

# Jeff Koons Mucem

Works from the Pinault Collection

Exhibition

5 May – 18 October 2021  
Press kit

Mucem

Pinault  
Collection

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## Online press resource

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A dedicated press area has been set up on the Mucem website at <http://presse.mucem.org> and <http://presse.mucem.org> with a complete downloadable data-bank of programme information, press kits, press releases, and HD visuals.

Required journalist password available on request.

All content is available for sharing on social media feeds and blogs.

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# Jeff Koons Mucem

Works from the Pinault Collection

Exhibition from 5 May to 18 October 2021

Mucem J4, Level 2 (1.200 m<sup>2</sup>)

All of the works by Jeff Koons presented in this exhibition are on loan from the Pinault Collection with the exception of *Bourgeois Bust—Jeff and Ilona*, which was kindly made available to the Mucem by the Tate and National Galleries of Scotland. Concurrently, the Pinault Collection's edition is on display in Rennes as part of the exhibition "Beyond Colour. Black and White in the Pinault Collection".

## Curators

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Elena Geuna

Independent exhibition curator, author and artistic consultant

Émilie Girard

Head curator and scientific director of the Mucem

## Scenography

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Pascal Rodriguez

The exhibition “Jeff Koons Mucem. Works from the Pinault Collection”, conceived in close collaboration with the American artist, will bring to Marseille some of his most celebrated works, exploring the relationship between Koons’s artworks and popular objects, photographs and documents from the Mucem’s immense collection, which is considered a unique reference in this field.

Widely regarded as one of the most influential living artists, Jeff Koons (born 1955, York, Pennsylvania, USA) draws artistic inspiration from everyday life and objects in contemporary American culture. Reinterpreting the concept of the Duchampian readymade, Koons questions the very concept of a work of art. The variety of subjects, the continuous references to the history of art as well as to the world of advertising, the diverse spectrum of mediums and techniques used have contributed to make his work part of our collective imaginary, proposing a new interpretation of our relationship with everyday life and with the objects that surround us. While Koons’s work reveals insightful reflections on his own time, the artist also holds an inquisitive gaze towards artistic and cultural objects from the past. The artist’s passion for everyday items, alongside the Mucem’s extensive collection, create the perfect stage for a stimulating cultural dialogue.

Composed of an exceptional loan of 19 works from the Pinault Collection, the show offers the opportunity of diving into the artist’s oeuvre, with seminal sculptures (such as *Balloon Dog*, 1994-2000 or *Lobster*, 2007-2012) and paintings (such as *Backyard*, 2002 or *Dutch Couple*, 2007). From the early works of The New series, to the iconic pieces of the Celebration series, to the most recent creations of the Gazing Ball and Antiquity series, the exhibition spans the artist’s career chronologically over the last 40 years, retracing recurring iconographies and themes, visual associations and modes of expression. Through this significant loan, the Pinault Collection is delighted to contribute to a preeminent national museum’s exhibition. The Pinault Collection will concurrently open to the public its museum in Paris, the Bourse de Commerce, and will also present an important exhibition dedicated to Bruce Nauman at Punta della Dogana in Venice.

The distinctive character of the project lies in the encounter of Koons's works with the Mucem's collections. Each artwork is specifically linked to a set of objects belonging to the museum, sparking a conversation – sometimes formal, sometimes symbolic or poetic – between major works by Jeff Koons and the Mucem's collections.

This experience allows for an unprecedented re-examination of the Mucem's collections: Koons revisits their history, plays with their plasticity and interpretation, returning to the aesthetic of the object and sometimes re-conferring them with a form of contemporaneity and remodelling their meaning, taking the visitor on a free and spontaneous journey.

The objects chosen from the collections are the result of long and meticulous work in the Mucem archives. Jeff Koons explored all the resources available in order to select everyday objects, masterpieces of traditional art, documents and photographs, so as to pay tribute to the richness of the collections. The final selection covers more than 300 pieces and was nurtured by discussions on the meaning of those objects, their use, and their form, in order to invite the visitor to this exhibition on a contemplative walk where the beauty emerges from the object itself and resonates with the artist's gaze.

The installation designed for the project proposes a unique means of showing the artist's work, emphasising the links forged with the Mucem collections. "Jeff Koons Mucem" opens with *New Hoover Convertible, New Shelton Wet/Dry 10 Gallon Doubledecker* (1981). Embodying the predominant approach of The New series, vacuum cleaners are displayed in an acrylic case facing one of the Mucem's "unité écologique", an historically important museographic device of the former museum of folk-arts and popular traditions. The exhibition path concludes with the monumental *Bluebird Planter* (2010-2016), from the Antiquity series, a mirror-polished stainless steel work with transparent colour coating, seemingly blown-up from a small porcelain original, engaging with a wide selection of bird-shaped works such as bird calls, roof ornaments and other decorative objects.

After "Un génie sans piédestal, Picasso et les arts et traditions populaires" or "Jean Dubuffet, un barbare en Europe", "Jeff Koons Mucem. Works from the Pinault Collection" continues on the museum's legacy of exhibitions dedicated to the legendary artists who give meaning to the societies they contemplate.

For several decades, François Pinault has been building a collection of contemporary art that is reputed to be one of the most important in the world. Since 2006 in Venice, it has been housed at the Palazzo Grassi and since 2009 also at the Punta della Dogana, which is where this collection was first presented to the public. To date, it has been presented in 28 exhibitions. From 2021, this will also be happening in Paris, at the former Bourse de Commerce, a historic building refurbished by Tadao Ando, where the public will be able to access the collection, which, moving forward, will be displayed in this network of three museums.

Moreover, it has always been important to François Pinault that, in addition to this museum activity that he himself initiated, his collection also stands out as a willing partner for public and private institutions, both French and foreign, which request loans for their own exhibitions. Some of these loans are exceptional in number and importance and give rise to more formal collaborations between partner museums and the Pinault Collection. For example, Pinault Collection extramural exhibitions have been held in Lille, Rouen, Paris, Colmar, Dunkirk, Rennes and Dinard, as well as outside France in Seoul, Moscow, Monaco, Beyrouth, Essen. During the first half of 2021, collaborations of this type will associate the Pinault Collection with the Bibliothèque nationale de France (for the exhibition “Henri Cartier-Bresson. Le grand jeu”), and the Couvent des Jacobins in Rennes (for the exhibition “Beyond colour. Black and white in the Pinault Collection”), as well as the Mucem in Marseille for its exhibition, “Jeff Koons Mucem. Works from the Pinault Collection”. As part of this programme, an exhibition titled “Jusque là” (“Until then”), devoted to the visual artist Enrique Ramirez who is currently working at the Pinault Collection residency in Lens, was planned to open at the Studio National des Arts Contemporaines in Le Fresnoy. Because of the health crisis, the exhibition is postponed and is scheduled to be presented in 2022.

It is indeed thanks to the exceptional loan of 19 Jeff Koons pieces that the Collection enables the Mucem to create a highly original dialogue between the work of this great US post-pop artist and productions from the vast field of popular arts and traditions. The Mucem, heir to Georges Henri Rivière’s ATP, is now responsible for its assets, given the marseillais national museum is the successor to the former national museum which, until 2005, presented its collections in Paris, on the edge of the Bois de Boulogne. If such a loan has been possible, it is because Jeff Koons’s work occupies a very important place in the collection assembled by François Pinault, as revealed in recent years by the presentation of some of the pieces of his collection in major exhibitions organized by the Collection itself and by other institutions such as the Centre Pompidou and the Château de Versailles.

That said, never before has the Pinault Collection granted such a large loan for an exhibition devoted to this artist.

François Pinault and I are delighted with this collaboration with the great national institution that is the Mucem, whose president, Jean-François Chougnet and his teams we salute. Our gratitude also goes to the curators of the exhibition, Émilie Girard and Elena Geuna, whose wise collaboration made this wonderful undertaking possible.

Jean-Jacques Aillagon  
General director of the Pinault Collection

**Pinault  
Collection**



(...) The encounter between Jeff Koons and the Mucem's collections generates formal, symbolic, and poetic associations, exploring new meanings and interpretations of the works on display, fostering an open dialogue.

Jeff Koons at the Mucem... this may seem surprising at first ! But this encounter seems obvious, when we know that the artist and the museum share the same interest in popular arts...

Émilie Girard When the Mucem's president, Jean-François Chougnet, told me he wanted to invite Jeff Koons, I was very enthusiastic. In the review of our collection that we have been carrying out for several years now, our work with Koons was a dream playground! The artist has always been interested in American popular culture, so we were curious to see how he would react to Mucem's popular art collection.

