

JEFF KOONS

LA RÉTROSPECTIVE

26 NOVEMBER 2014 – 27 APRIL 2015

Over the last thirty five years, Jeff Koons has become one of the best-known and most controversial artists of the contemporary art scene.

A perceptive connoisseur of the art of his time and an enthusiastic admirer of the art of the past, he has honed an extraordinary oeuvre that has shaken the foundations of the art world, constantly challenging the critics and reappraising with perspicacity the concept of value. Encapsulating the American Dream of success, Koons is an acute observer of the world he lives in: he questions its iconic objects, challenges its codes and, in the manner of artists such as Salvador Dalí, turns the possibilities offered by the media to his advantage through his self-made persona.

Presented in the form of series, the art of Koons is above all an art

of representation which is rich with archetypes and familiar motifs, unashamedly drawn from mass culture. By playing on contrast, Koons succeeds in lending them a sense of grandeur by using traditional materials and cutting-edge technology. This comes across in works such as *Michael Jackson and Bubbles* (1988), in which the “King of Pop” is depicted in porcelain like that of the royal courts, or *Play-Doh* (1995-2008), a canvas depicting a pile of molding compound, meticulously hand-painted in a monumental format, which highlight the artist’s desire to renew with the classical tradition. Today, by integrating masterpieces of humanity in his series *Antiquity* and *Gazing Ball*, Jeff Koons is setting his sights on history. And in so doing he is shifting the goalposts of art itself.

Centre
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BIOGRAPHY

1955 Jeff Koons is born in York, Pennsylvania.

1963 He paints copies of Old Masters, which his father, Henry J. Koons, displays in his interior decoration store.

1972-1975 Koons studies at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore and then the School of Art Institute of Chicago, where he takes classes under Jim Nutt and Ed Paschke. After calling Salvador Dalí, Koons spends the day with him in New York.

1976-1977 Koons moves to New York, where he works at the Membership Desk at the MoMA, and becomes friends with a number of artists, including David Salle and Julian Schnabel. Influenced by the readymade, his first series, *Inflatables*, is composed of coloured inflatable toys, found in discount stores in downtown Manhattan. The artist displays them on mirrors, in a blend of Pop Art and Minimalism.

1979 Koons pursues his research with his ensemble *Pre-New*, the precursor of *The New* series. In order to break away from the playful appeal of his *Inflatables*, he turns his attention to domestic appliances. By associating them with fluorescent lights, he conjures up the Minimalist works of Dan Flavin. He works as a commodities broker on Wall Street to fund his artistic production.

1980 *The New*, the cornerstone of an artistic output that will henceforward be structured in series, is shown in the window of the New Museum of Contemporary Art in New York; this marks the artist's first public exhibition.

1983 The series *Equilibrium* heralds a new approach, with Koons producing several copies of metal replicas based on everyday objects. The series includes the famous *Equilibrium Tanks*, the result of his collaboration with Nobel Physics prize-winner Richard P. Feynman.

1985 The exhibition of the *Equilibrium* series in the New York gallery International with Monument provides a launch pad for his future career.

1986 With his series *Luxury and Degradation*, Koons explores the strategies of advertising. He has advertising posters for various brands of liquor reprinted on canvas and creates stainless steel replicas of these consumer-related objects. He shows *Statuary* at the gallery owned by Ileana Sonnabend, who is to represent him for the next twenty years. This series, which includes his signature work *Rabbit*, epitomises Koons's interest in popular culture.

1988 The *Banality* series, which features the famous porcelain sculpture *Michael Jackson and Bubbles*, reinforces an ongoing collaboration with master craftspeople. He promotes the series in four international art magazines by devising a set of advertising inserts in which he plays a starring role.

1990 At the Venice Biennial, Koons unveils the series *Made in Heaven*. The series places him centre-stage, alongside adult film star and Italian parliamentarian Ilona Staller, aka Cicciolina, to whom he is later briefly married.

1992 On the fringes of the Kassel Documenta, Koons installs *Puppy*, a forty-foot high floral sculpture, in front of Arolsen Castle in Hesse.

1994 Koons starts work on *Celebration*. This monumental series, which calls on highly ambitious methods of production, spans over twenty years. It includes a number of Koons's iconic works, such as *Balloon Dog*.

