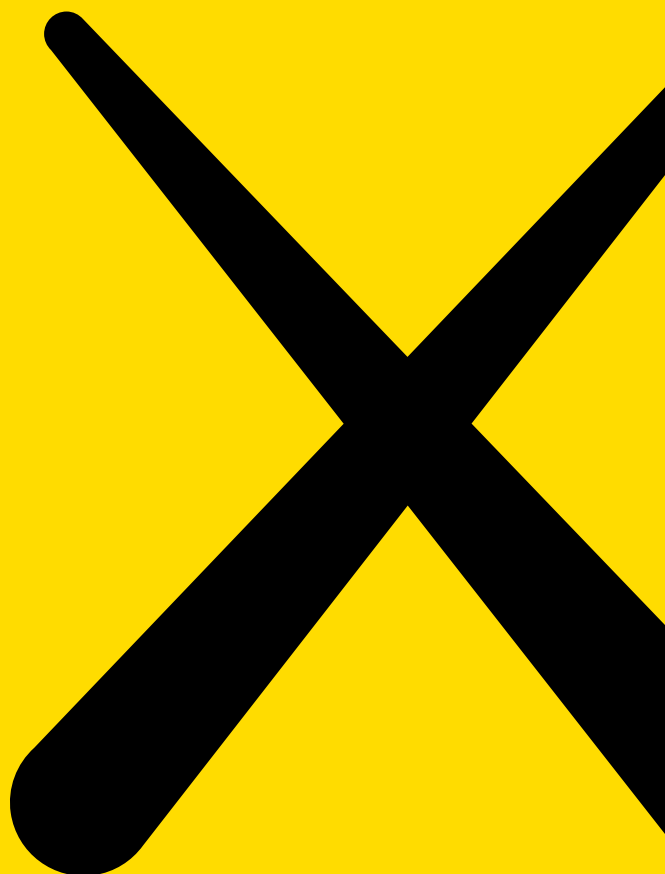


# KAWS



OPERA GALLERY

# KAWS

18 December 2025 – 15 January 2026  
BAL HARBOUR

OPERA GALLERY

# FOREWORD



From the streets of New York to museum halls and international public spaces, KAWS has developed a visual language that transcends boundaries of discipline, medium, and resonates with different audiences. His works – whether monumental sculptures, canvases imbued with saturated color, or editions – speak to both the familiarity of mass media and the unsettling ambiguities of contemporary life.

This exhibition brings together a selection of paintings, sculptures, and screenprints that encapsulate the breadth of his vision. *The Companion (Black Colorway)* (2010), with its monumental presence, is emblematic of KAWS's ability to reimagine icons of childhood into figures such as Mickey Mouse, charged with melancholy and human vulnerability. Alongside, canvases such as *Joe KAWS* (2015), *Response Ability* (2018), and *Chum (KCC5)* (2016) highlight his ongoing dialogue with form and gesture, translating cartoon-inspired characters into compositions of striking abstraction and emotional depth. Works on paper from *The News* series, as well as objects like *Seeing Black (BFF Lamp)* (2020), reflect his nimbleness in moving across mediums and contexts, bridging the space between fine art, design, and popular culture.

What unites these varied pieces is the unmistakable presence of KAWS's aesthetic vocabulary: bold lines, vivid hues, and recurring motifs such as the crossed-out eyes that simultaneously deny and affirm the possibility of vision. Through these devices, he creates works that invite multiple readings – at once playful and somber.

KAWS's ability to draw from the visual languages of our time while reshaping them into enduring symbols of human experience underscores his importance in today's artistic landscape.

**GILLES DYAN**  
Founder and Chairman  
Opera Gallery Group

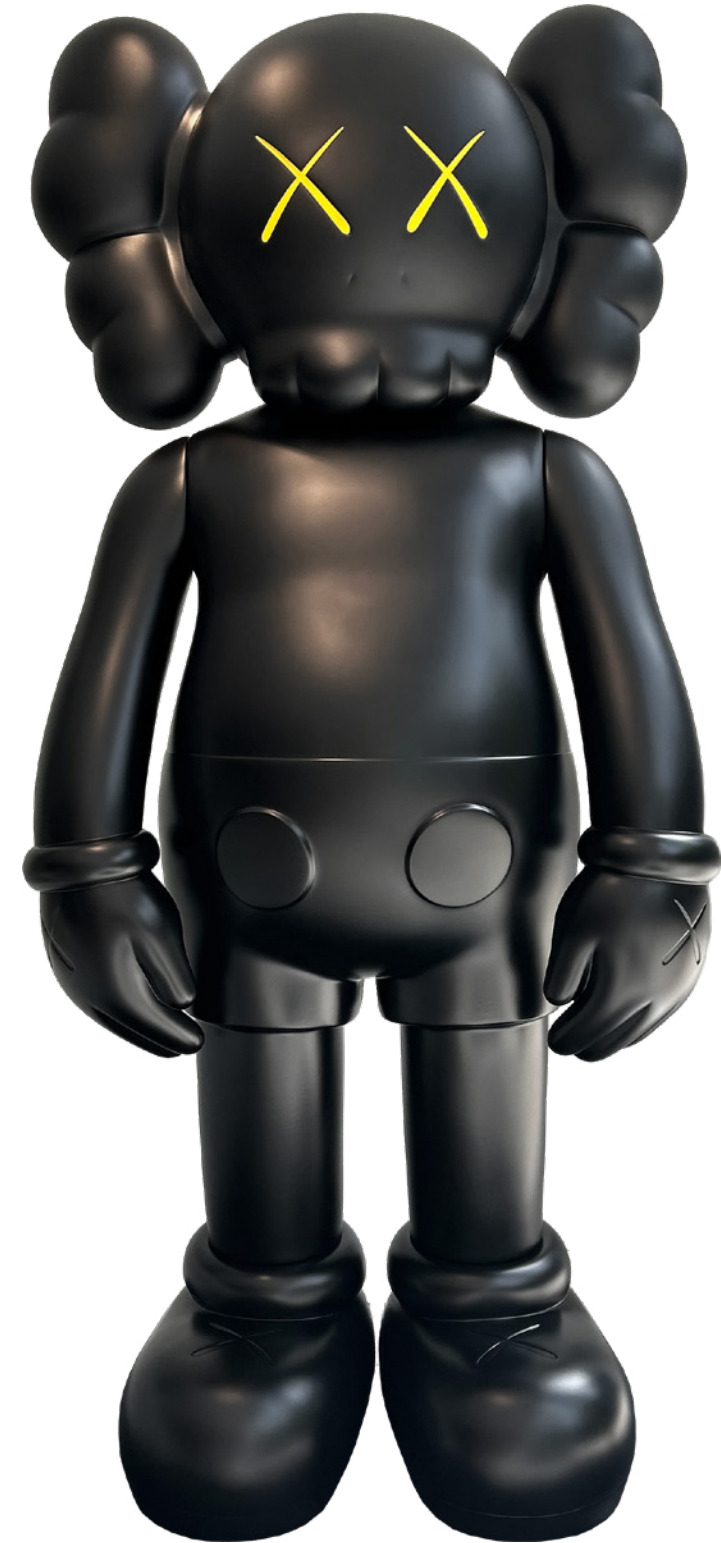
**ALEXANDRE SARFATI**  
Director  
Opera Gallery Bal Harbour