When in February 2019 he first came to Marseille and discovered our assets, we spent long hours soaking up their variety, opening drawers and exploring the database before returning to see objects. This first meeting between Jeff Koons and our collection was already an experience in itself. It set the tone for what was to be the design of this exhibition: a rediscovery of the collections under the eye of an artist who deeply loves objects, their plasticity, aesthetics and the stories they tell.

Elena Geuna It has been an incredible experience; it was wonderful to observe in detail the Mucem's extraordinary collection and uncover a resonance between Jeff Koons's oeuvre and the Mucem's artefacts. Every image, every object, everything to be found within the collection is deeply affiliated to people – to individuals – and to the community to which they belonged. In his work, Jeff Koons explores the object, the observation of the everyday and its experience, which is a common ground with the Mucem's ethos.

The show opens with *New Hoover Convertible*, *New Shelton Wet/Dry 10 Gallon Doubledecker*, vacuum cleaners displayed in an acrylic case and lit by visible fluorescent lights. It is an everyday object stripped of its function, of its intended purpose. In a parallel way, the artefacts from the Mucem's collection are intertwined with our daily lives and are shown in their integrity, enabling the viewer to confront them.

Please can you tell us in detail how this project took shape? And describe Jeff Koons's various visits to the museum?

El. G. This ambitious project came into being from a conversation between Jean-Jacques Aillagon and Jean-François Chougnet, which consequently resulted in a kind invitation from the Mucem, welcoming Jeff Koons on a visit to Marseille, both to the museum and to its immense archives. When Koons visited the Mucem's collections for the first time in 2019, his quite boundless curiosity was piqued. The museum's storage is a vast labyrinth of artefacts, documents, works of art, and extraordinary treasures, that Koons found fascinating. The experience of meandering through the storage was an entirely unique context with which to interact with a variety of everyday life objects. After this first trip to Marseille, a number of visits followed, on both an in-person and virtual basis, and together with the constant guidance of Émilie Girard, we were able to examine the collections piece by piece, and finalise the selection. This process was very exciting and stimulating, both for the artist and myself.

Ém. G. The Mucem has had many exchanges with Koons: first, we made a suggestion of a selection of objects from our collections for each of his works; these choices were then fine-tuned according to leads and new ideas that he initiated. Some associations came about naturally, one might say, such as the presentation of the Breton interior next to the *New Hoover Convertible*, *New Shelton Wet/Dry 10 Gallon Doubledecker*: we very quickly suggested that an ecological unit, this domestic space "under a bell cover", could echo his vacuum cleaners in the display case. There was an interesting methodological comparison to be made: to show how the artist and the museologist work by "sampling" daily life.

What really moved things forward, and what was the hallmark of how this exhibition was designed, were the periods when Koons came to Marseilles and spent time in our reserves, in front of the objects. We started with an idea, we went to see the objects we were thinking about, we did presentation simulations... and sometimes Jeff Koons would discover another series of objects, almost by chance, at the bend of an aisle, and so a new idea was born that we would work on until the final selection was established. It was highly meticulous work. Nothing was ever rushed or decided in haste. Everything is very well thought out in this exhibition.

We went from one step to the next to finally build something extremely coherent that revisits the history of the collections, the way they were collected, their use or documentary character, their meaning and the possible detour of meaning, their aesthetics, etc.

The phases of work around the scenography also made it possible to refine the choice of objects, as the spatial arrangement of Koons's works and the Mucem collections helped to consolidate our intuitions or, conversely, to refute them. Set designer Pascal Rodriguez was also very involved in the design of the exhibition's content. Each gallery has its own atmosphere and tells a different story.

## How do Jeff Koons's 20 works dialogue with the objects of the Mucem's collection?

EI. G. This exhibition has been possible thanks to the extraordinary generosity of the Pinault Collection, which has supported the project since the beginning with the precious loan of Koons's artworks. The dialogue between Koons's sculptures and paintings and the variety of objects and artefacts in the Mucem's collections enriches the experience of the visitors, inviting them – room by room – to a spontaneous re-discovery of the everyday. Different kinds of resonances are offered to the viewer: the encounter between Jeff Koons and the Mucem's collections generates formal, symbolic, or poetic associations, exploring new meanings and interpretations of the works displayed and promoting a dialogue of openness.

For instance, when we enter the room with *Travel Bar*, a stainless-steel cast of a portable bar, one is confronted with a number of ceramic mugs and glass vessels displayed on a circular showcase. This choice conveys Koons's interest in everyday objects and a sense of self-representation generated by his artworks. The dialogue suggested by *Travel Bar* as a sculpture and its 'original' function as a portable bar amplifies the meaning of the work and connects it to other images we have of objects that have an essence of transportation, like the mugs with a handle that could be carried around.

Ém. G. Jeff Koons repeated several times during the design of the exhibition that the nature of these connections should not be overly explained, but that each visitor should be able to create their own path and meaning in the exhibition. This is what guided our choice not to have any text explainers for the works, but rather only to illuminate the route with decorative borders and unpublished quotes by Koons, punctuating the visit route in the way of so many clues. The connections are sometimes formal, sometimes contextual, sometimes poetic or even playful... There is a great freedom in the way the artist has appropriated the Mucem collection, to make it speak and enter into a dialogue with his own works. The exhibition is based on the plasticity and polysemy of the objects, erasing the differentiation between categories, and between scholarly and popular art. It is a free and very open path.

Elena Geuna: How did your childhood experiences shape your understanding of objects?

Jeff Koons My experience was influenced by my father being an interior decorator with a furniture store and my mother's side of the family was involved in local politics in my hometown. I think these two factors gave me a sense of the meaning of objects and the roles they play in our lives. Eventually I was able to tie everything together in my practice, which has to do with the interactions of various people with the combination of the aesthetic aspects from my father's side, and the political influence of my mother's family. As an artist, one of the key things that I've learned is that we only have our own personal experience, and that experience is something which starts from our childhood and extends right up to this moment that we are conscious of.

What is the role of everyday objects in your practice?

JK I have been attracted to everyday objects because of their openness, their sense of generosity, their abundance. We know that everyday objects surround us everywhere. They are not situated in a hierarchy or placed in such a heightened context that we feel distant or alienated from them. Embracing the everyday has a sense of minimalism. It is also so abundant, it's like air, it's an openness. When you study and look at something that's simple, it can reveal an inner complexity and can make you feel interwoven with the biggest questions that preoccupy us philosophically. It is a very profound experience and gives us a sense of hope.

The exhibition at the Mucem is a unique opportunity to experience your work in dialogue with the artefacts of the museum's collection. Would you like to talk about your encounter with the Mucem's collections?

JK It was wonderful to be able to see and observe in detail the Mucem's collection. Each object, each image, everything within the collection is tied and connected to people, to individuals, to a community. The information we are engaging with triggers a sense of memory: a connection to experiences that we have already had in the past, what we imagine experiences to be. The collection is like a springboard that enables an expansion of dialogue in so many different directions and so produces this tremendous sense of connectivity. These are objects and images that are really intertwined with our daily lives, within both our personal and communal existence.

What surprised or interested you the most about exploring the museum's archives?

JK I was astonished by the vastness of the museum's collection of everyday objects and images. One minute you could be looking at the tools of a beekeeper and a moment later turn your head and you are looking at wind instruments. There's an endless montage of images and objects that you encounter walking through the historic Mucem collection. It is always a wonderful experience to stop and ponder the everyday and to let the richness of some of the most accessible images and objects present their beauty.

On a personal level, have some objects touched you more than others?

JK It is always exciting to come across something that is very distinct and unusual. One of the most wonderful aspects of putting together the exhibition was being open to all the different voices of the individual objects; and to celebrate their own distinct characteristics. The elimination of hierarchy is what gives this exhibition its intimate beauty.

## How have you developed your deep admiration and passion for French painting?

- JK For me France has always been connected to the meanings that are in art and is emblematic of art's possibilities, not only to move the individual but to move community. If I look back at my involvement with France, I know that it started with all the amazing accomplishments of French artists over the centuries. When I started studying art history and became aware of the nineteenth-century artists and the avant-garde artists of the twentieth-century, I was drawn to that type of energy, and to the understanding of enlightenment, this sense that art can transform you, and that you can create a future through art, you could change a community and change the world around you through art.

## How did your strong relationship with France and French culture begin?

- JK The first European museum that I ever exhibited in was in France. As a young artist, I was invited in the early 80s to participate to a group exhibition in Lyon. As an American artist, this sense of openness was new to me. French culture has always seemed to embrace everything that the world has offered, anything that can stimulate it, be it culturally, emotionally, or intellectually. So for me there is a sense of personal growth and a feeling of hope, that we can grow together as a society and have a better future.