1997-1998 Galerie Jérôme de Noirmont holds Jeff Koons's first solo exhibition in Paris.

1999 Koons presents his light-hearted, playful series *Easyfun*, while his *Celebration* series is still in production. He begins using computer-aided design in his compositions.

2000 He fine-tunes this process with his series *Easyfun-Ethereal*. *Split-Rocker*, his new monumental floral sculpture, is installed in Avignon to coincide with the exhibition "La Beauté".

2001 Koons moves his studio from SoHo to Chelsea, where over one hundred assistants currently work.

2002 He marries Justine Wheeler.

2003 The sculptures in the *Popeye* series incorporate industrial elements and achieve unparalleled levels of illusion.

2004 The series *Hulk Elvis*, featuring no less than fifty canvases, marks an explosion in his pictorial output.

2005 Jeff Koons becomes a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

2007 Founding of The Koons Family Institute on International Law & Policy, which aims to combat global issues of child abduction and exploitation.

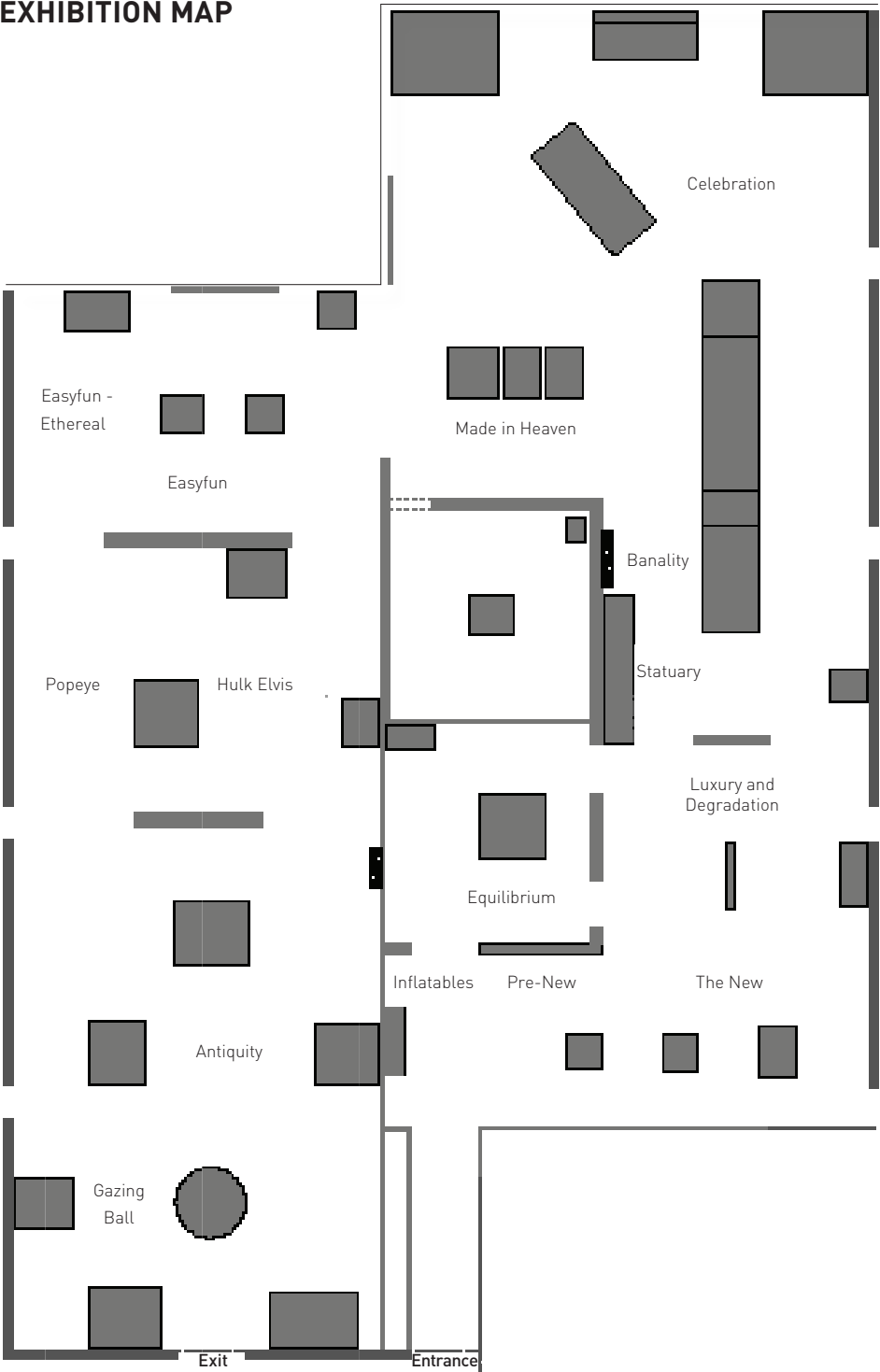
2008 Koons is invited to hold an exhibition within the Château de Versailles. The artist turns to classical sculpture for his series *Antiquity*.

