

COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

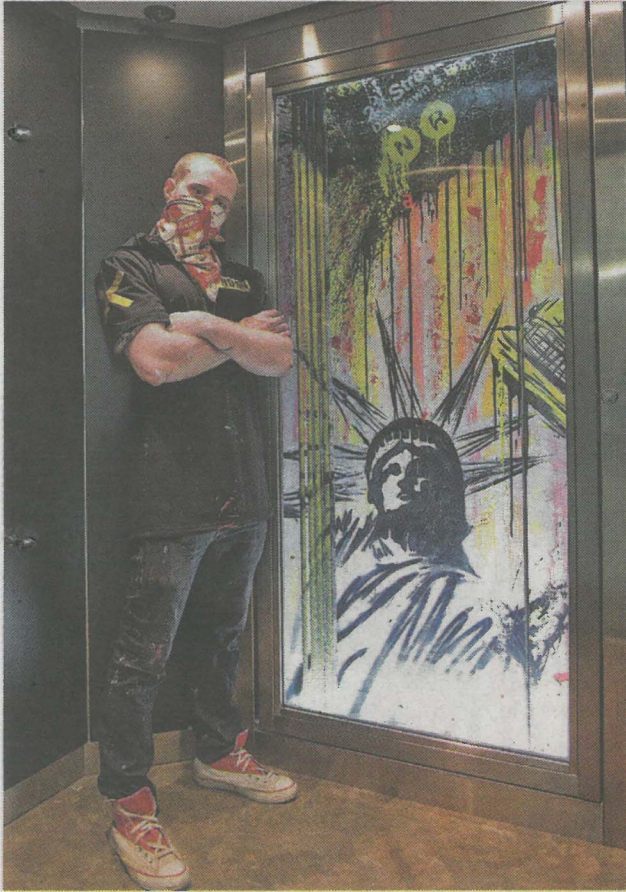
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New York Post, Tuesday, May 19, 2015

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GETTING SHAFTED

In the Flatiron, graffiti bandit turns elevators into art



ICONIC IMAGERY: Of his decision to depict Lady Liberty as part of his elevator shaft art series for a Flatiron office building, artist Skott Marsi, who always wears a bandana over his face in photos, says: "The Statue of Liberty is inspiring and represents the gateway to a new life for people from all over the world." He also included in the image the N and R subway sign, since it's the station closest to the buildings with the art, and a taxi: "If you show anyone in the world a yellow cab, I can't imagine they won't think New York."



MAD MEN: "'Taxi Driver' is a legendary New York movie with a legendary actor," says Marsi of his portrait of Robert De Niro as Travis Bickle. "The movie showed an underside to NYC, how it can be extreme, and how people can snap, which De Niro does so well." As for his decision to make the character's mohawk pink, "it reflects my inspiration from a piece Banksy did," he explains. "I use fluorescent colors as one of the main mediums for this project."



TO Z OR NOT TO Z: "Jay Z has had a major influence on my career," says Marsi. "He has conquered and endured so much with one goal in mind, and never quitting until that goal is reached. That's something I admire and respect in people. He has been relentless and successful in everything he has set his mind to do." Was it hard to choose which Jay Z persona to illustrate? Marsi answers, "The sunglasses are his style, though personally I think a Yankees hat is more iconic of Jay Z."

By LOIS WEISS

IT'S not where you'd expect a street artist to ply his trade, but painter Skott Marsi is bringing his graphic skills to Madison Square Park-area office buildings — transforming the elevator shafts into works of art.

As part of the renovations to several newly acquired and previously neglected buildings in the Flatiron District, Grant Greenspan, a principal of the Kaufman Organization,

hired the artist to make 19 W. 24th St., 13 W. 27th St. and 45 W. 27th St. even more friendly to the tech, advertising, media and Internet (so-called TAMI) tenants that have targeted Midtown South.

Greenspan won't let the art go to waste by leaving it out of sight, however, as specially designed, glass-walled elevators will reveal Marsi's work as they go through their daily ups and downs.

The fluorescent paint will also stand out as LEDs will light the entire shaft.



Grant Greenspan of Kaufman Organization



EAST MEETS WEST: The artist poses in front of one of his canvas graffiti works of King Kong at his solo show, "Pollock Like Banksy," at the Street Art Gallery in Dubai in 2014.

Says Greenspan: "Marsi's work embraces the legacy of the neighborhood, like one of his paintings at 45

W. 27th St. — a portrait of Al Capone — since it's a nod to the building's history as the Prohibition Enforce-

ment Headquarters."

Marsi, a Long Island native, now has a studio in Miami but is hanging here while he creates the unusual art. Those who are street art savvy may be familiar with his use of the beloved and stretchable green Gumby in several of his works.

To date, he has been commissioned by renowned pop star Christina Aguilera, and has showcased his art at exhibitions in Dubai, Miami, Beverly Hills and downtown LA.

When complete, the elevator shafts in the three, 12-story buildings will include 70 individual works and certainly make tenants take to staring without taking the stairs.



Michael Sofronski (4)

GODFATHER KNOWS BEST: Al Pacino as "The Godfather" has "dedication, power, loyalty and respect," says Marsi.

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