## A word about Marseilles. What places did you go to other than the Mucem? What did you think of the city?

- JK It's always wonderful to be in the south of France. I stayed at Hotel La Residence, and enjoyed its restaurant, Le Relais 50, on the street level. I walked outside along the harbor and visited bâtiment Georges Henri Rivière and fort Saint-Jean, Mucem. I also enjoyed very much driving through the city of Marseilles and understanding what a vibrant port city it is. I am looking forward to returning to Marseilles in 2021 and discovering even more of the city.

The exhibition proposes a dialogue between 20 works by Jeff Koons (19 from the Pinault Collection and 1 work, *Bourgeois Bust—Jeff and Ilona*, made available to the Mucem by the Tate and National Galleries of Scotland) and over 300 objects from the Mucem's collections. The artist's works are presented together with a set of objects from the museum's collection to create a dialogue that is sometimes formal, sometimes symbolic or poetic.

The exhibition path unfolds through 13 rooms retracing the artist's career chronologically over the last three decades.

The public is invited to experience an unfettered journey, the reading and interpretation of which will be left to everyone's own appreciation.

Original quotes by the artist punctuate the exhibition path.

"In my works, I try to empower the viewer."  
Jeff Koons



25. Jeff Koons. *Bluebird Planter*, 2010-2016. Mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent color coating and live flowering plants. 82 1/2 × 110 3/4 × 40 inches; 209.6 × 281.3 × 101.6 cm. Edition 1 from an edition of 3, plus artist's proof. Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, Photo: Fredrick Nilsen/Courtesy Gagolian



## Gallery 1

Jeff Koons's *New Hoover Convertible, New Shelton Wet/Dry 10 Gallon Doubledecker* is positioned with objects “under a bell cover” from the Mucem’s collection, including one of the museum’s ecological units.



1. Jeff Koons. *New Hoover Convertible, New Shelton Wet/Dry 10 Gallon Doubledecker*, 1981.  
Two vacuum cleaners, acrylic, and fluorescent lights.  
99 × 28 × 28 inches; 251.5 × 71.1 × 71.1 cm.  
Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons



2. Communal room of a Breton house.  
France, Finistère, Goulien. Beginning 1960s.  
Mucem © Mucem

The work is part of the series *The New*, executed between 1980 and 1987. Addressing concerns from Koons's early work, *The New* sees a radical reduction in the artist's intervention on objects. This artwork embodies the predominant sculptural approach of the series: vacuum cleaners displayed in acrylic cases and lit by visible fluorescent lights. Koons's use of vitrines suggests the visual vocabulary of a contemporary display of consumer goods. On the other hand, it strips the objects of their intended purpose whereby desirability becomes dissociated from the possibility of consumption. Separated from their domestic role as cleaning machines, their “respiratory system” and androgynous figure convey to the vacuum cleaners anthropomorphic qualities and erotic appeal. In *New Hoover Convertible, New Shelton Wet/Dry 10 Gallon Doubledecker*, the immobility of the objects amplifies their sense of virginity and purity, bringing to the foreground the strong association between newness and desirability in contemporary culture.

This interior was collected in 1964 by the teams of the Musée national des arts et traditions populaires. It was presented at the opening of the museum's cultural gallery in 1975, among other “ecological units”, such as a woodturner's workshop and a Savoyard chalet, which punctuated the exhibition visit route. This museographic principle consists in taking a set of objects from the same context and then reassembling them in a display case by reproducing them identically. It is thus the faithful restitution of a complex whole, shown in its state of use, frozen in time like a freeze frame, that is given to be seen.

## Gallery 2

Jeff Koons's *Travel Bar* is presented with grotesque-figure slip jugs and other drinking objects from the Mucem's collection.

Jeff Koons's relationship with the readymade undergoes a decisive transformation in his *Luxury and Degradation* series. The artist ventures beyond the appropriation of existing objects towards the exploration of their symbolic and social value. Stripped of their practical function, the objects portrayed in this series assume a radical change in their status within contemporary society.

The *Luxury and Degradation* series features images of liquor advertisements and stainless steel sculptures of decanters and objects related to the consumption of alcohol. *Travel Bar* displays a stainless steel cast of a portable bar. It subtly suggests one of the contradictions upon which modern advertising is based: the product's language bears promises of power and luxury while simultaneously posing a silent threat to the fragilities of the American dream.



3. Jeff Koons. *Travel Bar*, 1986.  
Stainless steel. 14 × 20 × 12 inches; 35.6 × 50.8 × 30.5 cm.  
Edition 2 from an edition of 3, plus artist's proof.  
Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, photo: Douglas M. Parker Studios, Los Angeles



4. Pitchers.  
Glazed ceramics. France, Moselle, Sarreguemines.  
Late 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century.  
Mucem ©Mucem/Marianne Kuhn

## Gallery 3

The work *Bourgeois Bust—Jeff and Ilona* by Jeff Koons is showcased with a blacksmith's sign and various objects from the Mucem's collection which, for the artist, evoke fertility.



5. Jeff Koons. *Bourgeois Bust—Jeff and Ilona*, 1991. Marble. 44 1/2 × 28 × 21 inches; 113 × 71.1 × 53.3 cm. Edition 2 from an edition of 3, plus artist's proof. ARTIST ROOMS Tate and National Galleries of Scotland. Acquired jointly through The d'Offay Donation with assistance from the National Heritage Memorial Fund and Art Fund 2008 © Jeff Koons, photo: Jim Strong, New York

The marble sculpture *Bourgeois Bust—Jeff and Ilona* exemplifies Koons's seductive use of the classical language. The work portrays the busts of Koons with his then-wife, Ilona Staller, embracing, on top of a bed of flowers. It is one of the most iconic works of the Made in Heaven series, in which the artist turns to his own life and body to address issues of guilt and shame. By employing the classical tradition of bust portraiture, Koons elevates the couple to a higher realm of divinity and bestows an air of power and devotion upon the work. Appropriating vocabularies from art history, specifically from the Baroque period, and the aesthetics of pornography, Made in Heaven questions the representation of sexuality in art, challenging the viewer to the confrontation between cultural codifications and natural impulses. All of the works by Jeff Koons presented in this exhibition are on loan from the Pinault Collection with the exception of *Bourgeois Bust—Jeff and Ilona*, which was kindly made available to the Mucem by the Tate and National Galleries of Scotland. Concurrently, the Pinault Collection's edition is on display in Rennes as part of the exhibition "Beyond Colour. Black and White in the Pinault Collection".



6. Bouquet of Saint Eloi – Blacksmith's signage, Sassier. Cut and painted iron sheet metal. France, Tours, 1878. Mucem © Mucem

The center of the signage is composed of 16 groups of 8 horse-shoes gathered in bouquets, testifying to all the types of horse-shoes that the "compagnon" is capable of making. The border of the sign illustrates the "Tour de France" carried out by the compagnons during their training, with some major stages of the compagnon's life, such as the departure of the compagnon (bag on back and cane in hand), the "guilbrette" (the hug of the compagnons) and the pilgrimage to the cave at Sainte-Baume (a sacred place for the compagnons). At the top of the signage sits throne-like Saint Eloi, the patron saint of blacksmiths. On the lower part, letters follow, which, when decoded, reveal the secret of the compagnon in the form of a dedication: *Dedicated To Tourangeau Difficult To Know Compagnon Blacksmith of Duty Made In Tours*.

This signage is undoubtedly the "travail de reception" of the compagnon Sassier, typical of the masterpieces produced at the end of the training that compagnons received in the different workshops they visited during their Tour de France.



## Gallery 4

Jeff Koons's *Balloon Dog (Magenta)* is shown surrounded by wallpaper made from photographs from the Mucem's collections (the clown Mimile blowing up a balloon in his dressing room at the Cirque d'Hiver, 1960).

Conceived in 1994, Jeff Koons's Celebration series rejoices in symbols and rituals surrounding celebratory occasions – such as Valentine's Day, Easter, and birthdays – in lush colours and festive, monumental scales.

*Balloon Dog (Magenta)*, largely considered one of the Celebration series' most emblematic works, portrays a balloon twisted in the shape of a dog. Cast in stainless steel, mirror-polished, and painted with transparent colour, the work immediately brings to mind children's birthday parties and the playful nature of infancy while at the same time suggesting a Trojan Horse. By modifying the material and dimensions of the inflatable balloon, the artist negotiates with the permanent and the ephemeral. The monumentality and materiality of the work elevate the subject into a work of art that displays an ecstatic and sensual character – especially as pronounced by the masculine and feminine forms that slowly reveal themselves through the work's dialogue with scale.



