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## **550 Madison Partners with Museum of the City of New York for New Exhibit Featuring Graffiti Artist Daze**

**‘Above Ground Midtown: MCNY x DAZE’ to be Featured at Landmarked Office Tower**

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**New York, May 8, 2025** – The Olayan Group and The Museum of the City of New York (MCNY) will collaborate on a new exhibition, *Above Ground Midtown: MCNY x DAZE*, that will feature two newly commissioned artworks by acclaimed artist Chris "DAZE" Ellis to be created and shown in the extraordinary retail space at 550 Madison.

The paintings by DAZE will be created onsite in public view in 550 Madison’s south retail space on the corner of 55th Street and Madison Avenue, which features soaring, 60-foot ceilings and windows on three sides. Presented in conjunction with *Above Ground: Art from the Martin Wong Graffiti Collection*, **currently on view at MCNY, 550 Madison will feature two large-scale paintings in which DAZE seeks to evoke the beautiful chaos of New York City, drawing on inspiration from the building and its adjacent public garden.**

*Above Ground Midtown: MCNY x DAZE* is at once inspired by and an extension of MCNY’s exhibition *Above Ground: Art from the Martin Wong Graffiti Collection*, which traces the evolution of graffiti art from its roots in the 1970s to its current recognition in galleries and museums worldwide. DAZE is a featured artist in this exhibition.

Daze, a New York City native, began his career painting subway cars in 1976 while attending the High School of Art and Design. He remains one of the few artists from that era to successfully transition from the streets to the studio and is represented by New York City’s PPOW Gallery.

“This collaboration enables us to present DAZE’s distinct work in a powerful and dramatic setting,” said Stephanie Hill Wilchfort, Ronay Menschel Director and President of MCNY. “The dynamic venue will underscore the significance of graffiti—an art form born in New York City—and its enduring impact on the city’s cultural landscape.”

550 Madison offers multiple retail options, including retail kiosks in the adjacent public garden and larger spaces on 55th and 56th streets. The exhibition in the 55th Street space will benefit from visual access to Madison Avenue, 55th Street, and The 550 Garden. Meanwhile, Simon Kim’s Gracious Hospitality Management, in collaboration with property owner The Olayan Group, will open a distinct, multi-concept, three-level dining destination in the 56th Street location. The collaboration with MCNY and

DAZE highlights the unique aspects and creative potential of the 55th Street retail space, which is currently available for lease.

### **About the Museum of the City of New York**

The country's first and largest city museum, the Museum of the City of New York fosters an understanding of the distinctive nature of urban life in the world's most influential metropolis. Through history, popular culture, and art, the Museum explores New York City's influence nationally and globally. Named the "Best Museum" in Time Out New York's "Best of the City 2021," MCNY holds a 750,000-object collection and hosts two permanent exhibitions, two immersive films, and four rotating exhibitions in its historic building at the top of Museum Mile. Learn more at [mcny.org](http://mcny.org).

### **About 550 Madison**

Designed by architects Philip Johnson and John Burgee, 550 Madison Avenue is one of the city's most recognizable architectural masterworks – a postmodern gem known for its distinctive “Chippendale” curved roof pediment and pink granite façade. The Olayan Group has led a comprehensive revitalization effort of this Landmarked, 850,000-square-foot office tower, including a new half-acre public garden, extraordinary tenant-only club-level amenity and wellness spaces, and extensive air quality and sustainability initiatives. The project transformed the single-tenant tower into a contemporary multi-tenant property that has attracted world-class tenants. Learn more about 550 Madison and its renovation at: [www.550madison.com](http://www.550madison.com).

### **About The Olayan Group**

The Olayan Group is a family-owned, multinational enterprise with an actively managed portfolio of international investments and diverse commercial and industrial operations. Originating in 1947, the Group today has offices in Vaduz, Athens, London, Luxembourg, Riyadh, Singapore and New York, where Olayan has had a continuous presence for more than 50 years. Investing both directly and in partnership with leading developers, the Group has a diverse real estate portfolio that includes commercial, residential, and mixed-use properties. Learn more about The Olayan Group at: [www.olayan.com](http://www.olayan.com).

### **About DAZE**

Chris “DAZE” Ellis, born in 1962 in New York City, began his artistic career painting subway cars in the mid-1970s while attending The High School of Art and Design. He quickly gained recognition and transitioned from the streets to galleries, with his first group exhibition in 1981 at the Mudd Club, followed by a solo show at Fashion Moda in the South Bronx. Over the years, his work has been exhibited internationally in cities such as Paris, Singapore, Florence, and Buenos Aires. His paintings have been shown in major venues like the Sidney Janis Gallery, Musée d'Art Moderne in Nice, and the Addison Gallery of American Art. His works are part of prominent collections including the Museum of the City of New York, the Whitney Museum, MoMA, and the Ludwig Museum in Germany.

In addition to his studio practice, DAZE has contributed to numerous public art projects and educational collaborations. These include murals in Hong Kong and Germany, a Creative Time commission in Coney Island, and consulting on Baz Luhrmann's *The Get Down*. Since 1994, he has also worked with students and communities around the world, from New York to Haiti and South Korea. A dedicated arts educator

and community artist, he regularly participates in programs like Leap Arts and Thrive Collective. Today, Daze continues to live and work in New York City, maintaining an influential presence in both the fine art world and public art scene. He is represented by PPOW Gallery, New York City.

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