



## Jeff Koons × BERNARDAUD

2022.4.9 (Sat) -  
9.11 (Sun)

### An Introduction to the Series of Collaborative Works between the Traditional French Porcelain Brand Bernardaud and the Contemporary Artist Jeff Koons

Exhibition Title	Jeff Koons × BERNARDAUD
Period	Saturday, April 9 – Sunday, September 11, 2022
Closed	Mondays(except July 18, August 15), July 19, August 16
Hours	10:00-18:00(until 20:00 on Fridays and Saturdays)
Venue	21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Design Gallery
Admission	Free
Organized by	21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa [Kanazawa Art Promotion and Development Foundation]
In Cooperation with	BERNARDAUD JAPAN K.K.
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## About the Exhibition

Jeff Koons (born in York, Pennsylvania in 1955; currently living in New York) emerged as a leading figure in the international art scene with works that made use of pop culture icons and eye-catching everyday images. In this exhibition, we present Koons' *Celebration*, a series that was delicately crafted in a collaboration with Bernardaud, a porcelain brand closely associated with the French city of Limoges.

The original *Celebration* series, one of Koons' most prominent works, was made in the mid-1990s. When the motifs (cheap and lightweight animal-shaped balloons normally used as party decorations) first appeared in the form of huge stainless sculptures with a mirror finish, they combined diametrically opposed concepts such as vulgarity and class, purity and enchantment, and transience and permanence. The works not only refer to special days and times during the year, they also celebrate the life cycle as a whole.

Nearly ten years ago, Koons, who first began working with ceramics in the 1980s, commissioned Bernardaud to reproduce *Celebration* in porcelain. The company, established in 1863 in Limoges, a city renowned for porcelain, is a family-owned company that has maintained outstanding quality through the use of exquisite craftsmanship. At the same time, Bernardaud has remained on the cutting edge of creativity and technical innovation by, among other things, engaging in collaborations with internationally esteemed contemporary artists. The *Celebration* works are distinguished by their transparent colors, delicate overall balance, and – in keeping with the artist's fervent wishes – smooth and reflective surfaces. To faithfully recreate Koons' complex but carefully designed works, Bernardaud's modelers, decorators, and glazers endeavored to develop specialized skills.

Do not miss this excellent opportunity to see these works, which are the combined fruit of Koons and Bernardaud's commitment to taking on new challenges and striving for perfection, and the artisans' technical expertise.

## Profile

### Jeff Koons

Born in 1955 in York, Pennsylvania, Jeff Koons is without question one of the most important living artists. He is among the few who successfully extract the essentials from avant-gardism, most notably Pop Art. In his hands, even the most familiar, everyday items transcend commonality to become true icons that manifest the essence of American popular culture. Yet on a broader scope, we are presented with positive messages of acceptance and humanity, themes which resonate universally. Koons works are exhibited throughout the world and are found in numerous public and private collections.



photo: Chris Fanning, @Jeff Koons

### BERNARDAUD

Founded in 1863 in Limoges, France, and still owned by the family, Bernardaud continues to be at the cutting edge of creativity and innovation while upholding its core values of excellence, superior quality and precision. Working in a sector that is in a permanent state of change, the house continues to develop advanced technology and push back technical limits in the art and science of porcelain-making. The company's determination to work to the highest of standards is the key to its collaboration with internationally famous contemporary artists.

BERNARDAUD

Exhibition  
features**Ballon Dog (BLUE)**

A limited porcelain edition of *Balloon Dog (Blue)*, which is part of Koons' *Celebration* series, highly acclaimed as one of the 20th-century's preeminent artworks. The original *Balloon Dog* (1994-2000), a stainless-steel sculpture with a height of over three meters, was based on the motif of a balloon-shaped dog. Balloons, sometimes used as fun items at birthday parties and other celebrations, evoke childhood memories and innocent playfulness. By transforming something that exemplifies a moment of joy in life into a permanent work, Koons imbues a pure and innocent experience with profound symbolism.



Jeff Koons, *Balloon Dog (Blue)*, 2021  
Porcelain, 40×48×15.8cm  
BERNARDAUD, @Jeff Koons

**Diamond (Red)**

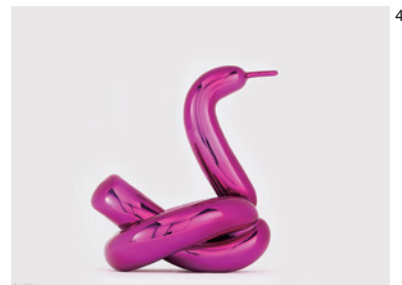
A limited porcelain edition of *Diamond*, which is part of Koons' *Celebration* series. The original *Diamond* (1994-2005) was a large sculpture with a height of nearly two meters made out of reflective stainless steel and covered with a transparent color coating. In addition to glittering like a diamond commemorating a special day, this work manifests the moment of creation, which is the origin of life. The work's mirror-like reflective surface has made repeated appearances in Koons' work for over 40 years, beginning with the *Inflatables* series in the late 1970s. It reflects both the work's surroundings and the viewer, while also suggesting the inseparable connection between the work and the viewer.



Jeff Koons, *Diamond (Red)*, 2020  
Porcelain, 31.8×39.3×32cm  
BERNARDAUD, @Jeff Koons

**Balloon Swan (Magenta)**

A limited porcelain edition of *Balloon Swan*, which is part of Koons' *Celebration* series. The original *Balloon Swan* (2004-2011) was a large sculpture with a height of over three meters that was created in five colors: magenta, red, purple, blue, and yellow. One of Koons' first ceramic works was a white swan, which he made at the age of nine. The motif is so important to the artist that he spent a year and a half deciding on the angle of the animal's elegant neck. Koons has said of the work, "If you look at it from the front, it's totem-like and male. If you go to the side, it becomes female. *Balloon Swan* is reminiscent of classical works; it defines beauty as sexual harmony."



Jeff Koons, *Balloon Swan (Magenta)*, 2017  
Porcelain, 24.1×16.4×21cm  
@Jeff Koons

### Balloon Rabbit (Violet)

A limited porcelain edition of *Balloon Rabbit*, which was inspired by a rabbit-shaped balloon. The original *Balloon Rabbit* (2005-2010) was a large sculpture with a height of over four meters that was created in five colors: blue, magenta, purple, red, and yellow. Born in a rural part of south-central Pennsylvania, Koons has said that he was deeply impressed by the rabbit balloons that were used to decorate houses at Easter, and the generous spirits and rich hearts of local residents, who set out to delight people in the neighborhood. As suggested by other noteworthy Koons works such as *Inflatable Flower and Bunny* (1979) and *Rabbit* (1986), the rabbit motif occupies an important place in the artist's practice.



Jeff Koons, *Balloon Rabbit (Violet)*, 2017  
Porcelain, 29.2×13.9×21cm  
@Jeff Koons

### About the Pop-up store

During the exhibition period, Bernard products such as tableware and home decor are available for purchase at the Museum Shop 2.

Inquires for Bernardaud:  
YOSHIDA Tomoyo, Oens. Inc  
Tel: 03-6418-6962  
E-mail: tomoyo\_y@oens.net  
www.bernardaud.com



### Images for Publicity

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