

## THE PUPYES SERIES BY JEFF KOONS

### SERIA „PUPPYES” CREATĂ DE JEFF KOONS

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***Abstract.** In this paper we will show how Jeff Koons has managed to combine the landscape sculpture and architecture realizing an interesting series of the floral starting from 1992 until 2002. The novelty brought by the Koon's works is given by the shape and size of the entire series. These works represent the form of the pet puppies, the Terrier race, oversized up to a 13 meter height. The flower pots are supported by metal frames. Although the flowers are perennial, these floral arrangements look wonderful and they need a lot of care by qualified personnel. The visual effect of such floral arrangements is special and for this it is worth the effort. Until now, the artist Jeff Koons has created several of these floral arrangements located in different countries in the world, such as: The Schloss Arolsen, Germany during Documenta IX, 1992, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain, 1997, The Brant Foundation, Greenwich, Connecticut, 2002. The artistic quality of this series of pet puppies is controversial because the art critics have a different opinion about it. Despite this, art collectors are still interested in floral arrangements. Placed in different locations these works get on different meanings aesthetic and managed to impose itself as an argument in support of the contemporary artistic approach.*

**Key words:** floral arrangements, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao

***Rezumat.** In acest articol vom arăta cum Jeff Koons a reușit să îmbine arhitectura peisageră cu sculptura, realizând în perioada 1992-2002 o serie de aranjamente florale. Ca element de noutate, aceste aranjamente sunt volumetrice, redând forma unor cățeluși de companie, rasa Terrier, supradimensionat până la 13 m înălțime. Ghivecele de flori sunt susținute pe schelete metalice. Ținând cont de caracterul peren al florilor, aceste aranjamente necesită o îngrijire permanentă, asigurată de personal calificat. Efectul vizual deosebit al unui asemenea aranjament merita efortul de întreținere. Până în prezent, au fost realizate cinci asemenea aranjamente la Schloss Arolsen, Germany pe parcursul Documenta IX, 1992, Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain, 1997, The Brant Foundation, Greenwich, Connecticut, 2002 (instalație permanentă). Calitatea artistică a acestei serii este discutabilă, criticii având păreri diferite, dar în același timp, a trezit interesul colecționarilor. Situate în diferite locații, lucrările capătă diferite valențe estetice, reușind să se impună ca argument în sprijinul demersului artistic contemporan.*

**Cuvinte cheie:** aranjamente florale, Muzeul Guggenheim, Bilbao

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## INTRODUCTION

The 20th century remain in the history of art through constant redefinition of the field of Visual Arts. Creative energies were channeled more on searching of new mediums of expression than on deepening and plastic styles claimed by various artistic groups.

Born in New York, Pennsylvania, Jeff Koons studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and Maryland. Before he has a reputation as an artist, he has enjoyed success as a broker on Wall Street. He also worked in a Department that was collecting funds for the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Building on the style of Pop-art and conceptual ideas, in particular his concept of the "readymade" Duchamp 's, presented as found art object, he discovered new areas as regards the content, the production, and the artist's relationship with the celebrity and the market art. He created beauty and challenging sculptures with a technical refinement and deserves the most critical and commercial success and his popularity (Kaufman, 2014).

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

One of the famous artists who managed to merge and then revolutionize with success two completely different disciplines at first glance, sculpture and landscape architecture, it's the artist Jeff Koons. The series of works entitled "Puppy" (fig. 1) illustrates very well the aforementioned.



**Fig. 1** - Puppy The Brant Foundation, Greenwich, Connecticut, 2002 - the permanent instalation ([http://www.jeffkoons.com/site/pup\\_3.html](http://www.jeffkoons.com/site/pup_3.html))

The artist performs volume that defines these innovative projects, through the combination of different colored flowers supported on a metal armature.

To carry of the plants over an entire season, he designed an internal network of pipes providing water quantity needed of flowers, and if necessary some pots can be replaced by qualified personnel providing assistance to maintain the life of the high volume of plants.

With an instinct of roasting vs. consumer desires and enjoying the challenge, former broker cheerfully dissolved any authority itself of aesthetics and replaced it with fun — little girls who embrace the Bavarian porcelain pink Panthers, huge covered with flowers, puppies are just two examples of the topics addressed by the artist.

Toward the realization of a dream scenery classical sculptor Jeff Koons did not focus on its deployment on a flat surface, as usually happens, but simply turns the plan down, as a result of this transformation resulting in a form of a puppy that stands upright and is awaiting an order from calm to his master.

