



Loopy, 1999, oil on canvas, 274.3 x 201.3 cm. Bill Bell Collection. Photo: Lawrence Beck



Bear and Policeman, 1988, polychromed wood, 215.9 x 109.2 x 94 cm. The Mugarbi Collection

I believe very much in desire. I don't really think in terms of high and low culture. I don't believe in kitsch. I don't even like that word because it implies looking down on something or someone. I believe in optimism and in liking things.

Jeff Koons, 2020

Cover: *Balloon Dog (Orange)*, 1994–2000, mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent colour coating, 307.5 x 363 x 114.5 cm. Photo: Tom Powel Imaging



JEFF KOONS

LOST IN AMERICA

21.11.2021
31.03.2022

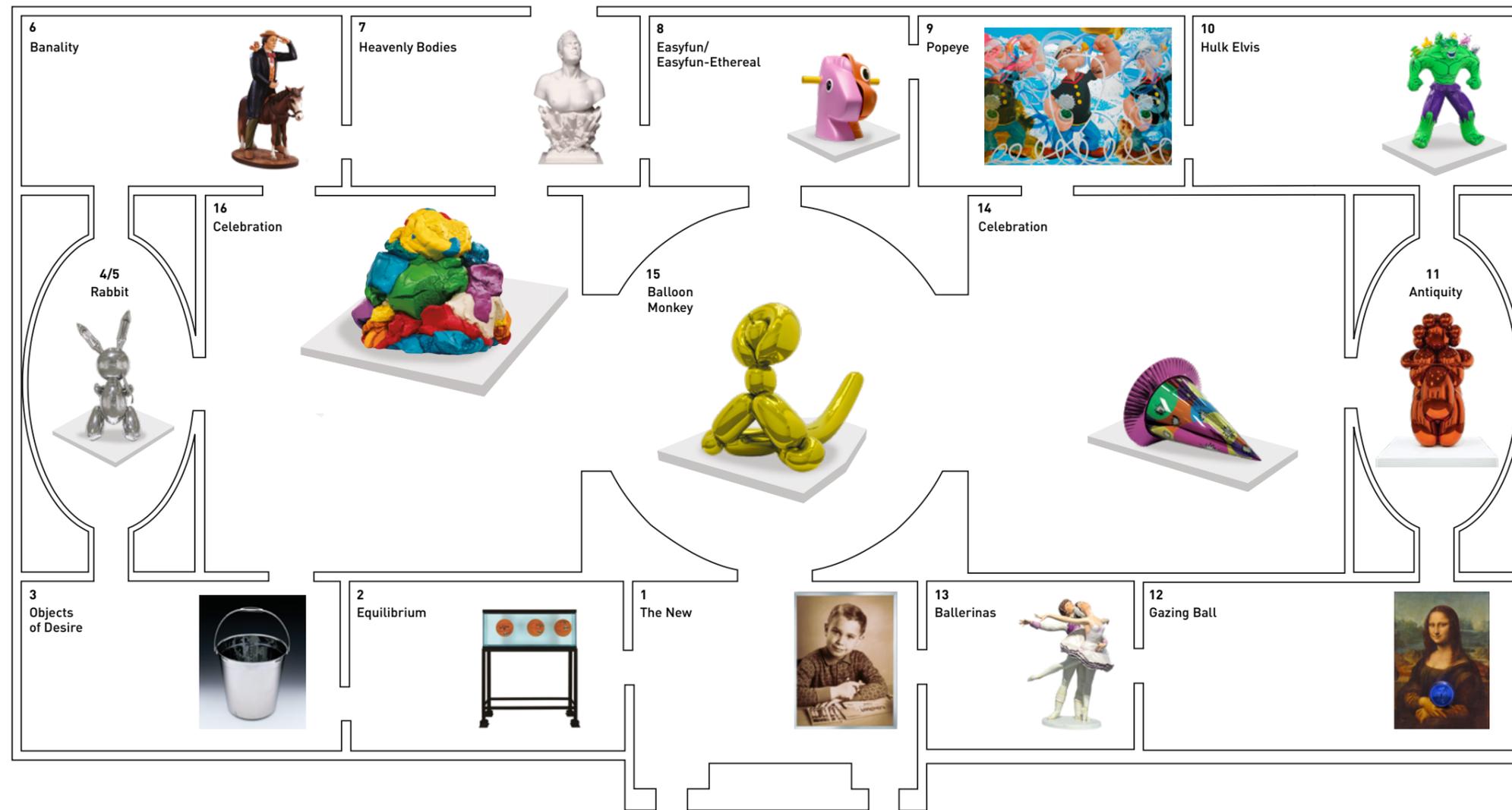


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Jeff Koons is among the most influential and complex artists to have emerged since the 1980s. While his work has been collected and celebrated by important museums around the world, it is still widely debated, confirming Koons' status as a daring voice within the history of contemporary art. His largest exhibition in the Middle East, *Jeff Koons: Lost in America* provides a unique introduction to an exceptional practice that has radically changed the world of art over the last four decades. Bridging Pop, Minimalism and the readymade, Koons' work imagines novel relationships between the avant-garde and popular culture, while revealing new paradigms for the role of the artist in the age of hyper-communication.

Over the course of his career, Koons has reinvented the ways in which art is fabricated and distributed. He creates complex sculptures, paintings and installations that transform everyday objects and industrial materials into alluring devices, posing questions about desire, narcissism, the self and the masses. *Jeff Koons: Lost in America* presents some of the artist's most well known works from series such as *The New* (1980–1987), *Banalities* (1988), *Celebration* (1994–), *Popeye* (2002–2013) and *Antiquity*



1 *The New* Jeff Koons, 1980, duratran and fluorescent light box, 106.7 x 81.3 x 20.3 cm. Private Collection 2 *The Three Ball Total Equilibrium Tank (Spalding Dr. J Silver Series)*, 1985, glass, steel, distilled water, sodium chloride reagent and three basketballs, 153.7 x 123.8 x 33.7 cm. Astrup Fearnley Collection, Oslo, Norway 3 *Pail*, 1986, stainless steel, 49.5 x 33 x 30.8 cm. Beth Rudin DeWoody Collection 4/5 *Rabbit*, 1986, stainless steel, 104.1 x 48.3 x 30.5 cm, Private Collection 6 *Buster Keaton*, 1988, polychromed wood, 167 x 127 x 67.3 cm. Private Collection 7 *Self-Portrait*, 