2012 Koons's oeuvre is celebrated in several major exhibitions throughout Europe, including Basel and Frankfurt am Main.

2013 Jeff Koons exhibits simultaneously in two of the world's most influential galleries, Gagosian Gallery and David Zwirner, where he presents his latest series, *Gazing Ball*. Christie's sale of *Balloon Dog (Orange)* sets a new world record for a living artist.

2014 The monumental floral sculpture *Split-Rocker* is installed at Rockefeller Center in New York. The Whitney Museum of American Art, the Centre Pompidou and the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao feature a retrospective of Jeff Koons's oeuvre.

EXHIBITION MAP



EXHIBITION

EXHIBITION CURATOR

Scott Rothkopf, Nancy and Steve Crown
Family Curator and Associate
Director of Programs at
the Whitney Museum of American Art

CURATOR FOR THE EXHIBITION AT THE CENTRE POMPIDOU

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PUBLICATIONS

CATALOGUE

Editor
Scott Rothkopf
French edition supervised by
Bernard Blistène
316 pp., 340 colour ill. / €49.90

PORTFOLIO

Edited by Bernard Blistène
Texts : Julie Champion and Nicolas
Liucci-Goutnikov
French/English
160 pp., 100 colour ill. / €19

ALBUM

French/English
60 pp., 60 colour ill. / €9.90

KOONS FOR CHILDREN

Edited by Anne Weiss
24 pp., 24 colour ill. / €11.90

AROUND THE EXHIBITION

GUIDED TOURS

Saturdays at 11.30 a.m., Sundays
at 5.30 p.m. Wednesdays (except 24
December) at 7.00 p.m.

TALKS: SPOTLIGHT ON EXHIBITIONS

In the presence of the artist

Wednesday 26 November, at 7.00 p.m.

Made in Koons

Thursday 5 February, at 2.30 p.m.

CHILDREN'S WORKSHOPS

Saturdays 10-01 / 7-02 / 14, 28-03 /
11-04 / Sundays 11, 25-01 / 8, 15,
29-03 / 12-04 / Atelier des Enfants
Wonderland !
Aged 6-10 with their families. 2.30-4.30 p.m.
Hop ! Hop ! Hop !
Aged 2-5 with their families. 3.00-4.30 p.m.

TAILOR-MADE TOURS

Saturday 7 February
10.00 a.m. For the visually-impaired
Saturday 7 March
11.00 a.m. For the hard of hearing:

lip-reading tour
2.30 p.m. For the deaf: sign-language tour

AUDIOGUIDE

Languages: French, English, Spanish,
Italian, German.
Introduction by Bernard Blistène,
description and analysis by the authors of
the portfolio and comments by Jeff Koons
You can also discover 50 works from
the permanent collections, together
with an architectural tour of the
building.
On hire at the ticket office, level 0
Withdrawals at the Espace audioguide, level 0

INFORMATIONS

01 44 78 12 33

www.centrepompidou.fr

EXHIBITION OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

From 26 November 2014 to 27 April 2015
Galerie 1, level 6
Every day except Tuesdays, 11.00 a.m.
to 9.00 p.m.
Late night opening on Thursdays,
Fridays and Saturdays until 11.00 p.m.

PRICES

Access with

the "Museum & exhibitions" ticket

Valid the same day for one admission
to each area: the museum, all the
exhibitions and the View of Paris
€13; reduced price: €10
www.centrepompidou.fr/billetterie
Free with the annual pass
and for those under 18

TWITTER

#Koons

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