In most of cases the quality of a landscape, or a green space is achieved by bringing together all the elements of decor in a whole landscape that produces pleasure, delight, or unconditioned admiration, which exercises a spontaneous attraction (Wunenburger, 2004), but in this case the lawn increases its outline and the result was one full volume effect, due to the Association of clusters happy with the familiar image of a pet puppy.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Contemporary multimedia artist Jeff Koons is one of the better quoted (in financial terms) but also controversial artists from Andy Warhol till now.



**Fig. 2** - Puppy Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao, Spain, 1997 - the permanent instalation ([http://www.jeffkoons.com/site/pup\\_2.html](http://www.jeffkoons.com/site/pup_2.html))

Influenced by his predecessors pop art such as Claes Oldenburg, Koons is known for his neo-pop kitsch, exemplified by works such as "Michael Jackson and Bubbles"-1988, made from porcelain and gold, or giant reproductions of banal objects such as "Puppy" (fig. 2), Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, 1997, or "Balloon Dog", a giant steel replica of banal forms of puppy made of the combination of several balloons (Metropolitan Museum of Art).

It is important to point that his kitsch works aforementioned are part of a commercial strategy well thought preparation and coordinated in order to capture the attention of the consumer public art, so as to benefit from a media audience needed to bring in the auction halls as well many customers. In support of this claim stands as proof that the artist aware of lack of genuine artistic value he destroyed some of his works from the beginning.

Critics are skeptical when it comes to the work of Koons, although foals were sold at auction for astronomical amounts. In 1991, a version of "Michael and Bubbles" sold for 5.6 million dollars, at that time a record for a living artist. In 2008, the "Balloon Flower" was sold at Christie's in London for record amount of 25.7 million dollars, shortly before the onset of the global economic crisis.

Personally I don't think that financial success is synonymous with artistic value of a work of art, but in the case of Puppies series I agree that we have to do with the high-quality contemporary art created in the spirit of the ephemeral and consumerist style which characterize the way of living of our days.



**Fig. 3** - Puppy Schloss Arolsen, Germany during Documenta IX, 1992.  
(<http://www.jeffkoons.com/site/index.html>)

In 1992, he managed to obtain financing from the Art Exhibition in Bad Arolsen, Germany. Koons has made what was to be one of the most popular of his works, "Puppy" reproduced in fig. 3, a sculpture of 13 meter drop in flower arrangements supported on a steel structure, which gives the image of a Terrier puppy.

The work was bought by the Guggenheim Foundation in 1997 and installed in the courtyard at Guggenheim Museum, in Bilbao. A faithful replica of the puppy has been performed for the renowned businessman, Peter Brant of Connecticut (fig. 1).

Critics have different opinions when it comes to the value of Koons as an artist. Adherents of traditional art taking into account the importance of an artist's skills in the craft of sculptor Jeff Koons and say it has no value because in his works appeal to the help of assistants. Others considered that only certain topics may benefit from the quality and aesthetic themes of Koons are far too "kitsch" to be considered art.

## CONCLUSIONS

Located in various locations, such as the naturally, his works acquires different aesthetics meanings in musicology and, and with it the way which it is perceived is automatically diversify.

Being a work of contemporary art the most proper place to show his work is in front of the Guggenheim Museum in town Bilbao, Spain, where the relationship with the contemporary style of deconstructivist (Ortega y Gasset, 2000) and feature architecture creates a new reality suprarrealisto-futuristic, that changed the classic perception which art consumers used to it (Marleau, 2001) if we refer to the classical relationship existing for thousands of years between sculpture and architecture.

The location of the work in the front of Bad Arolsen Castle, wants to create a contrast between straight lines and walls free of vibration, and round shapes life full of gaiety of living forms created by plants, the contrast does not annul but rather accentuates and detect each piece as compose the picture even though we have the temptation to regard as a picture frame and the castle on the right composition of Puppy work resulting from the proximity of the two works.

Other outdoor locations are not so happy chosen because it can easily be confused with the environment not being any other way to highlight the work than through the stain color that creates a strong contrast between the work and the environment.

The contemporary artist have the emblematic desire to distance themselves completely from classical art crossing the kitsch from subculturale genres, among classical art genres (Zaharia, 2007), but when it comes to aesthetic value, Puppies series manages to impose itself as

one of the few artistic moments full of plastic and aesthetic meanings, as an argument in support of the contemporary artistic approach.

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