7. Jeff Koons. *Balloon Dog (Magenta)*, 1994-2000.  
Mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent color coating.  
121 × 143 × 45 inches; 307.3 × 363.2 × 114.3 cm. One of five unique versions.  
Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, photo © FMGB Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa,  
photo by Erika Barahona Ede



8. Pierre Soulier. *Le clown Mimile dans sa loge du cirque d'Hiver*  
[Mimile the clown in his dressing room at the Cirque d'Hiver], 19 January 1960.  
France, Paris.  
Mucem © Mucem/Pierre Soulier

## Gallery 5

In this room, Jeff Koons's work *Hanging Heart (Red/Gold)* is displayed with popular art objects and motifs evoking love and commitment.



9. Jeff Koons. *Hanging Heart (Red/Gold)*, 1994-2006.  
Mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent color coating.  
114 5/8 × 110 1/4 × 40 inches; 291 × 280 × 101.5 cm. Plus ribbon at variable length.  
One of five unique versions.  
Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, photo: Installation view at Punta della Dogana,  
2009 © Palazzo Grassi/ORCH orsenigo\_chemollo



10. Ex voto.  
Brass, silver. France and Italy.  
20<sup>th</sup> century.  
Mucem © Mucem/Marianne Kuhn

*Hanging Heart (Red/Gold)* is a highly evocative sculpture. It represents an enormous heart-shaped pendant suspended from the ceiling by a golden ribbon with a large bow.

Similar to other stainless steel sculptures of the Celebration series, the proportions of the original object are greatly enlarged while its details and smooth surfaces are immaculately preserved. The work's suspension from the ceiling grants the sculpture a sense of weightlessness which, in combination with its reflective surface, provokes a suspension of the viewer's disbelief in the authentic substance of the material. Due to its scale and subject, the red, mirrored surface of this artwork attracts the viewer both physically and emotionally. The heart, a symbol of humanity, warmth, and romance, is complemented by the spiritual and magical ethos of the artwork itself, silently beckoning viewers to revisit the realm of private aspirations and desires.

Among the ex voto, objects offered to ask for or to give thanks for grace granted, one category is particularly represented, those of the so-called anatomical ex voto. These objects reproduce a sick limb (arm, leg, etc) or an organ (eyes, liver, lungs, etc) that the believer symbolically offers to a higher power to obtain healing. Often made of metal, they are fabricated on small embossing plates. We also find, especially in Italy, many ex voto made of bread. Here, it is not the diseased organ that is represented but rather the symbol: these heart-shaped ex voto were offered to obtain love or union.

The motif of the heart, immediately recognizable today, is already very present in works of popular art and is found in particular on many love gifts such as cattails, ribbon sieves, lace folders, spoons, etc, which sealed the fiancée's commitment to his bride.

## Gallery 6

This gallery presents two works by Jeff Koons, *Moon (Light Blue)* and *Gazing Ball (Picasso Couple)*. They are set in a dialogue, through a play of forms and correspondences, with objects from the Mucem's collection, including a pitcher by Pablo Picasso.

Gazing balls have fascinated Koons since his childhood when he would often see them in neighbours' gardens. In the *Gazing Ball* series, started in 2012, the object operates as a vortex that imports the viewer and art history into the same reflected, abstract dimension. Koons is not interested in a perfect reproduction of the paintings he selects. The images are all hand-made replicas, but with different dimensions and texture: Koons's intent is to reproduce the idea of the painting, not the original work.

*Gazing Ball (Picasso Couple)* depicts Pablo Picasso's December 5, 1969 work *Couple*. In this painting, Koons reflects on how key concerns in his practice can be presented to the viewer through citation and homage. To Koons, the readymade avoids personal narrative while reminiscing on personal memory, touching upon mindsets which viewers can share, and, in doing so, feel accepted.

This pitcher was offered in 1975 to the Musée national des arts et traditions populaires, shortly before its opening, by Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, who had been Picasso's art dealer since 1912. The pitcher was then presented in the part of the museum devoted to ceramic techniques, as a counterpoint to the display case devoted to traditional pottery techniques, thus revealing the relative nature of the boundary between artistic and popular production.

Forty-six years on, this pitcher, and through it the whole of Picasso's work, can be seen as an element of popular culture, so great is the posterity of the artist.



11. Jeff Koons. *Gazing Ball (Picasso Couple)*, 2014-2015.  
Oil on canvas, glass, and aluminum.  
68 5/8 × 53 3/4 × 14 3/4 inches; 174.3 × 136.5 × 37.5 cm.  
Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, photo: Tom Powel Imaging/Courtesy Gagosian



12. Pablo Picasso. *The painter and two models*, 1954.  
Pitcher, painted terracotta, France, Vallauris  
© Succession Picasso 2021, photo: Mucem/Yves Inquierman



## Gallery 7

This gallery displays two works by Jeff Koons, *Elephants* and *Prison (Venus)*, paired with objects from the Mucem's collections that find a form of contemporaneity in their relationship to the artist's work.



13. Jeff Koons. *Elephants*, 2001.  
Oil on canvas. 120 × 168 inches; 304,8 × 426,7 cm.  
Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, photo: Douglas M. Parker Studios, Los Angeles



14. Hair in picture frames.  
Hair, wood, paper, glass.  
France, 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.  
Mucem © Mucem/Marianne Kuhn

Executed in the early 2000s, the Easyfun-Ethereal series comprises oil paintings of collages and a multi-layered accumulation of images drawn from various sources. While sustaining a close relationship with the language of advertising, these hand-painted works bear references to daily life, nature, and art history. Considered one of the most representative paintings of this series, *Elephants* is pervaded by depictions of childhood joy and innocence, a woman's hair, and the idea of the elephant, as well as contrasting grown-up pleasures. Layers of imagery include a silhouette of a woman where in place of her flesh is an image of a herd of elephants, which is subsequently overlaid with jewellery worn on bodies from which the flesh has been dropped out. The dreamlike dimension of the painting poses a challenge to the viewer on both visual and conceptual levels. Through the indiscriminating fusion of subjects lacking a hierarchical system, *Elephants* is stripped from its inner coherence, unravelling the boundlessness of creative interpretation.

These small works were made from locks of hair belonging to a loved one, as a souvenir of a happy event (such as a birth or baptism) or, more often, as an "affectionate keepsake" of a deceased person. Hair is considered here as a relic that embodies the loved one; it becomes a symbol, an object of adoration, a fetish.

## Gallery 8

This gallery presents two works by Jeff Koons, *Wrecking Ball* and *Dolphin*, with objects from the Mucem collections evoking the domestic or maritime world, such as the four merry-go-round sirens sculpted by Friedrich Heyn (late 19<sup>th</sup> century).

This sculpture is part of the Popeye series that was started in 2002. In this group of works, Koons returns to ideas that characterise his earlier practice, revisiting his approach to the readymade and the use of inflatables. Drawing inspiration from Duchamp, Dalí, and Warhol, the series includes paintings in bright colours and sculptural assemblages that combine transformed inflatables and unaltered objects.

*Dolphin* presents a series of contrasts through both its imagery and its process. The dolphin hangs from the ceiling from a set of coated steel chains, and in turn supports a full set of stainless steel pots and pans hanging from a kitchen rack. While some elements are unaltered objects, the inflatable dolphin is an aluminum cast. The precise process of creating moulds of real inflatables and casting them in aluminum and applying a hyper-realistic paint surface results in a life-like effect. Distinctions are therefore blurred between actual and replica readymades.



15. Jeff Koons. *Dolphin*, 2002.  
Polychromed aluminum, stainless steel, and coated steel chain.  
63 × 72 1/2 × 38 inches; 160 × 184.2 × 96.5 cm. Plus chain at variable length.  
Edition 1 from an edition of 3, plus artist's proof.  
Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, photo: Tom Powel Imaging



16. Fountain.  
Tin and brass. Austria, Steyr. Middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.  
Mucem © Mucem/Marianne Kuhn

## Gallery 9

This gallery shows two works by Jeff Koons, *Lobster* and *Olive Oyl (Red)*, together with objects from the Mucem collections evoking the world of the circus.