# ARTWORKS

*Companion*  
*(Black Colorway)*  
2010

Fiberglass and paint  
Edition: 1/3  
96.1 x 48 x 35.8 in | 244 x 122 x 91 cm

PROVENANCE  
Private collection



## *Chum (KCB6)*

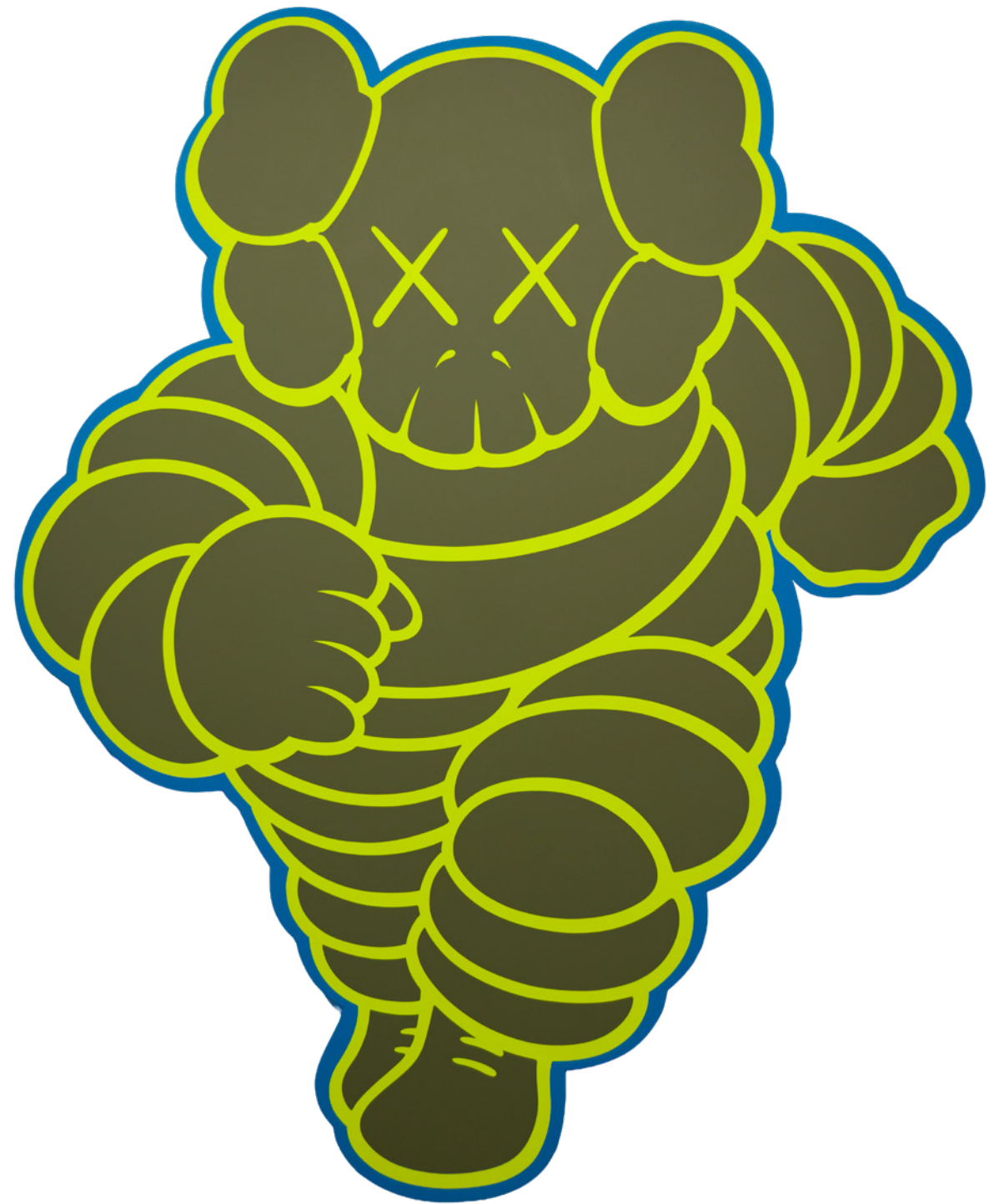
2012

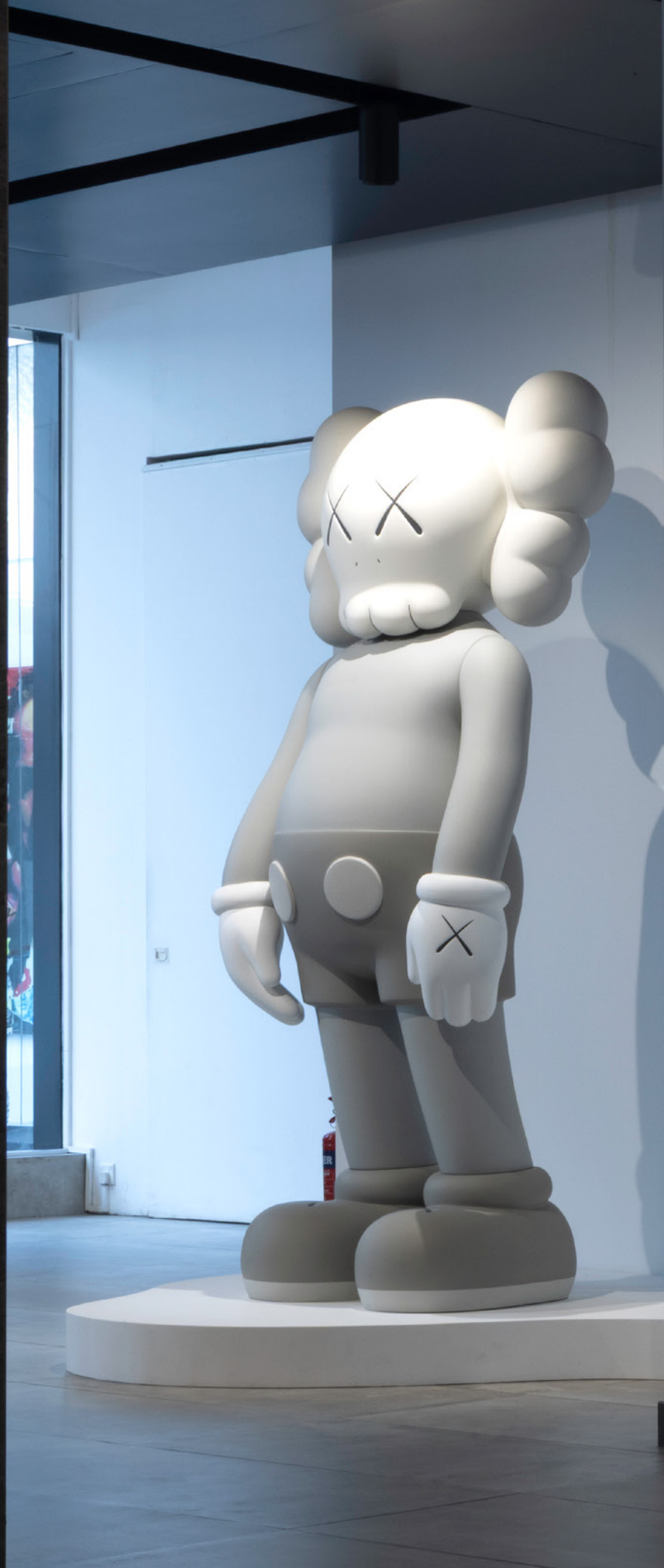
Acrylic on canvas

Signed, dated and titled 'KAWS .. 12 /  
CHUM (KCB6)' on the reverse

83.9 x 68.1 in | 213 x 173 cm

PROVENANCE  
Private collection

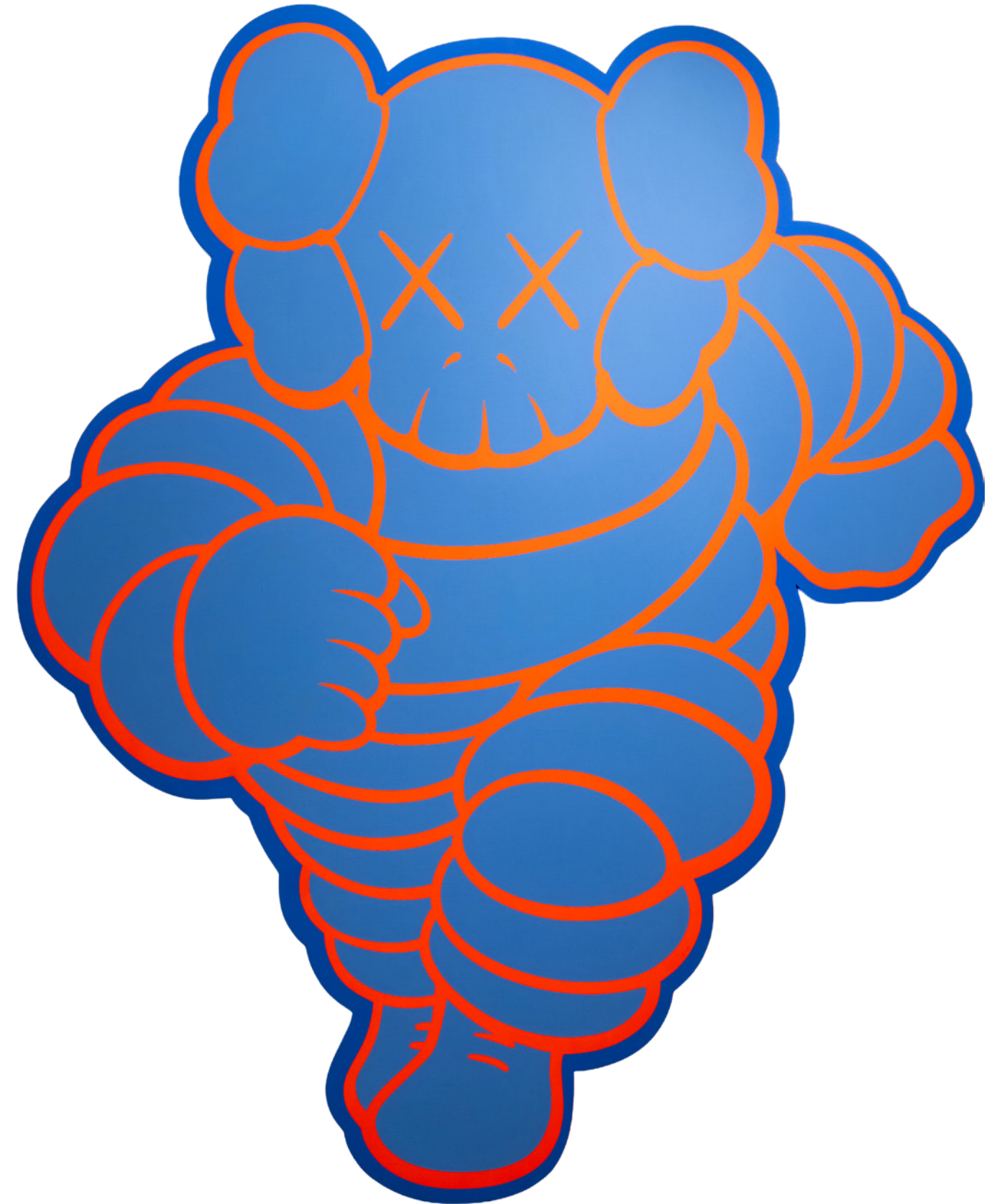




*Chum (KCC5)*  
2014

Acrylic on canvas  
