

CHRISTIE'S

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THE STAGE IS SET FOR A HISTORIC SALE CHRISTIE'S NEW YORK TO OFFER A POP ICON OF OUR AGE

JEFF KOONS *BALLOON DOG (ORANGE)*

"It is about celebration and childhood and color and simplicity - but it's also a Trojan horse. It's a Trojan horse to the whole body of art work."

JEFF KOONS



JEFF KOONS (B.1955)
Balloon Dog (Orange)
high chromium stainless steel with transparent color coating
121 x 143 x 45 inches (307.3 x 363.2 x 114.3 cm)
1994-2000
Estimate: \$35,000,000-55,000,000

New York – On November 12th, Christie's Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Sale promises to be a landmark occasion for the art market when Christie's will offer Jeff Koons' *Balloon Dog (Orange)*, one of the most recognizable images in today's canon of art history. This monumental work, with its flawless reflective surface and glorious color, is the most beloved of all contemporary sculptures. Its spectacular form has been celebrated around the world, having graced the rooftop of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, Venice's Grand Canal, and Versailles Palace outside Paris. It has become an icon of Popular vernacular, adored by the public and collectors for its unabashed celebration of childhood, hope and innocence. Estimated at \$35 – 55 million, *Balloon Dog (Orange)* is expected to surpass the artist's current record of \$33.6 million, established in 2012 by Christie's New York with Koons' chromatic *Tulips* (now on display at the Wynn Casino Las Vegas), and is set to make history for the sale of a work by a contemporary artist. *Balloon Dog (Orange)* is part of the Brant Collection and proceeds from the sale will be used to help fund future activities of The Brant Foundation Art Study Center in Greenwich, CT.

“At a time when collectors are propelling rare master works to new price levels at auction, the sale of Jeff Koons’ Balloon Dog will be a spectacular event for buyers around the world. This is a definitive icon of the 20th century. The Balloon Dog is the Holy Grail for collectors and foundations. In private hands, the work has always communicated the prominence and stature of its owner. Like Andy Warhol’s portrait of Marilyn, which influenced Koons’ choice of the orange metallic color for Balloon Dog, it is the ultimate masterpiece, instantly recognizable to the art world and public alike. To own this work immediately positions the buyer alongside the very top collectors in the world and transforms a collection to an unparalleled level of greatness,” stated **Brett Gorvy, Chairman and International Head of Post-War & Contemporary Art.**

A timeless and universal monument to the joys of childhood, Jeff Koons takes the simple transitory form of a party balloon animal, and blows it up to a heroic scale. Creating the illusion of weightlessness with reflective stainless steel of gigantic proportions, the work is considered the supreme example from Koon’s highly desired and acclaimed *Celebration Series*, begun in the early 1990s. The series evolved from Koons' desire to recreate the ecstatic experiences of a child's enjoyment of the world with universal signifiers. His sculptures recall Constantin Brancusi's pristine, polished forms with their rounded, flawless surface.

Jeff Koons declared, *“I think the balloon dog is really a symbol like the Trojan horse—something kind of mythic, and an aspect of a history.”* The work has been equally lauded by critics: described as *“an awesome presence...a massive durable monument”* by **Amy Dempsey**, while **Jerry Saltz** wrote that he was, *“wowed by the technical virtuosity and eye-popping visual blast (...) it’s so perfect it exists in some undisturbed eternal state. Call it the reflective sublime.”*

Five years ago, it was the *Celebration* series that shot Koons to newfound prominence in the market and in museums, achieving the highest price for a living artist at auction with the sale of his *Balloon Flower (Magenta)* at Christie’s in London in 2008. Since then, Jeff Koons has had important museum shows at the Neue Nationalgalerie in Berlin, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, the Chateau de Versailles in France, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the Serpentine Gallery in London, the Beyeler Foundation in Basel, Switzerland and the Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt, Germany.

Inspired by Andy Warhol’s five iconic Marilyn paintings, *Balloon Dog (Orange)* was conceived as one of five unique Balloon Dog sculptures in individual metallic colors. Each example has an outstanding pedigree, belonging to the world’s greatest and most revered private collectors: The Broad Art Foundation- *Balloon Dog (Blue)*; Steven Cohen – *Balloon Dog (Yellow)*; Dakis Joannou’s Deste Foundation for Contemporary art - *Balloon Dog (Red)*; Francois Pinault – *Balloon Dog (Magenta)*.

Balloon Dog (Orange) was one of the first of the Balloon Dogs to be fabricated, and was acquired by Greenwich collector Peter Brant in the late 1990s. As well as owning the foremost collection of works by Andy Warhol and Jean-Michel Basquiat in private hands, Brant’s focus as a pioneering collector and passion for artists such as Jeff Koons, Christopher Wool, Richard Prince, Cindy Sherman, Julian Schnabel, John Currin and Elizabeth Peyton has had a major impact on their markets and amongst collectors inspired by his vision. The Brant Collection contains the essential Koons grouping, including; *Pink Panther*, 1988, the monumental flowering *Puppy*, 1992, and *Balloon Dog (Orange)*.

*“Since the mid 1980s, the work of Jeff Koons has remained core to my collection. Along with the monumental *Puppy*, 1992, *Balloon Dog (Orange)* is recognized as his masterpiece. The sale of this work will provide future funding to enrich and expand the vision of The Brant Foundation Art Study Center,”* declared **Peter Brant.**

NOTE TO EDITORS: JEFF KOONS AT CHRISTIE'S



In June 2008, **Balloon Flower (Magenta)** achieved **\$25.8 million** at Christie's, then the world auction record for the artist.



Christie's holds the world record for a painting by the artist at auction, achieved when **Loopy** sold for **\$5.1 million** in June 2010



In November 2012 Christie's set the current world auction record when **Tulips** sold for **\$33.7 million**

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About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in the first half of 2013 that totaled £2.4 billion/\$3.68 billion. In 2012, Christie's had global auction and private sales that totaled £3.92 billion/\$6.27 billion making it the highest annual total in Christie's history. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's has since conducted the greatest and most celebrated auctions through the centuries providing a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 450 auctions annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$100 million. Christie's also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War and Contemporary, Impressionist and Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Private sales totaled £465.2 million (\$711.8 million) in the first half of 2013, an increase of 13% on the previous year, and for the third successive year represents the highest total for the period in both company and art market history.

Christie's has a global presence with 53 offices in 32 countries and 12 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Mumbai. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in growth markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.

*Estimates do not include buyer's premium. Sales totals are hammer price plus buyer's premium and do not reflect costs, financing fees or application of buyer's or seller's credits.

About the Brant Foundation Art Study Center

The Brant Foundation Art Study Center, designed by Richard Gluckman, has a mission to promote education and appreciation of contemporary art and design, by making works available to institutions and individuals for scholarly study and examination. The Brant Foundation Art Study Center presents long-term exhibitions curated primarily from the collection. The collection is remarkable in that scores of artists are represented in depth, including works from the earliest period of their practice through their most recent works. Currently, The Brant Foundation, Inc., established in 1996, lends works to more than a dozen exhibitions per year.

<http://www.brantfoundation.org/>

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