17. Jeff Koons. *Lobster*, 2007-2012. Mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent color coating. 57 7/8 × 37 × 18 7/8 inches; 147 × 94 × 47.9 cm. Edition 1 from an edition of 3, plus artist's proof. Pinault Collection  
© Jeff Koons, photo: Marc Damage/Courtesy Almine Rech Gallery



18. Acrobat, Sadi Alfarabi. Monochrome print. 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Mucem © Mucem

Koons's iconic inflatable lobster has been a frequent subject in the artist's oeuvre since the beginning of the Popeye series in the early 2000s. The lobster symbolically expresses key elements in Koons's broader practice, such as his relation to surrealism and the readymade. *Lobster* brings to mind Salvador Dalí's *Lobster Telephone*, while the animal's antennae can allude to Dalí's own moustache as well as to Marcel Duchamp's work *L.H.O.O.Q.* The choice of subject highlights potential connections between an object's formal properties and its sexuality, and it reveals the co-existence of both masculine and feminine connotations. Combining historical references, technical precision, and childhood memories, *Lobster* can visually attract, sensually seduce, and conceptually challenge the viewer all at once.

These portraits of acrobats, contortionists and tightrope walkers in action were brought together at the very beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by the animal painter Gustave Soury, who bequeathed his immense collection (several thousand cardboard prints, in postcard format, about the world of the circus, and made in major European capitals) to the Musée national des arts et traditions populaires. If all are not identified, we find on many images the captions mentioning the names of the artists, often working with their families: the Georgis, the Emilios, the François... Sadi Alfarabi, who is the poster for the exhibition, has found his posterity today: his sense of balance and the perfection of his technique, in the shape of an inverted Y, echoing the shape of Jeff Koons's *Lobster*.

## Gallery 10

This gallery features two works by Jeff Koons, *Backyard* and *Chainlink*, which are shown with objects from the Mucem's collections based on the matching of shapes and colors.

The Popeye series also comprises brightly hued and visually complex paintings—in addition to its iconic sculptural assemblages—showing a natural progression of the artist's painting practice. This is perfectly exemplified by *Backyard*.

Popeye paintings are highly detailed and layered compositions that combine disparate images both found and created by the artist. *Backyard* presents, on a two-dimensional surface, a kaleidoscopic arrangement of sculptural elements that recur through this series. One can see the inflatables used in the *Dogpool* sculptures, the galvanised fence from *Chainlink*, and the chains which are employed in several works from the series. By combining these elements into one indissoluble image, *Backyard* is able to suggest the broad universe of Popeye in a single, celebratory gesture.



19. Jeff Koons. *Backyard*, 2002.  
Inkjet on canvas. 164×288 inches; 416.6×731.5 cm.  
Edition 1 from an edition of 1, plus artist's proof.  
Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons



20. Chairs.  
Wood. France, Alsace. Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.  
Mucem © Mucem/Marianne Kuhn



## Gallery 11

This gallery presents two works by Jeff Koons, *Dogpool (Logs)* and *Caterpillar Chains*, which have been positioned in the middle of a series of merry-go-round subjects, in a playful and colorful dialogue.

*Caterpillar Chains* displays the principal traits of the Popeye series: juxtapositions between the real and the replicated, and childhood and adulthood. The sculpture is composed of an aluminum cast of an inflatable caterpillar, which hangs from the ceiling by eight red-coloured, coated steel chains, with each chain being attached to one of the caterpillar's feet.

Due to the precise nature of its casting process, the inflatable caterpillar actively plays with the viewer's perception. Arrested in a field of ambiguities, the work's suspension is both literal and metaphorical: the inflatable pool toy's undeniable childlike charm is put into question by its dependence on eight red-coated steel chains.



21. Jeff Koons. *Caterpillar Chains*, 2003.  
Polychromed aluminum and coated steel chain.  
20 × 43 1/2 × 77 inches; 50.8 × 110.5 × 195.6 cm. Plus chain at variable length.  
Edition 1 from an edition of 3, plus artist's proof.  
Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, photo: Tom Powel Imaging



22. Cow – Merry Go Round piece.  
Gustave Bayol. Sculpted and painted wood, metal, leather.  
France, Angers. Circa 1900.  
Mucem © Mucem



## Gallery 12

This gallery features two works by Jeff Koons, *Titi* and *Dutch Couple*, in dialogue with a series of headdresses from the Mucem collections.



23. Jeff Koons. *Titi*, 2004-2009.  
Mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent color coating.  
37 7/8 × 23 13/16 × 14 7/8 inches; 96.2 × 60.5 × 37.8 cm.  
Edition 3 from an edition of 3, plus artist's proof.  
Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, photo: Robert McKeever/Courtesy Gagolian



24. Headdress.  
Linen canvas, cotton, satin.  
19th century. France, Poitou-Charentes.  
Mucem © Mucem/Marianne Kuhn

While the work derives from the Popeye series, this reflective version of the inflatable toy of Titi bird differs in visual language and is considered by the artist as an independent artwork in itself. *Titi* is executed in mirror-polished stainless steel and painted with a transparent colour coating. The hybrid nature of the work provokes associations with many of Koons's creations, especially considering that inflatables have appeared in the artist's works since the late 1970s.

*Titi* is one of the most iconic sculptures by the artist, and it touches upon several themes of his practice. The cartoonish form brings to mind the playfulness of childhood and innocence while the reflective surface reminds the viewer of their existence.

The most voluminous headdresses are mounted on a cardboard base, sometimes reinforced by a metal frame, covered with a linen or cotton canvas on which the tulle is fixed. The complexity of this assembly and the play of materials and transparency of the tulle reflect the rich meaning of these headdresses, which do not only have an aesthetic role. The duly experienced will be able to recognize in the length of the ribbons and lappets, their positioning, the embroidered motifs or the number of folds, the origin of the woman wearing the headdress, her status and position in society.

## Gallery 13

The last gallery of the exhibition presents a recent work by Jeff Koons, *Bluebird Planter*, which is displayed with a series of bird-shaped objects from the Mucem's collections that evoke the importance as well as the aesthetic and symbolic dimension of the motif in popular art.

The Antiquity series sees the artist engaging in a more explicit dialogue with history. Across its paintings and sculptures, which blur distinctions between the antique and the contemporary, this series traces parallels between biological and cultural links that connect societies throughout history.

In *Bluebird Planter*, Koons employs transparent color gradations as opposed to solids hues on the stainless steel surface. Seemingly blown-up from a small porcelain original, *Bluebird Planter* explores coexistences between replica and actual readymades. The back of the stainless steel bird contains a large planter with live plants, taking the work beyond the confines of the readymade object and celebrating the power of nature. Koons's work has always hinged on the readymade's ability to affirm one's existence, allowing one to readily understand the evolution of the readymade into life itself.

Ridge finials respond first of all to a functional necessity, that of ensuring that roofs are waterproof by covering its protruding part. But the richness of their ornamental repertoire testifies to their aesthetic and symbolic value. Thus, there is no functional reason for these finials to take the shape of a bird, except for the beauty of the silhouette and the sense of the motif, symbol of protection and abundance. The form is not just a response to usage.



25. Jeff Koons. *Bluebird Planter*, 2010-2016.  
Mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent color coating and live flowering plants. 82 1/2 × 110 3/4 × 40 inches; 209.6 × 281.3 × 101.6 cm.  
Edition 1 from an edition of 3, plus artist's proof.  
Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, Photo: Fredrick Nilsen/Courtesy Gagosian



26. Ridge finial.  
Glazed stoneware, France.  
1<sup>st</sup> half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.  
Mucem © Mucem/Marianne Kuhn

## Elena Geuna

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Elena Geuna is an independent curator, author, and art advisor. Born in Italy and based in London, Elena Geuna studied in Geneva and obtained her master's degree at Columbia University in New York.

Her main curatorial museum projects include "Fontana: Luce e Colore" (Palazzo Ducale, Genoa, 2008); "Zhang Huang: Ashman" (PAC, Milano, 2010); "Arte Povera in Moscow" (Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow, 2011); "Freedom not Genius. Works from Damien Hirst's Murderme collection" (Pinacoteca Agnelli, Turin, later travelled to Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow, 2012); "Rudolf Stingel" (Palazzo Grassi, Venice, 2013); "Sigmar Polke" (Palazzo Grassi, Venice, 2016); and "Lucio Fontana. Retrospective" (Multimedia Art Museum, Moscow, 2019).

In 2017, she curated "Damien Hirst: Treasures from the Wreck of the Unbelievable", one of Hirst's most ambitious project to date: for the first time both Palazzo Grassi and Punta della Dogana in Venice were dedicated to a single artist.

She has also co-curated two exhibitions dedicated to Jeff Koons: in 2003 at Museo Archeologico Nazionale, Naples, and in 2008 at the Château de Versailles, Versailles.