Signed and dated 'KAWS .. 14'  
on the reverse  
83.9 x 68.1 in | 213 x 173 cm

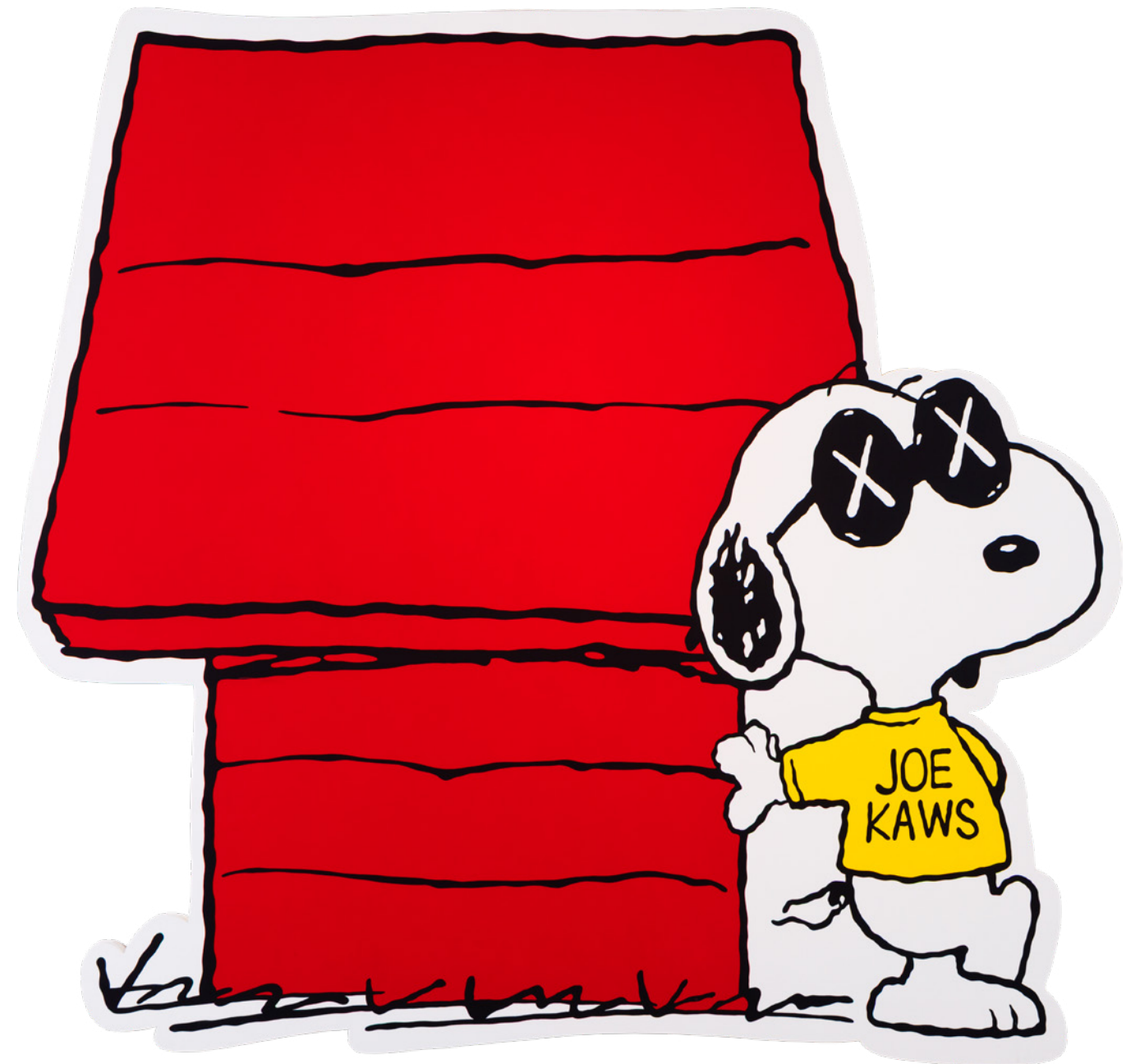
PROVENANCE  
Private collection



*Joe Kaws*  
2015

Acrylic on canvas  
Signed and dated 'KAWS .. 15'  
on the reverse  
59.8 x 61.8 in | 152 x 157 cm

PROVENANCE  
Private collection





My first interest in graffiti came when I was in grammar school, around '87 or '88 I was about twelve years old. I did not know much about writing, I just knew that I liked to write my name everywhere I could in my neighborhood.

