



JEFF KOONS (b. 1955)

Smooth Egg with Bow (Magenta/Violet)

mirror-polished stainless steel with transparent color coating

83 1/2 x 76 5/8 x 62 in.

of 5 unique versions

c. 1994-2009

37957

PROVENANCE:

Gagosian Gallery

Private Collection

Christie's New York: Tuesday, May 10, 2016 [Lot 0055B], Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Sale

Private Collection

EXHIBITION:

On view at Dixon Gallery and Gardens, Memphis, Tennessee, Mar 2017-2020.

LITERATURE:

H.W.Holzwarth, Jeff Koons, Cologne, 2008 p.204 (another example illustrated in color).

Hana Bank Membership Magazine, v.114, Summer, 2014, pp.4 and 5 (another example illustrated in color).

N. Wolfe, ed., Tory Burch: In Color, New York, 2014 p.100 (another example illustrated in color).

J. Kim, "A Magician of Creation and Destruction," Art, August 2014 (another example illustrated in color).

Jeff Koons is an American artist known for his reproductions of banal objects—such as Balloon animals produced in stainless steel with mirror finish surfaces. Koons' work has sold for substantial sums of money including at least one world record auction price for a work by a living artist. The largest sum known to be paid for a work by Koons is Tulips which was sold for US\$33,682,500 at Christie's New York on November 14, 2012 (Lot 35) in the Post-War & Contemporary Art Evening Sale.

Jeff Koons rose to prominence in the mid-1980s as part of a generation of artists who explored the meaning of art in a media-saturated era. He gained recognition in the 1980s and subsequently set up a factory-like studio in a SoHo loft on the corner of Houston Street and Broadway in New York. It was staffed with over 30 assistants, each assigned to a different aspect of producing his work—in a similar mode as Andy Warhol's Factory.

Among curators and art collectors and others in the art world, Koons's work is labeled as Neo-pop or Post-Pop as part of an '80s movement in reaction to the pared-down art of Minimalism and Conceptualism in the previous decade. Koons resists such comments: "A viewer might at first see irony in my work... but I see none at all. Irony causes too much critical contemplation." Koons' crucial point is to reject any hidden meaning in his artwork. The meaning is only what one perceives at first glance; there is

no gap between what the work is in itself and what is perceived. He has caused controversy by the elevation of unashamed kitsch into the high art arena, exploiting more throwaway subjects than, for example, Warhol's soup cans.

Celebration, a series of large-scale sculptures and paintings of, among others balloon dogs, Valentine hearts, diamonds, and Easter eggs, was conceived in 1994. Some of the pieces are still being fabricated. Each of the 20 different sculptures in the series comes in five differently colored "unique versions", including the artist's cracked Egg (Blue) won the 2008 Charles Wollaston Award for the most distinguished work in the Royal Academy's Summer Exhibition. Created in an edition of five versions, his later work Tulips (1995–2004) consists of a bouquet of multicolor balloon flowers blown up to gargantuan proportions (more than 6.6 ft tall and 16 ft. across). Koons finally started to work on Balloon Flower in 1995. His work Balloon Dog (1994–2000) is based on balloons twisted into shape to make a toy dog.

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