Geuna lectures internationally and is contributor to art magazines and journals.

## Émilie Girard

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Émilie Girard is the head curator and scientific director of the Mucem.

She joined the Mucem team in 2006. In 2008, she became head of the museum's collections department, where she led, among other things, the work involving the transfer from Paris to Marseilles of all its collections and assets, and the establishment of the Mucem's Conservation and Resource Center.

She regularly curates exhibitions at the Mucem, such as the "Galerie de la Méditerranée" in 2013; "Food" in 2014, "A genius without a pedestal, Picasso and popular arts and traditions" in 2016; "Shall we dance?"; and "Reliquaries from A to Z" in 2019. From 2013 to 2020, she was in charge of the "Religions and Beliefs" theme of the Mucem and coordinated several professional training courses on religious heritage, which are linked to her earlier studies in Christian archaeology and Coptic epigraphy. Since 1 August 2019, she has led the Mucem's scientific and collections team.

## Scenography

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### Pascal Rodriguez

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A state-registered architect since 1993, Pascal Rodriguez undertakes long-term projects (museums, cinema installations, etc). Since the beginning of the 2000s, he has been creating scenographies for temporary and permanent exhibitions.

Pascal Rodriguez's productions for the Mucem include the exhibitions "Gold" (2018), "Giono" (2019), and most recently "Folklore" (2020-21). Other productions include "Tim Burton", "Pasolini" and "Chris Marker" for the Cinémathèque Française; "Ensor" for the Musée d'Orsay; "Coluche" for the Mairie de Paris; and "Klein", "Surrealism and the object" and "Beat Generation" with the Centre Pompidou.

He also produces the scenography for more unusual projects, such as the exhibition "Voyages" at the Réau penitentiary center with nine inmates as co-curators and the exhibition "Napoleon" in Kazakhstan with the RMN-GP.

Scenography allows Pascal Rodriguez to tackle multiple subjects and to invent new forms that combine imagination and technique.

### Scenography

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This exhibition brings together a selection of works from the Mucem's collections and 20 works by Jeff Koons along a path made up of 13 galleries. Each of them will have a unique atmosphere and a scenography adapted to host Jeff Koons's monumental and colorful works. The aim has been to develop a light, airy, clear scenography whose highly framed passages and openings subtly put the museum's works and those of the artist into perspective.



Jeff Koons by Mario Sorrenti, 2007  
©artpartner

1955 Jeff Koons is born in York, Pennsylvania, USA.

1963 Motivated by his parents, Koons explores creativity and paints copies of Old Masters, exhibited in the windows of his father's furniture store.

1972-1975 Koons studies at the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore and in 1975 at the School of Art Institute of Chicago. Koons meets with Salvador Dalí in New York in 1973.

1976-1977 Koons moves to New York in 1976 where he works at the Membership Desk at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in 1977. Koons incorporates inflatables and mirrors in his sculptural practice.

1980 Taking place in the window of The New Museum of Contemporary Art, the artist's first solo exhibition, titled "The New", features three iconic sculptures of vacuum cleaners and an illuminated lightbox with "The New" written in bold letters.

1982 A sculpture of vacuum cleaners is included in the group show "Energie New York" at Espace Lyonnais D'Art Contemporain in Lyon, marking the artist's first presentation in Europe.

1985-1986 New York gallery, International With Monument, hosts Koons's first solo gallery exhibition, presenting the Equilibrium series in 1985. The same East Village gallery dedicates a second solo exhibition titled Luxury and Degradation in 1986. The artist starts working on a new series, Statuary. Ileana Sonnabend invites Koons to exhibit the stainless-steel sculpture *Rabbit* for the first time in a group exhibition of Neo-Geo artists at her New York gallery. Ileana Sonnabend starts representing the artist.

1987 The Whitney Museum of American Art in New York exhibits *One Ball Total Equilibrium Tank* during the Whitney Biennial. The Saatchi Collection hosts "New York Art Now", an exhibition featuring young American artists in London. *Rabbit* is on the cover of the exhibition catalogue.

1988 "Banality" opens simultaneously in three different galleries: Max Hetzler in Cologne, Ileana Sonnabend in New York, and Donald Young in Chicago.

American artist Jeff Koons (born 1955, York, Pennsylvania, USA) is widely regarded as one of the most influential living artists. His work combines art historical references with everyday objects and images, questioning the very concept of a work of art.

1990-1991 Paintings and sculpture from the Made in Heaven series are included in the Venice Biennial in 1990. Max Hetzler Gallery in Cologne and Ileana Sonnabend in New York present the complete series in 1991.

1992-1993 *Puppy*, a flowering sculpture over 12 meters tall, is installed in front of Arolsen Castle in Hesse, Germany, during Documenta. Koons opens his studio on West Broadway. Solo museum exhibitions are held in Amsterdam, Stuttgart, San Francisco, and Minneapolis in 1992 and 1993.

1994 Koons begins the ambitious Celebration series.

1995 *Puppy* is installed outside Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art in Australia.

1997-1998 Galerie Jérôme de Noirmont presents Koon's first solo exhibition in Paris. Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, acquires *Puppy* and installs it permanently in front of the entrance of the newly opened venue in Bilbao.

1999 The artist conceives the Easyfun series and presents the new work at Sonnabend Gallery in New York.

2000 The Easyfun-Ethereal series is conceived and shown at the Deutsche Guggenheim Berlin. As part of its exhibition "La Beauté", the monumental topiary sculpture *Split-Rocker* is installed at the Palais des Papes in Avignon. *Puppy* is displayed in front of Rockefeller Center in New York.

2001 Jeff Koons is presented with the Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur. He relocates his studio from SoHo to Chelsea. Paintings are shown during solo exhibitions at Gagolian in Los Angeles, Kunsthaus Bregenz in Austria, Fruitmarket Gallery in Edinburgh, and Guggenheim Museum Bilbao.

2002 Koons starts working on the Popeye series. Major exhibitions include the Guggenheim Museum, New York; Kunsthaus Bielefeld, Germany; Musée d'art Contemporain, Nîmes; and Chosun Ilbo Art Museum, Seoul.

2003 Solo exhibitions include "Popeye" at Sonnabend Gallery and a major survey of Koons's work that takes place at Museo Archeologico Nazionale in Naples, Italy.

2004-2005 The artist begins the Hulk Elvis series. Retrospectives are shown at C&M Arts, New York, and the Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo, in Norway that travels to Helsinki City Art Museum in Finland the following year. In 2005, Koons is elected to the American Academy for Arts and Sciences, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

2006 To celebrate the launch of the Pinault Collection at Palazzo Grassi, *Balloon Dog (Magenta)* is presented on the Grand Canal in Venice. *Balloon Flower (Red)* is unveiled at 7 World Trade Center in New York. Koons receives the Artistic Achievement Award from the Americans for the Arts.

2007 President Jacques Chirac promotes Koons from Chevalier to Officier de la Légion d'Honneur. Koons transforms *Rabbit* into a Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade balloon filled with 4650 cubic feet of helium.

2008 Koons starts working on the Antiquity series. The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin exhibit sculptures from the Celebration series. Koons's iconic works are the subject of a solo show at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Chicago. Koons becomes the first living artist to stage solo exhibition at the Château de Versailles.

2009 The Serpentine Gallery in London presents the Popeye series. In New York, Koons curates a posthumous exhibition of works by teacher and friend, Ed Paschke, at Gagosian.

2010-2011 Jeff Koons is made an Honorary Member of the Royal Academy of Arts, London. Koons created the 17th BMW Art Car that raced at the 24 hours of Le Mans, France. In 2011, Punta Della Dogana presents key pieces from the Pinault Collection including a room dedicated to the iconic Popeye sculptures during "In Praise of Doubt".

2012 Koons has a solo show at the Fondation Beyeler in Basel and presents two exhibitions in Frankfurt, one of paintings at Schirn Kunsthalle and one of sculptures at Liebieghaus Skulpturensammlung.

2013 The artist exhibits sculptures from the Gazing Ball series at David Zwirner while a simultaneous show of Koons's work is on view at Gagosian in New York. Koons receives the U.S. State Department's Medal of Arts, which was awarded in Washington, D.C., in 2012.

2014-2015 A major retrospective of Koons's work travels from The Whitney Museum of American Art in New York, to the Centre Pompidou in Paris and Guggenheim Museum Bilbao. *Split-Rocker* appears in Rockefeller Center. In 2015, Koons presents his Gazing Ball Paintings for the first time at Gagosian in New York.