**KAWS**

## *The News*

2017

Screenprint on wove paper

Edition: AP 6/20 (Edition of 100)

Numbered, signed and dated 'AP 6/20

Kaws, .17' on the lower edge

24 x 24 in | 61 x 61 cm

### PROVENANCE

Artist's studio

Private collection, New York

Private collection

Anon. sale; Phillips, London, 15

December 2020, lot 158

Private collection



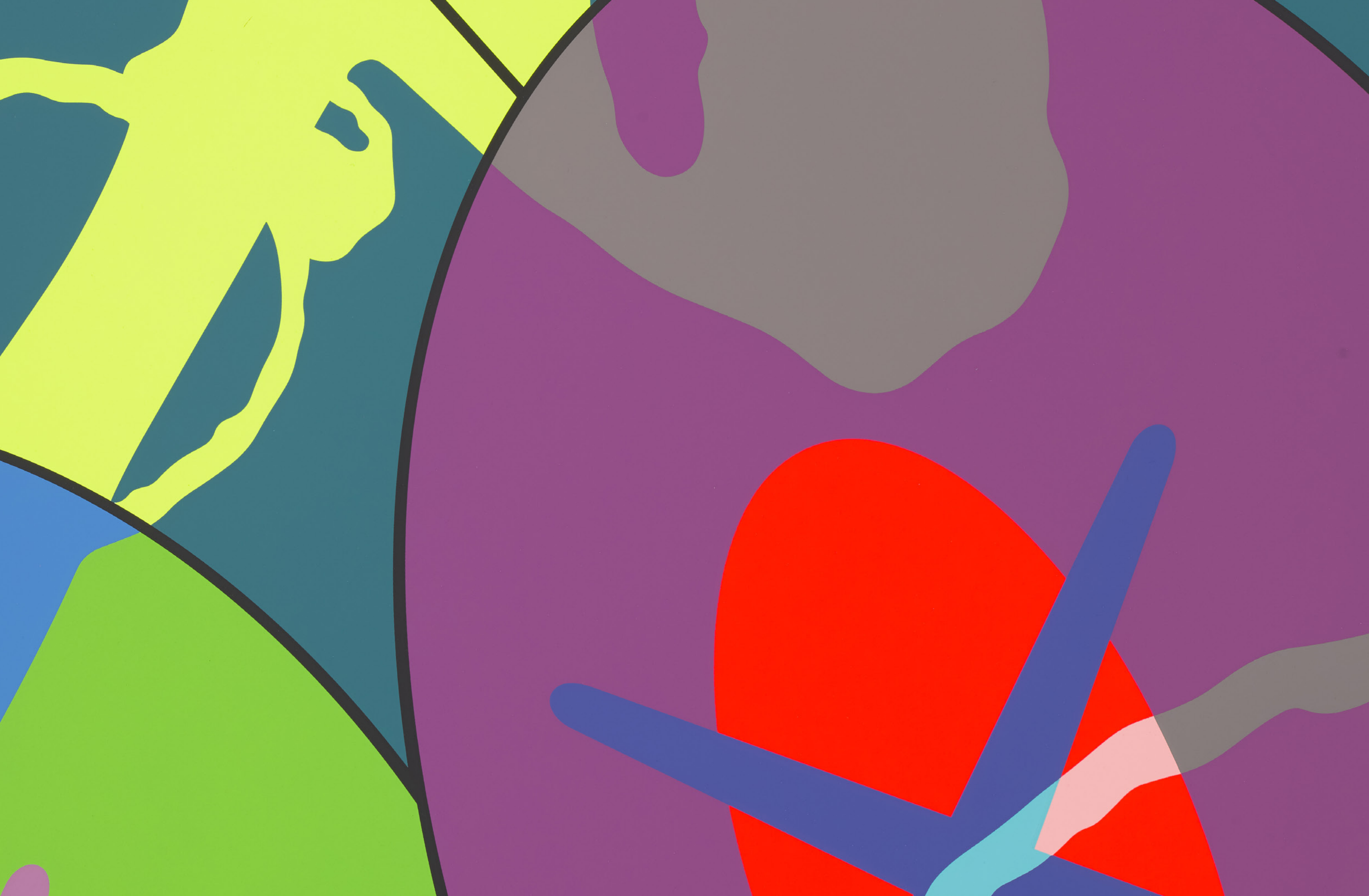
## *The News*

2017

Screenprint on wove paper  
Edition: AP 6/20 (Edition of 100)  
Numbered, signed and dated 'AP 6/20'  
Kaws, .17' on the lower edge  
24 x 24 in | 61 x 61 cm

PROVENANCE  
Artist's studio  
Private collection, New York  
Private collection  
Anon. sale; Phillips, London, 15  
December 2020, lot 158  
Private collection





## *The News*

2017

Screenprint on wove paper

Edition: AP 6/20 (Edition of 100)

