable names are not the crux of the exhibition. "This isn't a project for the art world, this is a project for all of New York City," he tells *AD*. The culmination of the project will be a gallery show featuring all 50 covers, though the aim is to show the works in a space that doesn't traditionally function as an art gallery, so as not to alienate anyone who might otherwise feel intimidated. The covers are for meant for every New Yorker and visitor to experience and engage with, whether that's on tourist-heavy Fifth avenue between 46th and 47th streets, in the East Village on 10th Street between Avenues B and C, on the West Side's Clarkson between Hudson and Greenwich, or scattered throughout Brooklyn. The project will eventually populate all five boroughs.



Rob Pruitt's contemporary take on the classic "I Heart New York" logo.

The public art exhibition is just one of many installations, activations, and events that will make up the year-long "My New York" celebration, which will bring together the city's best writers, musicians, comedians, chefs, and filmmakers, among others, throughout 2018. While many of the additional projects have yet to be revealed, the collective art exhibition sets the visual tone. "The assemblage of all 50 [covers] could paint a pretty interesting portrait of what the New York artist community looks like right now," says Haskell.