2016 The French Institute Alliance Française honors Koons with the Trophée des Arts Award. Solo exhibitions include Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires, Buenos Aires, Argentina and two exhibitions in London at the Newport Street Gallery and Almine Rech Gallery.

2017 Koons becomes the First Artist-in Residence at Columbia University's Mortimer B. Zuckerman Mind Brain Behavior Institute. Koons is made an Honorary Member of University of Oxford's Edgar Wind Society for Outstanding Contribution to Visual Culture. At over 13 meters tall, *Seated Ballerina* is unveiled in Rockefeller Center in New York while another large-scale inflatable, *Balloon Dog*, tours during the Jay Z – 4:44 Festival Tour.

2018 *Jeff Koons—Works from the Astrup Fearnley Collection* is on view during the 25th year of the museum. De Nieuwe Kerk Amsterdam presents *Gazing Ball (Perugino Madonna and Child with Four Saints)* as its 2018 Masterpiece.

2019 The Ashmolean Museum in Oxford presents a solo Jeff Koons exhibition. Koons is made an Honorary Professor of Sculpture of the Fine Arts Academy of Carrara in Carrara, Italy. Koons relocates his studio near Hudson Yards. *Seated Ballerina*, the large-scale inflatable, is presented outside Museo Jumex during an exhibition featuring the works of Marcel Duchamp and Jeff Koons. An inauguration was held in the gardens of the Champs-Élysées in Paris on October 4 for *Bouquet of Tulips*, a monumental sculpture created by Jeff Koons, which was offered by donation to the City of Paris in support from the American people to Parisians and French people bereaved by the attacks of 2015-2016.

2020 The Tel Aviv Museum of Art hosts a solo exhibition of the artist's paintings and sculptures. Koons debuts *Balloon Venus Lespugue (Red)* on David Zwirner Online. *Venus*, the first completed work from Koons's newly conceived Porcelain series, is presented during the National Gallery of Victoria Triennial in Melbourne.

2021 Qatar Museums hosts the largest exhibition of Koons's work in the Gulf Region in Doha.



## Artistic and cultural programme

The exhibition programme is currently being designed and organized. It will be published in its entirety at the inauguration.

- *Jeff Koons in his own words*: interviewed specifically for the exhibition, Jeff Koons reveals in a series of unpublished commentaries both his vision of his work and the keys for reading the exhibition at Mucem – a podcast to listen to on your cellphone or on the museum's website during and/or after the visit of the exhibition.
- *Exhibition booklet (title to be confirmed)*: a surprise souvenir to conclude a visit to the exhibition that allows the visitor to extend their experience.
- *Jeff Koons at the Médiathèque*: a selection of archives produced in partnership with the INA Méditerranée to retrace the work of Jeff Koons and an opportunity to find out more about the objects that have been selected by the artist from the Mucem's collection for presentation in the exhibition.

## Exhibition catalogue

### “Jeff Koons Mucem. Works from the Pinault Collection”



Provisional cover

Collective under the direction of: Elena Geuna and Émilie Girard, exhibition curators

With contributions by: Glenn Adamson, Jean-Jacques Aillagon, Donatien Grau, Fabrice Hergott, Annabelle Ténèze, and an interview with Jeff Koons by Elena Geuna

To accompany the exhibition, the catalogue is conceived in collaboration with Jeff Koons studio. It features prestigious contributions from art historians: voices that examine Koons's relationship to the objects and popular art he selected to celebrate at the Mucem. They enter into his fascinating manufacturing processes, they pay tribute to the freedom of an artist whose works claim to resonate with a collective memory as well as to provoke joy. The book includes an exclusive interview with the artist and presents a new iconography: the dialogue between Jeff Koons's works and the Mucem's collections is captured in a specific photographic work and the entire exhibition, with its spectacular scenography documented in images.

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These photographs may be used to promote the exhibition “Jeff Koons Mucem. Works from the Pinault Collection”, scheduled for 5 May to 18 October 2021 at the Mucem.

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0. Jeff Koons, by Mario Sorrenti, 2007 © artpartner



2. Communal room of a Breton house. France, Finistère, Goulien. Beginning 1960s. Mucem © Mucem



4. Pitchers. Glazed ceramics. France, Moselle, Sarreguemines. Late 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> century. Mucem © Mucem/Marianne Kuhn



6. Bouquet of Saint Eloi – Blacksmith's signage, Sassier. Cut and painted iron sheet metal. France, Tours, 1878. Mucem © Mucem



1. Jeff Koons. *New Hoover Convertible, New Shelton Wet/Dry 10 Gallon Doubledecker*, 1981. Two vacuum cleaners, acrylic, and fluorescent lights. 99 × 28 × 28 inches; 251.5 × 71.1 × 71.1 cm. Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons



3. Jeff Koons, *Travel Bar*, 1986. Stainless steel. 14 × 20 × 12 inches; 35.6 × 50.8 × 30.5 cm. Edition 2 from an edition of 3, plus artist's proof. Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, Photo: Douglas M. Parker Studios, Los Angeles



5. Jeff Koons. *Bourgeois Bust—Jeff and Ilona*, 1991. Marble. 44 1/2 × 28 × 21 inches; 113 × 71.1 × 53.3 cm. Edition 2 from an edition of 3, plus artist's proof. ARTIST ROOMS Tate and National Galleries of Scotland. Acquired jointly through The d'Offay Donation with assistance from the National Heritage Memorial Fund and Art Fund 2008 © Jeff Koons, photo: Jim Strong, New York



7. Jeff Koons. *Balloon Dog (Magenta)*, 1994-2000. Mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent color coating. 121 × 143 × 45 inches; 307.3 × 363.2 × 114.3 cm. One of five unique versions. Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, photo © FMGB Guggenheim Bilbao Museoa, photo by Erika Barahona Ede





8. Pierre Soulier. *Le clown Mimile dans sa loge du cirque d'Hiver* [Mimile the clown in his dressing room at the Cirque d'Hiver]. 19 January 1960. France, Paris. Mucem © Mucem/Pierre Soulier



11. Jeff Koons. *Gazing Ball (Picasso Couple)*, 2014-2015. Oil on canvas, glass, and aluminum. 68 5/8 × 53 3/4 × 14 3/4 inches; 174.3 × 136.5 × 37.5 cm. Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, photo: Tom Powel Imaging/Courtesy Gagosian



14. Hair in picture frames. Hair, wood, paper, glass. France, 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Mucem © Mucem/Marianne Kuhn



17. Jeff Koons. *Lobster*, 2007-2012. Mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent color coating. 57 7/8 × 37 × 18 7/8 inches; 147 × 94 × 47.9 cm. Edition 1 from an edition of 3, plus artist's proof. Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, photo: Marc Damage/Courtesy Almine Rech Gallery



9. Jeff Koons. *Hanging Heart (Red/Gold)*, 1994-2006. Mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent color coating. 114 5/8 × 110 1/4 × 40 inches; 291 × 280 × 101.5 cm. Plus ribbon at variable length. One of five unique versions. Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, photo: Installation view at Punta della Dogana, 2009 © Palazzo Grassi/ORCH orsenigo\_chemollo



12. Pablo Picasso. *The painter and two models*, 1954. Pitcher, painted terracotta, France, Vallauris © Succession Picasso 2021, photo: Mucem/Yves Inchiezman



15. Jeff Koons. *Dolphin*, 2002. Polychromed aluminum, stainless steel, and coated steel chain. 63 × 72 1/2 × 38 inches; 160 × 184.2 × 96.5 cm. Plus chain at variable length. Edition 1 from an edition of 3, plus artist's proof. Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, photo: Tom Powel Imaging



13. Jeff Koons. *Elephants*, 2001. Oil on canvas. 120 × 168 inches; 304.8 × 426.7 cm. Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons, photo: Douglas M. Parker Studios, Los Angeles



10. Ex voto. Brass, silver. France and Italy. 20<sup>th</sup> century. Mucem © Mucem/Marianne Kuhn



16. Fountain. Tin and brass. Austria, Steyr. Middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Mucem © Mucem/Marianne Kuhn



18. Acrobat, Sadi Alfarabi. Monochrome print. 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Mucem © Mucem





19. Jeff Koons. *Backyard*, 2002.  
Inkjet on canvas. 164 × 288 inches;  
416.6 × 731.5 cm. Edition 1 from an  
edition of 1, plus artist's proof.  
Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons



22. Cow – Merry Go Round piece.  
Gustave Bayol. Sculpted and painted  
wood, metal, leather. France, Angers.  
Circa 1900  
Mucem © Mucem