Numbered, signed and dated 'AP 6/20

Kaws, .17' on the lower edge

24 x 24 in | 61 x 61 cm

### PROVENANCE

Artist's studio

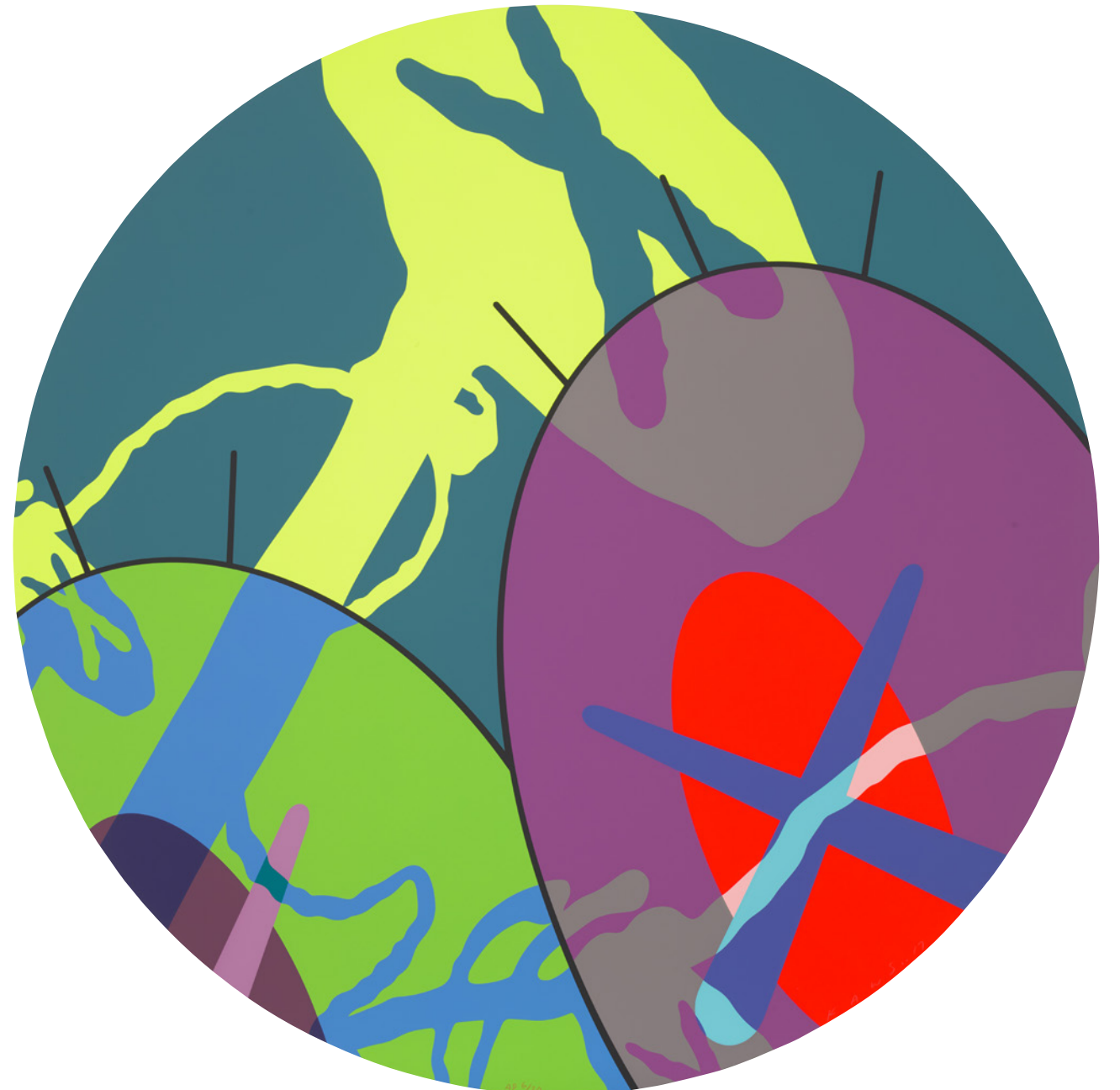
Private collection, New York

Private collection

Anon. sale; Phillips, London, 15

December 2020, lot 158

Private collection



## *The News*

2017

Screenprint on wove paper

Edition: AP 6/20 (Edition of 100)

Numbered, signed and dated 'AP 6/20

Kaws, .17' on the lower edge

24 x 24 in | 61 x 61 cm

### PROVENANCE

Artist's studio

Private collection, New York

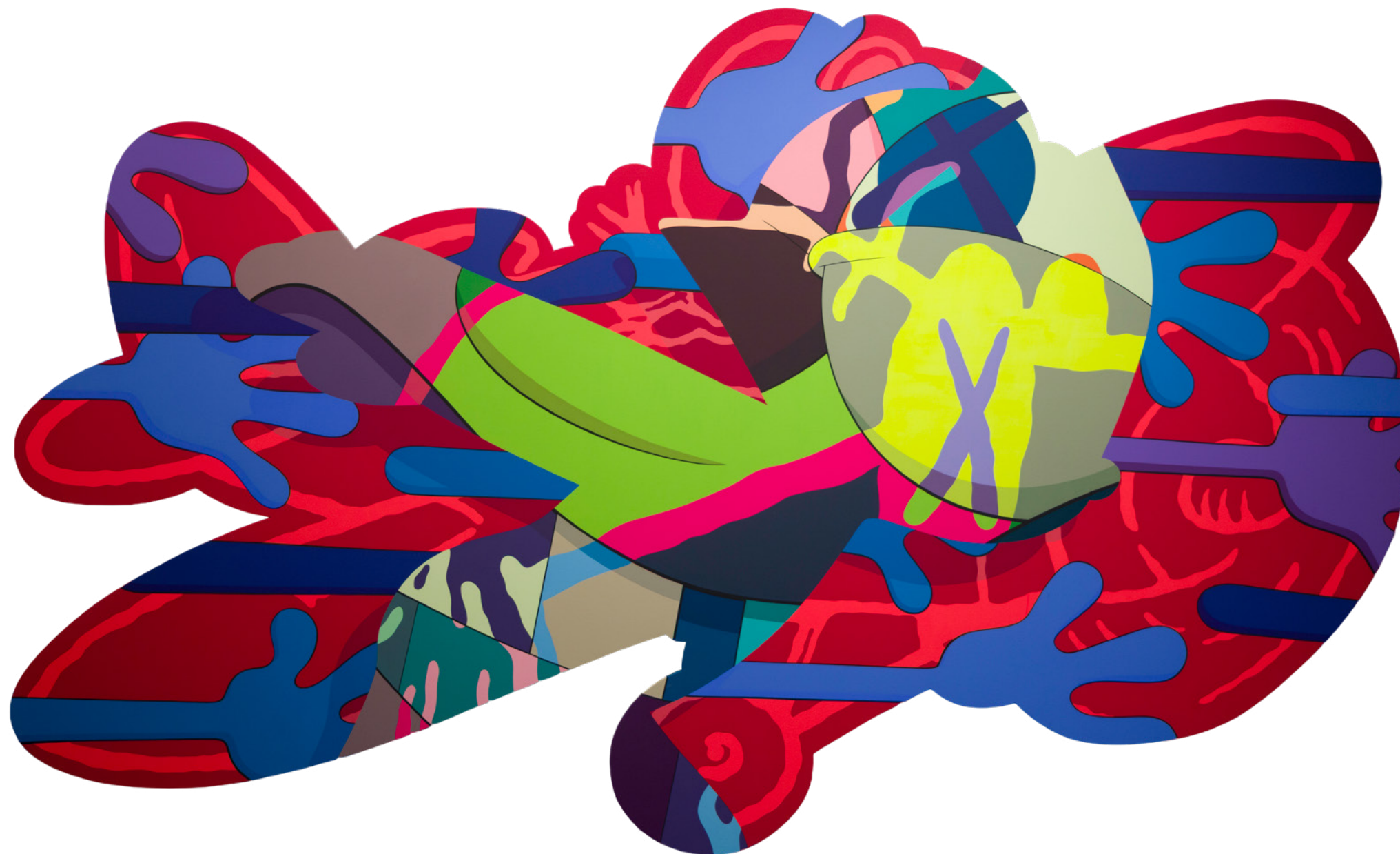
Private collection

Anon. sale; Phillips, London, 15

December 2020, lot 158

Private collection





## *Response Ability*

2018

Acrylic on canvas  
Signed and dated 'KAWS .. 18'  
on the reverse  
66.1 x 107.9 in | 168 x 274 cm

