



PROJECT PERPETUAL

JEFF KOONS 'GAZING BALL (CHARITY)' ON VIEW AT ALBRIGHT-KNOX ART GALLERY



New York, NY – **Project Perpetual** is pleased to announce the exhibition of ***Gazing Ball (Charity)***, a unique plaster sculpture by **Jeff Koons** at Albright-Knox Art Gallery. The show was organized by Godin-Spaulling and Holly E. Hughes. ***Gazing Ball (Charity)*** anchored the inaugural auction of Project Perpetual held November 2014 in New York, raising more than \$5.7 million for charity.

A new arts initiative, Project Perpetual works with contemporary artists to produce new works which are then auctioned to benefit organizations that advocate for children worldwide. Through the belief that genuine creativity can motivate new ways of giving, Project Perpetual generates opportunities for imaginative advocacy through contemporary art. In 2014, ***Gazing Ball (Charity)*** and nine other unique works created by Koons were auctioned to fund the work of the United Nations Foundation Shot@Life campaign to provide vaccines for children.

Inspired by the history of art, Koons based the life-sized sculpture on *La Soupe*, a painting by one of his artistic influences, Pablo Picasso. The painting, which is on loan for this exhibition from the Art Gallery of Toronto, was created in 1902-1903 at the height of Picasso's Blue Period and depicts a child reaching for a steaming bowl of soup held by a second figure, possibly her mother. Alternately, this image may be read as the child having just handed the woman a bowl of soup.

The formal relationship between Picasso's painting and Koons's unique plaster sculpture is strikingly clear, yet significant differences remain, most noticeably in Koons's interpretation of the painting's scene through the medium of plaster and on a much larger scale. Koons augments Picasso's imagery with the addition of three luxury donated handbags hanging from the woman's arms and a blue gazing ball—the latter a reference to the mirrored ornaments frequently found on suburban neighborhood lawns, including those around Koons's childhood home in Pennsylvania. The gazing ball, placed at the feet of the figures, affirms one's existence as it reflects not only the sculpture, but also the viewer. With the inclusion of the Hermès handbags, donated by renowned designers and dignitaries such as Diane von Furstenberg and Clara Kuo, Koons contrasts the prevailing mood of deprivation in *La Soupe* with a simple and powerful gesture of charity.

The exhibition will be on view through August 26, 2015.

About Project Perpetual

Project Perpetual is a new initiative that combines art and philanthropy. For each edition, a celebrated contemporary artist will produce new work to be auctioned to benefit children at risk. The Project was created in 2014 as a privately funded initiative by collector and philanthropist Svetlana Kuzmicheva-Uspenskaya. For more information, visit www.projectperpetual.org.

About The United Nations Foundation

The United Nations Foundation builds public-private partnerships to address the world's most pressing problems, and broadens support for the United Nations through advocacy and public outreach. Through innovative campaigns and initiatives, the Foundation connects people, ideas, and resources to help the UN solve global problems. The Foundation was created in 1998 as a U.S. public charity by entrepreneur and philanthropist Ted Turner and now is supported by global corporations, foundations, governments, and individuals. Through the Measles & Rubella Initiative and the Shot@Life campaign, the United Nations Foundation works directly with the United Nations and other partners to fund immunizations and advocate on the global importance of vaccination. For more information, visit www.unfoundation.org.

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