25. Jeff Koons. *Bluebird Planter*,  
2010-2016.  
Mirror-polished stainless steel with  
transparent color coating and live  
flowering plants.  
82 1/2 × 110 3/4 × 40 inches;  
209.6 × 281.3 × 101.6 cm.  
Edition 1 from an edition of 3, plus  
artist's proof.  
Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons,  
photo: Fredrick Nilsen/Courtesy  
Gagosian



20. Chairs.  
Wood. France, Alsace.  
Beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.  
Mucem © Mucem/Marianne Kuhn



23. Jeff Koons. *Titi*, 2004-2009.  
Mirror-polished stainless steel with  
transparent colored coating.  
37 7/8 × 23 13/16 × 14 7/8 inches;  
96.2 × 60.5 × 37.8 cm.  
Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons,  
photo: Robert McKeever/Courtesy  
Gagosian



26. Ridge finial.  
Glazed stoneware, France.  
1<sup>st</sup> half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.  
Mucem © Mucem/Marianne Kuhn



21. Jeff Koons. *Caterpillar Chains*,  
2003.  
Polychromed aluminum and coated  
steel chain. 20 × 43 1/2 × 77 inches;  
50.8 × 110.5 × 195.6 cm  
Plus chain at variable length.  
Edition 1 from an edition of 3, plus  
artist's proof.  
Pinault Collection © Jeff Koons,  
photo: Tom Powel Imaging



24. Headdress.  
Linen canvas, cotton, satin.  
19<sup>th</sup> century.  
France, Poitou-Charentes.  
Mucem © Mucem/Marianne Kuhn

## Caisse d'Epargne CEPAC

Founding sponsor of the Mucem

As a regional cooperative bank, the Caisse d'Epargne CEPAC has always been involved in corporate philanthropy, particularly in favour of culture in all of its areas of operations. A founding sponsor of the Mucem since 2013, CEPAC is committed to promoting access to culture for as many people as possible. Thanks to its support, more than 200.000 students have been able to benefit from reduced rates for school outings. Each year, we choose to support a major exhibition. After "Island time" and "Folklore", CEPAC has decided to associate itself with the flagship exhibition of 2021 dedicated to the master of contemporary art, Jeff Koons. The American artist, pope of "neo pop", has chosen to settle in Marseille for an exceptional six-month collaboration with the Mucem. Jeff Koons, a world-renowned visual artist, has wanted to create an original exhibition that would bring his works together with the Mucem's collections. The exhibition puts into perspective both contemporary art and the riches of the Mediterranean, which are particularly close to our hearts.

"What an opportunity to offer the people of Marseille and Provence the chance to discover the contemporary work of Jeff Koons and to participate in a unique experience that allows a re-reading of the Mucem's collections through a bold and modern prism. At a time when the cultural sector is strongly impacted by the current crisis, it is essential to allow culture to live and grow, and to continue to offer us this opening onto other worlds."

Joël Chassard  
Chairman of la Caisse d'Epargne CEPAC



## La Fondation PwC France et Maghreb

Founding sponsor of the Mucem

The Fondation d'entreprise PwC France et Maghreb was created in June 2007. Its chairman is Bernard Gannier and its CEO is Loïc Le Claire, partner, Chairman of PwC Société d'Avocats and General Delegate of the Foundation.

It is in line with the strategic ambition of PwC France et Maghreb to help reconcile business, economy and society by putting people at the heart of its action for sustainable and responsible growth. The Foundation is one of the vectors of PwC France et Maghreb's involvement with current socio-economic realities. It provides support for major not-for-profit projects, particularly those in which its employees are involved.

Developing a strong cultural patronage in favour of major exhibitions that highlight the national heritage, PwC France et Maghreb is convinced that the opening up of culture is one of the conditions of social equilibrium.

This year, the Foundation, a founding sponsor of the Mucem, is the main sponsor of the "Jeff Koons Mucem" exhibition, organized by the Museum of Civilizations of Europe and the Mediterranean. By providing financial support for this new exhibition, the Foundation is proud to be able to contribute to the commitment of French companies to the artistic and cultural activity of our country.

In France and the Maghreb, PwC develops consulting, audit and legal expertise assignments with the strategic ambition of helping to reconcile business, the economy and society. The entities of PwC France et Maghreb bring together over 6.000 employees who share their expertise within an international network of over 276.000 people in 157 countries.

Among its initiatives, the firm is committed to the collective empowerment of all its employees, clients and stakeholders in order to anticipate future practices.

In the région Sud & Monaco, over 300 employees in the Marseille, Nice, Montpellier and Monaco offices offer a range of multi-skilled services, from financial audit to more specialized services (assistance with IPOs, financial communication, IFRS, internal control, consolidation, mergers/acquisitions, organizational and information systems consulting, etc), in conjunction with the law firm PwC Société d'Avocats.



## Interxion

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Founding sponsor of the Mucem

Interxion is a Digital Realty company and one of the leading providers of neutral-carrier data center services to telecom operators and cloud providers in EMEA. Interxion is committed to helping organizations accelerate their digital transformation. With a network of over 100 data centers in 11 European countries, Interxion enables companies to host, exchange and distribute data in a secure environment. As part of the Digital Realty Group, our customers can now access 47 cities on six continents.

In France, Interxion has offices in Paris and Marseille. The presence of submarine cables serving Africa, the Middle East and Asia has made Marseille a leading digital hub and Interxion is committed to supporting its development through the construction of new infrastructure. In the city, Interxion has recently built its third data center, Interxion MRS3.

This year, the operator has joined forces with Mucem as a founding sponsor to provide special support for the “Jeff Koons Mucem” exhibition.

**interxion**  
A DIGITAL REALTY COMPANY

## Bookings and enquiries

Bookings 7 days a week from 9am to 6pm  
on telephone 04 84 35 13 13  
or by email to [reservation@mucem.org](mailto:reservation@mucem.org)

Deaf and hearing impaired on: 06 07 26 29 62  
[handicap@mucem.org](mailto:handicap@mucem.org)

## Opening hours (subject to change)

Daily except Tuesdays

Face mask and temperature monitoring:  
mandatory for visitors 11 years old and over

10am-7pm from 5 May to 5 July 2021  
10am-8pm from 7 July to 30 August 2021  
10am-7pm from 1 September to 18 October 2021

Last entry 45 minutes prior to closure of the site.  
Exiting of exhibition halls 15 minutes prior to closure  
of the site. These times are subject to change  
depending on the health situation.

## Prices

Mucem ticket 11€/7.50€  
(permanent and temporary exhibitions/valid for the day)

Mucem Family ticket 18€  
(permanent and temporary exhibitions/2 adults and 5  
children max./valid for the day)

Guided visit 16€/12.50€/5€  
(under 18s)

Visit in FSL or with  
audio description 4.50€

Access to the Mucem's outdoor spaces and gardens is  
free during the site's opening hours.  
Access to the exhibitions is free of charge for all visitors  
on the first Sunday of each month..

Free entry to exhibitions to under 18s, job seekers, recipients  
of minimal social benefits, disabled visitors with a carer and  
professionals, students at Aix-Marseille Université (AMU,  
Sciences Po Aix), INSEAMM (Beaux-Arts et Conservatoire)  
and ENSAM, and professional artists.

Free entry to the Galerie de la Méditerranée ("Connectivities";  
"The grand Meze") only for school teachers who are holders  
of a Pass Éducation and 18-25 year olds.

Reduced entry charge for holders of a full price ticket  
musée Regards de Provence, FRAC (dated the same  
week) and the musée Granet.

Avoid the queues

Buy online at [mucem.org](http://mucem.org), [fnac.com](http://fnac.com), [digitick.com](http://digitick.com),  
[ticketmaster.fr](http://ticketmaster.fr)

## Visitors in groups

Group visits (8 persons or more) to the exhibition and outdoor  
areas of the site are by prior booking only, at least 15 days in  
advance for guided tours and one week for self-guided tours.  
Booking required.

## Access

Entry at the J4 esplanade

Entry by the Panier walkway, forecourt of the église  
Saint-Laurent

Entry by the lower entrance of the fort Saint-Jean at 201,  
quai du Port

Metro Vieux-Port ou Joliette

Tram T2 République/Dames ou  
Joliette

Bus 82, 82s, 60, 83 Stop fort Saint-Jean/Night  
bus 582

Bus 49 Stop église Saint-Laurent

Paid car parks Vieux-Port – Mucem

## Social networks

Always more programme information available at [mucem.org](http://mucem.org)  
The Mucem, with you everywhere at:  
[facebook.com/lemucem](https://facebook.com/lemucem)  
[twitter.com/Mucem](https://twitter.com/Mucem)  
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