PROVENANCE  
Private collection

EXHIBITED  
Tokyo, Perrotin, 'KAWS', 22 March–12 May 2018

*Seeing Black*  
*(BFF Lamp)*

2020

Zinc alloy, ceramic, LED light

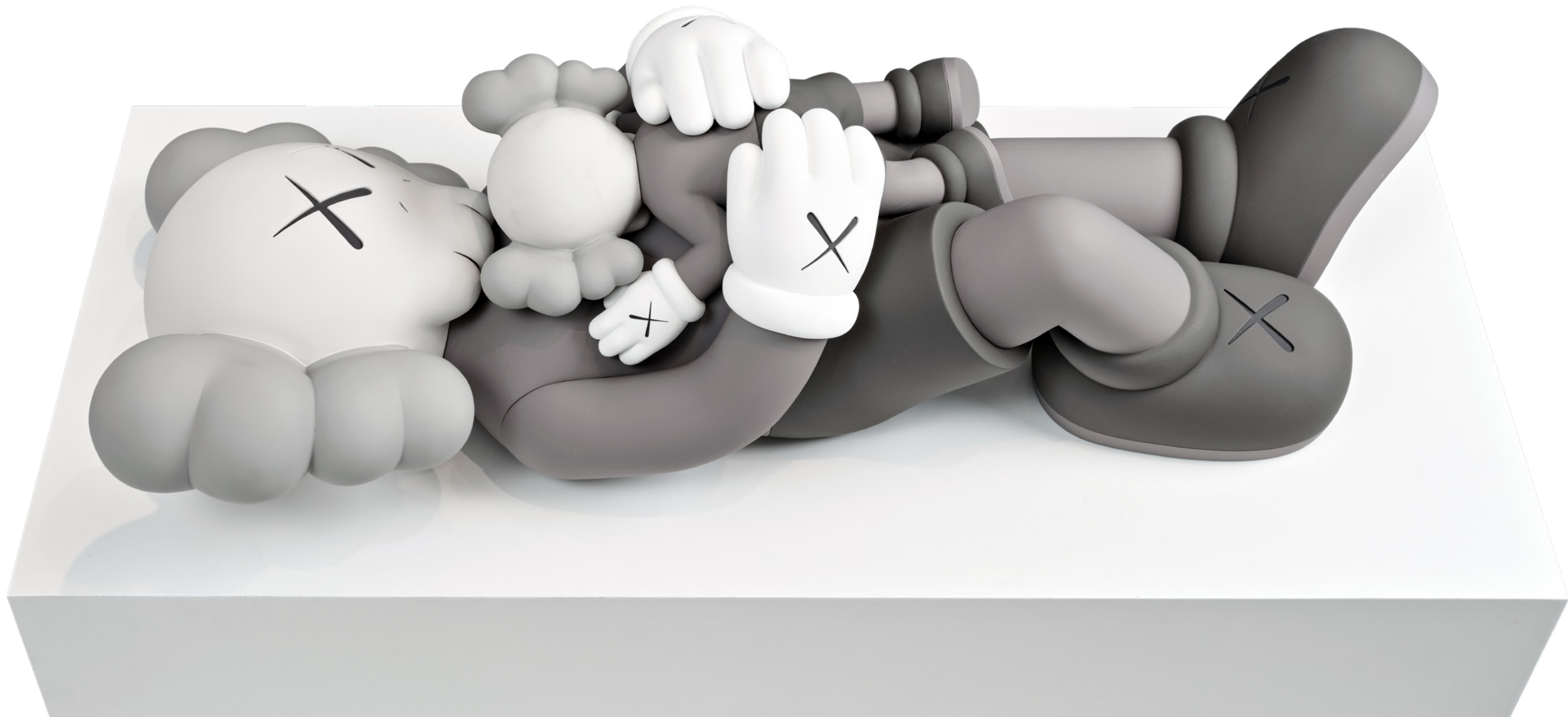
Edition: 128/150

Numbered, signed and inscribed '128/150 /  
KAWS .. 20 / © KAWS\_20' on the reverse

14.6 x 6.9 x 7.3 in | 37 x 17.4 x 18.6 cm

PROVENANCE  
Private collection, USA





## *Holiday*

2020

Aluminium and paint

Edition: 9/10

Numbered, signed and dated '9/10,  
KAWS..20'

on the underside

11 x 39.4 x 15.7 in | 27.9 x 100.1 x 39.9 cm

### PROVENANCE

Artist's studio

Private collection





# KAWS

b. 1972

KAWS's practice encompasses painting, sculpture, drawing and design, and is marked by a consistent engagement with the visual languages of popular culture. His work often begins with imagery drawn from mass media – animated characters, toys or commercial graphics – which he transforms through a process of simplification and exaggeration into forms that are at once familiar and estranged. Recognizable for their bold outlines, flattened colors and recurring motifs such as crossed-out eyes, these figures move fluidly between disciplines and contexts, from canvases and monumental sculptures to toys and collaborative projects.

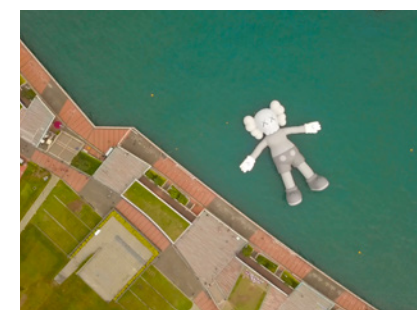
Born Brian Donnelly in Jersey City, New Jersey, in 1974, KAWS adopted his moniker as a teenager while experimenting with graffiti, drawn to the shapes of the letters themselves. After earning a BFA in illustration from the School of Visual Arts in New York in 1996, he worked as a background painter for animated series such as *101 Dalmatians* and *Doug*. Parallel to this, he began a practice of intervening in urban advertisements, subtly reworking commercial posters with his own characters before returning them to the streets. This combination of studio training, professional animation and subversive street art would form the foundation of his multifaceted career.

Ambiguity and duality are central to KAWS's practice, which often revolves around the reimagining of familiar cartoon figures. Characters such as *COMPANION*, *CHUM* and *BFF* draw on icons of popular culture, but are recast with his signature motifs – crossed-out eyes, rounded skulls and exaggerated gestures. These figures occupy a space between playfulness and melancholy, suggesting both comfort and unease. By reshaping images from mass media into new forms, KAWS creates works that reflect the emotional range of contemporary life while also questioning the boundaries between commercial imagery and fine art.

KAWS has exhibited widely at institutions around the world, with solo shows at the Brooklyn Museum, New York (2015, 2021), the Serpentine Gallery, London (2022), the Mori Arts Center Gallery, Tokyo (2021), and the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (2019), among others. More recently, his work has been presented at the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh (2024), and the Parrish Art Museum, Water Mill, New York (2024). Alongside these institutional projects, he has developed large-scale public works, including a balloon for the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in 2012 and a 115-foot inflatable sculpture that floated in Victoria Harbour, Hong Kong, in 2019. He lives and works in Brooklyn, New York.



KAWS' sculpture in New York © John Penney via iStock by Getty Images



Aerial photography of KAWS' artwork in Victoria Harbour, Hong Kong 2019 © Shutterstock

**SELECTED  
PUBLIC COLLECTIONS**

Brooklyn Museum, New York, USA  
CAC Malaga, Malaga, Spain  
City Museum, St. Louis, USA  
Hall Art Foundation, Reading, USA  
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, USA  
K11 Musea, Hong Kong  
Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, USA  
Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego,  
San Diego, USA  
The Nancy A. Nasher and  
David J. Haemisegger Collection, Dallas, USA  
The National Gallery of Victoria, Victoria, Australia

**SELECTED  
SOLO EXHIBITIONS & PROJECTS**

- 2025

'KAWS: THERAPY', Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin, Germany
- 2024

'KAWS: DAY BY DAY', Skarstedt, New York, USA  
'KAWS: TIME OFF', Parrish Art Museum, Watermill, USA  
'KAWS + Warhol', The Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh, USA
- 2023

'KAWS: FAMILY', Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Canada; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, USA; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, USA  
'KAWS: TIME OFF', Skarstedt, New York, USA  
'KAWS: HOLIDAY', Prambanan Temples, Indonesia
- 2022

'KAWS: NEW FICTION', Serpentine Gallery, London, UK  
'KAWS: HOLIDAY', Changbai Mountain, China

- 2021

'KAWS: PRINTS', High Museum of Art, Atlanta, USA  
'KAWS: HOLIDAY', Marina Bay, Singapore  
'KAWS: SPOKE TOO SOON', Skarstedt, New York, USA  
'KAWS: SHARE', Rockefeller Center, New York, USA  
'KAWS: TOKYO FIRST', Mori Arts Center Gallery, Tokyo, Japan  
'KAWS: HOLIDAY', Bristol, UK  
'KAWS: WHAT PARTY', Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, USA  
'KAWS: HOLIDAY', Skarstedt, Palm Beach, Florida, USA  
'KAWS: WHAT PARTY', Seagram Building, New York, USA
- 2020

'KAWS: HOLIDAY SPACE', National Gallery Singapore, Singapore  
'KAWS: EXPANDED HOLIDAY', New York, USA; Los Angeles, USA; London, UK; Paris, France; São Paulo, Brazil; Seoul, South Korea; Taipei, Taiwan; Tokyo, Japan; Doha, Qatar; Katavi National Park, Tanzania; Melbourne, Australia
- 2019

