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MICKY MOUSE INSPIRES DAMIEN HIRST



***World-Renowned Artist Interprets Mickey Mouse Using His Trademark Spots
Hirst To Donate Proceeds Of The Painting's Auction At Christie's To Kids Company***

London: With his iconic status, universal appeal and ability to emotionally connect with generations of people all over the world, Mickey Mouse has inspired many world-renowned artists, including Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein and Claes Oldenburg. British artist Damien Hirst is the latest to follow in these famous footsteps with his very own interpretation of Disney's best-loved character.

Damien Hirst was invited by Disney to create a unique piece of art that combines the fun and energy of Mickey Mouse with Hirst's own unique style. The artist took inspiration from Mickey's round shapes and created "*Mickey*", household gloss on canvas, 1829 x 1054 millimetres.

"*Mickey*" will be auctioned in aid of the charity Kids Company as part of the *Post-War and Contemporary Art Evening Auction*, which will take place at Christie's headquarters (8 King Street, St. James's, London) on Thursday 13 February at 7pm. "*Mickey*" will be on view to the public as part of the auction's pre-sale exhibition from the 8 until 13 February 2014. Kids Company is a charity which Hirst has long supported. Based in London and Bristol and established in 1996, it provides practical, emotional and educational support to vulnerable inner-city children and young people.

Carlotta Saltini, Vice President, Marketing, Mickey Mouse and Friends, for The Walt Disney Company EMEA says: “Damien Hirst’s “*Mickey*” painting is a great example of a modern, innovative and creative interpretation of the world’s most famous mouse whose never-ending appeal spans across generations of audiences. We’re also thrilled that this collaboration will benefit vulnerable children and young people.”

Damien Hirst comments, "Mickey Mouse represents happiness and the joy of being a kid and I have reduced his shape down to the basic elements of a few simple spots. I hope people love it, because it is still instantly recognisable - Mickey Mouse is such a universal and powerful icon."

Camila Batmanghelidjh, Founder and Chief Executive of Kids Company says: “Maltreated children often feel very alone. Having been victimised, they lose their sense of power and potency. In cartoon characters like Mickey Mouse they find a friend, sometimes a protector and the hope that one day they’ll leave the harm they have endured. Damien Hirst to the children of Kids Company has been a genuine hero. He has mobilised resources to help transform lives by offering children a brighter future.”

Francis Outred, Head of Post-War and Contemporary Art, Christie’s Europe adds: “As an icon of cartoon and consumer culture and one of the classic designs of the twentieth century, Mickey Mouse has provided inspiration to generations of great artists from Roy Lichtenstein, whose 'Look Mickey' was arguably his first piece of Pop Art, to Andy Warhol, who idolised him in his 'Myths' series, as well as Claes Oldenberg to name but a few. Damien’s is an exciting and hugely significant addition to this rich artistic vein of Mickey depictions. Taking his own universally recognised painterly language – the spots – and applying it in a striking yet simple composition to Mickey, the resulting image speaks of the profound way that both icons have entered our collective consciousness. We look forward to exhibiting the painting in London, and to offering it at the *Post-War and Contemporary Evening Auction* in February. We are honoured to play a part in raising funds for such a worthy cause as Kids Company.”

Collaborations with artists, designers and visionaries started with Walt Disney himself. He pushed the boundaries and expectations to create spectacular new things and many “firsts”, such as the first full-colour feature-length animated film and the first theme park. And following the company’s founder’s passion for art and creativity, The Walt Disney Company continues to encourage collaborations with contemporary artists.

In 1954 Walt Disney and Salvador Dalí collaborated to produce *Destino*, a short animated film. Walt Disney famously commented on collaborations by stating: “You’re a genius. I’m a genius. So imagine what we can do together.”

Andy Warhol’s Mickey Mouse interpretation is particularly iconic and belongs to a portfolio of ten screen prints called ‘Myths’ published in 1981. The series is based on different characters from American pop culture which have become icons and have defined generations.

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For images of Andy Warhol and Roy Lichtenstein's interpretations of Mickey Mouse please contact: www.dacs.org.uk

About The Walt Disney Company in Europe, Middle East and Africa

The Walt Disney Company, together with its subsidiaries and affiliates, is a leading diversified international family entertainment and media enterprise. Disney is a Dow 30 company and had annual revenues of around \$45billion in its last fiscal year (FY13).

The Walt Disney Company has been at the forefront of family entertainment in Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) for 80 years and is dedicated to creating innovative, entertainment experiences for children and families. Disney has a presence in 25 countries and employs more than 6,000 people (and 14,500 employees in Disneyland Paris) in 42 offices, and London (UK) is the regional headquarters. Disney is experienced in numerous ways across the region including in cinemas, on TV screens with Disney-branded channels as well as through non branded content such as the award-winning series "Revenge", through a wide range of consumer products that are sold at mass market retailers and in numerous Disney Stores across the region, and at Disneyland Paris, which opened in 1992 and is Europe's #1 tourist destination.

About Damien Hirst

Damien Hirst was born in 1965 in Bristol and grew up in Leeds. In 1984 he moved to London, where he worked in construction before studying for a BA in Fine Art at Goldsmiths college from 1986 to 1989.

Whilst in his second year at Goldsmiths, Hirst conceived and curated '[Freeze](#)', a group exhibition that included both his own work and that of his fellow students. The exhibition is commonly acknowledged to have been the launching point not only for Hirst, but for a generation of British artists. For its final phase he painted two series of coloured spots on to the warehouse walls. Hirst describes the [spot paintings](#) as a means of "pinning down the joy of colour", and explains they provided a solution to all the problems he'd previously had with colour. It has become one of the artist's most prolific and recognisable series, and in January 2012 the works were exhibited in a show of unprecedented scale across 11 [Gagosian Gallery](#) locations worldwide. He was awarded the Turner Prize in 1995.

Since 1987, over 80 solo Damien Hirst exhibitions have taken place worldwide and his work has been included in over 260 group shows. His contribution to British art over the last two and a half decades was recognised in 2012 with a major retrospective of his work staged at [Tate Modern](#). Hirst lives and works in London, Gloucestershire and Devon.

About Kids Company

Kids Company was founded by Camila Batmanghelidjh in 1996. Kids Company provides practical, emotional and educational support to vulnerable inner-city children and young people. Its services reach 36,000 children across London and Bristol, including the most deprived and at risk whose parents are unable to care for them due to their own practical or emotional challenges. The charity provides a safe, caring, family environment where support is tailored to the needs of each individual. Their services and support empower children who have experienced enormous challenges to lead positive and fulfilling lives.

In 2007 Kids Company was awarded the Liberty and JUSTICE Human Rights Award. In 2010 they were selected as a 'Child Poverty Champion' by the End Child Poverty project for their success in enabling children to achieve their full potential.

Registered Charity Number: 1068298 www.kidsco.org.uk

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2013 that totaled £4.5 billion/ \$7.1 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 around 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 & Contemporary, Impressionist & Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Private sales totaled £760.5 million (\$1.19 billion) in 2013, an increase of 20% on the previous year.

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.*

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