

# The Metro Section

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## Coming Soon: The Wax Menagerie

### Tussaud's Is Giving Times Square Something New to Gawk At

By GLENN COLLINS

Back in 1996, the issue wasn't all that complicated. If Madame Tussaud's of London brought its legendary wax museums to the Big Apple, exactly what would New Yorkers want to see?

But Manhattan focus groups provided answers that were underwhelming at best, said Arnold Tansley, the English director of the Tussaud's Group Ltd. Mr. Tansley would observe through a one-way mirror as city residents mumbled politely about seeing a mix of urban icons, historic figures, rock stars, politicians and sports legends. But few city residents in the focus groups had actually been to Tussaud's, only half had ever heard of it, and many said that the American wax museums they had seen were awfully cheesy.

Then Mr. Tansley would open a door and bring in Arnold Schwarzenegger.

O.K., it wasn't really Arnold. It was a life-size Tussaud wax sculpture dressed in a tight white T-shirt and slacks. It had cost \$50,000 and had taken six months to create.

"People were gob-smacked by the uncanny likeness, and the reaction was extraordinary," Mr. Tansley recalled. "They said things like, 'Look at the tiny veins,' and, 'Those eyes are really creepy.' And that's exactly the tremendous sense of excitement we're aiming to bring to New York City."

Yes, very much like the excitement Mr. Tansley will try to create next week: at a press conference outside Tussaud's in Times Square, Mayor Rudolph W. Giuliani will present to the world the \$50,000 wax, um, dummy for which he posed. (No, the first lady is not yet ready for her close-up with a wax sculptor.)

This is the beginning of a \$2.5 million publicity blitz for Madame Tussaud's New York. (In England, the surname is

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An artist from Madame Tussaud's applies the finishing touches to a model of a certain singer with blue eyes.



Visitors to Times Square will be able to rub elbows with Donald J. Trump, Al Roker and Larry King, or at least their wax facsimiles, when Madame Tussaud's opens this fall.