'KAWS: HOLIDAY', Dhow Harbour, Doha, Qatar  
'KAWS: HE EATS ALONE', Fire Station, Qatar Museums, Doha, Qatar  
'KAWS: BLACKOUT', Skarstedt, London, UK  
'KAWS: COMPANIONSHIP IN THE AGE OF LONLINESS', National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia  
'KAWS: ALONE AGAIN', Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, Detroit, USA  
'KAWS: HOLIDAY', Virginia Beach, USA  
'KAWS: ALONG THE WAY', HOCA Foundation, Hong Kong  
'KAWS: HOLIDAY', Victoria Harbour, Hong Kong  
'KAWS: HOLIDAY', Chiang Kai-Shek Memorial Hall, Taipei, Taiwan
- 2018

'KAWS: CLEAN SLATE', Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, USA  
'GONE', Skarstedt, New York, USA  
'KAWS: HOLIDAY', Seokchon Lake, Seoul, South Korea  
'KAWS', Galerie Perrotin, Tokyo, Japan  
'KAWS', Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong

- 2017

'KAWS', The Greenberg Gallery, St. Louis, USA  
'FAR FAR DOWN', Contemporary Art Museum of St. Louis, St. Louis, USA  
'WHERE THE END STARTS', Yuz Museum, Shanghai, China
- 2016

'WHERE THE END STARTS', Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, USA  
'KAWS: BFF', Central Embassy, Bangkok, Thailand  
'KAWS: GISWIL', More Gallery, Giswil, Switzerland  
'KAWS', Galerie Perrotin, Seoul, South Korea  
'KAWS', Yorkshire Sculpture Park, West Yorkshire, UK
- 2015

'Permanent Vacation II', Eden Rock Gallery, St. Barths  
'ALONG THE WAY', Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, USA  
'CLEAN SLATE, LA NAVE', Las Salinas, Ibiza, Spain  
'CLEAN SLATE', Shanghai Times Square, Shanghai, China
- 2014

MAN'S BEST FRIEND, Honor Fraser, Los Angeles, USA  
'Permanent Vacation', Eden Rock Gallery, St. Barts  
'CLEAN SLATE', Harbour City, Hong Kong  
'FINAL DAYS', Centro de Arte Contemporáneo, Málaga, Spain  
'PLAY YOUR PART', Galeria Javier Lopez, Madrid, Spain
- 2013

'KAWS @ 30TH Street Station: COMPANION (PASSING THROUGH)', Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, USA  
'KAWS GISWIL', More Gallery, Giswil, Switzerland  
'KAWS @ PAFA', Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
'Sculpture Plinth Exhibition Program: KAWS', Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, USA  
'UPS AND DOWNS', Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Overland Park, USA  
'Ohhh...', Kaikai Kiki Gallery, Tokyo, Japan  
'PASS THE BLAME', Galerie Perrotin, New York, USA  
'KAWS', Mary Boone Gallery, New York, USA

- 2012

'COMPANION (PASSING THROUGH)', Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, USA  
'IMAGINARY FRIENDS', Galerie Perrotin, Paris, France  
'THE NATURE OF NEED', Galerie Perrotin, Hong Kong  
'KAWS: DOWN TIME', High Museum of Art, Atlanta, USA
- 2011

'KAWS: COMPANION', High Museum of Art, Atlanta, USA  
'Focus: KAWS', Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, Texas  
'Hold The Line', Honor Fraser, Los Angeles, USA  
'COMPANION (PASSING THROUGH)', The Standard, New York, USA  
'COMPANION (PASSING THROUGH)', Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, USA
- 2010

'COMPANION (PASSING THROUGH)', Harbour City, Hong Kong  
'Pay the Debt to Nature', Galerie Perrotin, Paris, France  
'KAWS', Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, USA  
'KAWS', Galeria Javier Lopez, Madrid, Spain
- 2009

'The Long Way Home', Honor Fraser, Los Angeles, USA
- 2008

'KAWS', Gering & López Gallery, New York, USA  
'SATURATED', Galerie Emmanuel Perrotin, Miami, USA
- 2003

'Original Fake', BAPE Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- 2002

'C9', MU Art Foundation, Eindhoven, The Netherlands
- 2001

'Tokyo First', Parco Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- 1999

'KAWS: EXPOSED', Colette, Paris, France
- 1998

'Me vs. Them', bOb Bar, New York, USA  
'KAWS: Studies in Subvertising', Art & Revolution Organization, Seattle, USA

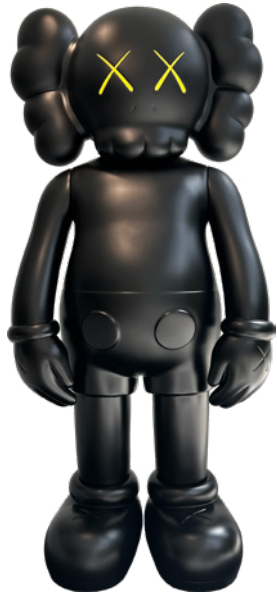
## SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024** 'Shades of Grey', Skarstedt, London, UK  
'Pop Forever: Tom Wesselmann &...',  
Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris, France  
'Portraits Go Pop!', Lévy Gorvy  
Dayan & Wei, Hong Kong
- 2023** 'Wild Style', Jeffrey Deitch, New York, USA  
'My Kid Could Do That',  
ProjectArt, New York, USA  
'Tondo', Anton Kern Gallery, New York, USA  
'Faces & Figures', Skarstedt, New York,  
USA; London, UK; Paris, France  
'City As Studio', K11 Musea, Hong Kong  
'Pop Masters – Art from the Mugarbi  
Collection', Home of the Arts,  
Surfer's Paradise QLD, Australia
- 2022** 'Sculpture', Skarstedt, Paris, France  
'Un Panorama de este Mundo', Fundación  
Proa, Buenos Aires, Argentina  
'Visions', 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Singapore Arts Week,  
National Gallery, Singapore  
'1970s/GRAFFITI/TODAY', Phillips  
Park Avenue, New York, USA  
'Artists Inspired by Music: Interscope  
Reimagined', Los Angeles County  
Museum of Art, Los Angeles, USA  
'Light to Night Festival', National  
Gallery, Singapore
- 2021** 'ArtZuid Sculpture Biennale',  
Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
'Black/White', Skarstedt,  
East Hampton, USA  
'Painter/Sculptor', Skarstedt, London, UK  
'The Looking Glass', Frieze, New York, USA
- 2020** 'Collectouples', New York Academy  
of Art, New York, USA  
'Nuit Blanche Arts Festival', Paris, France  
'The Flag Project', Rockefeller Center,  
New York, USA
- 2019** 'Happy!', NSU Art Museum',  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA  
'Buy/By Me', Susan Inglett Gallery,  
New York, USA  
'Paintings & Sculptures', Skarstedt,  
New York, USA  
'Inaugural Exhibition', Skarstedt  
(64<sup>th</sup> Street), New York, USA  
'Approaching The Figure',  
Skarstedt, New York, USA