1991, marble, 95.3 x 52.1 x 36.8 cm. Vanhaerents Art Collection, Brussels 8 *Split-Rocker (Pink/Orange)*, 1999, polychromed aluminum, 34.3 x 36.8 x 33 cm. Collection of the artist 9 *Triple Popeye*, 2008, oil on canvas, 274.3 x 371.2 cm. Private Collection 10 *Hulk (Friends)*, 2004–2012, polychromed bronze, 181 x 123.2 x 66 cm. Collection of the artist. Photo: Marc Domage 11 *Balloon Venus (Orange)*, 2008–2012, mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent colour coating, 259.1 x 147.7 x 137.5 cm. Collection of the artist. Photo: Tom Powel Imaging 12 *Gazing Ball (da Vinci Mona Lisa)*, oil on canvas, glass and aluminium, 172.7 x 115.6 x 37.5 cm. The Broad Art Foundation. Photo: Tom Powel Imaging 13 *Ballet Couple*, 2010–2019, polychromed marble, 254 x 214 x 170.5 cm. The Mugrabi Collection. Photo: Elad Sarig 14 *Party Hat (Pink)*, 1994–2019, mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent colour coating, 251.8 x 339.4 x 296.2 cm. Private Collection. Courtesy Pace Gallery 15 *Balloon Monkey (Yellow)*, 2006–2013, mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent colour coating, 381 x 320 x 596.9 cm. Collection of the artist. Photo: Prudence Cuming Associates 16 *Play-Doh*, 1994–2014, polychromed aluminum, 315 x 386.7 x 348 cm. Private Collection. Photo: Tom Powel Imaging

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(2008–), alongside more recent pieces. The exhibition also doubles as a hallucinatory portrait of American life as seen through Koons' own autobiography, beginning with his childhood in suburban Pennsylvania. Each gallery is introduced by the artist, emphasising his fascination with American visual culture, familial structures, memory and identity— notions that are similarly reflected through the mesmerising surfaces of his sculptures and paintings.

Koons shares an obsession with popular culture with many of his predecessors, including artists such as Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol, and peers such as Robert Rauschenberg, Barbara Kruger, Richard Prince and Cindy Sherman. Throughout his work, Koons has composed a personal vision of his home country, a 'fantasy America . . . custom-made from art and schmaltz and emotions'—to use the words with which Warhol described his own interpretation of American culture. With his aesthetics of abundance and pop-up dreams of social mobility and acceptance, Koons has created a mirage of America that appears even more distorted and captivating when seen in Doha—a city that has taken its own fascination with the new to vertiginous heights.