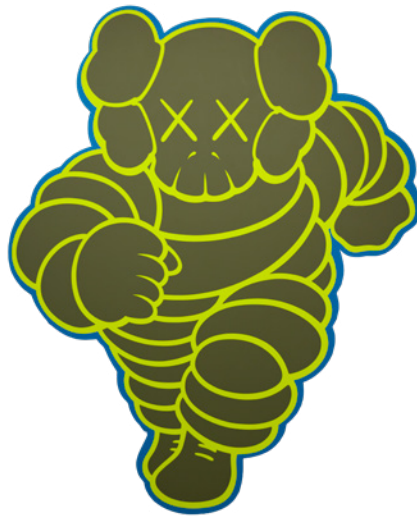
- 2016** 'Character', V1 Gallery,  
Copenhagen, Denmark  
'Holdings: Selections from MCASD's  
Collection', Museum of Contemporary  
Art San Diego, La Jolla, USA  
'Greek Gotham', Dio Horia Gallery,  
Mykonos, Greece  
'A Material Legacy', Nasher Museum of Art  
at Duke University, Durham, USA
- 2015** 'A Shared Space: KAWS, Karl Wirsum,  
Tomoo Gokita', Newcomb Art Museum  
of Tulane University, New Orleans, USA  
'Respect', Centro de Arte  
Contemporáneo, Málaga, Spain  
'ArtZuid 2015', Amsterdam,  
The Netherlands
- 2014** 'If You're Accidentally Not Included, Don't  
Worry About It', Zürcher Studio,  
New York, USA  
'Joyride', Marlborough Chelsea,  
New York, USA  
'Ok, I'll rename it', Bill Brady KC,  
Kansas City, USA  
'Knock! Knock!', Galeria Javier Lopez,  
Madrid, Spain  
'Full House', Garth Greenan Gallery,  
New York, USA  
'PAINT NEW YORK', GL Strand,  
Copenhagen, Denmark
- 2012** 'East West Shift to the Middle Part #1',  
Bill Brady KC, Kansas City, USA  
'Group Show - Wangechi Mutu -  
KAWS - Jeff Sonhouse - Wim Delvoye',  
Gallery Zidoun, Luxembourg  
'It Ain't Fair 2012', OHWOW, Miami, USA
- 2011** 'PRETTY ON THE INSIDE',  
Paul Kasmin Gallery, New York, USA  
'Art in the Streets', Museum of  
Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, USA
- 2010** 'Mutant Pop', Loyal Gallery, Malmö, Sweden  
'It Ain't Fair', OHWOW, Miami, USA  
'The Reflected Gaze - Self  
Portraiture Today', The Torrance  
Art Museum, Torrance, USA

- 2009** 'Just what is it that make today's painting so  
different, so appealing',  
Gering & López Gallery, New York, USA  
'Stages', Galerie Emmanuel  
Perrotin, Paris, France  
'Alpha Exotica', Hydra School Projects,  
Athens, Greece  
'The New Yorkers', V1 Gallery,  
Copenhagen, Denmark  
'Plastic Culture', Harris Museum  
and Art Gallery, Preston, UK
- 2008** 'Everything Else', Franklin Parrasch  
Gallery, New York, USA
- 2007** 'POPcentric', Gering & López  
Gallery, New York, USA
- 2006** 'Info Babble', Richard & Dolly Maass Gallery,  
Purchase, New York, USA  
'Ugly Winners', Galerie Du Jour  
Agnes B., Paris, France
- 2004** 'Beautiful Losers', Le Tri Postal, Lille, France;  
Palazzo dell'Arte, Milan, Italy;  
USF Contemporary Art Museum, Tampa,  
USA; Contemporary Museum, Baltimore,  
USA; Orange County Museum of Art,  
Newport Beach, USA; Yerba Buena Arts  
Center, San Francisco, USA; Contemporary  
Arts Center, Cincinnati, USA
- 2003** 'SK8 on the Wall', Parco Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- 2002** 'Session The Bowl', Deitch Projects,  
New York, USA  
'ALIFE Shop', Deitch Projects,  
New York, USA  
'Coded Language', City Gallery  
Chastain, Atlanta, USA  
'KAWS & CRASH', Made Gallery,  
Vancouver, Canada
- 2001** 'Shortcuts', Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre,  
Athens, Greece; Pierides Museum  
of Contemporary Art, Athens, Greece  
'New Acquisitions from the  
Dakis Joannou Collection', Deste  
Foundation, Athens, Greece

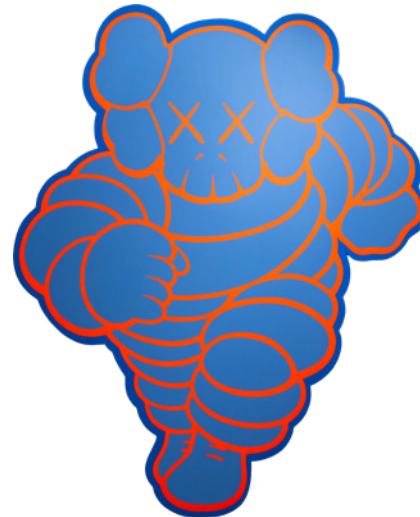
# INDEX



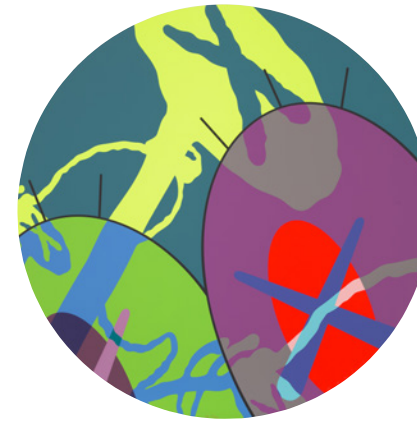
p. 8-9  
*Companion (Black Colorway)*  
2010



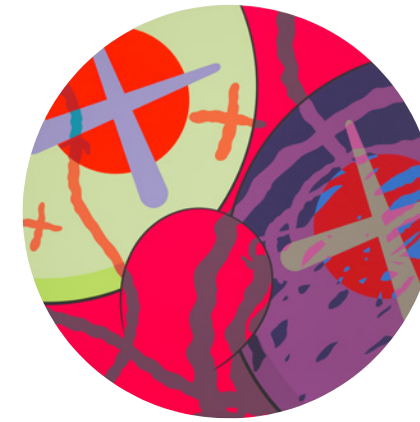
p. 10-11  
*Chum (KCB6)*  
2012



p. 14-15  
*Chumn (KCC5)*  
2016



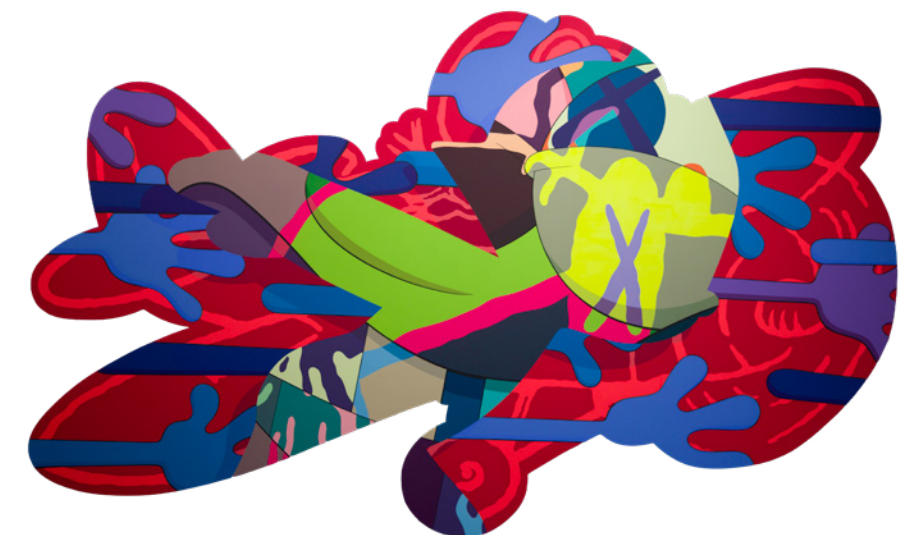
p. 26-27  
*The News*  
2017



p. 28-29  
*The News*  
2017



p. 32-33  
*Seeing Black (BFF Lamp)*  
2020



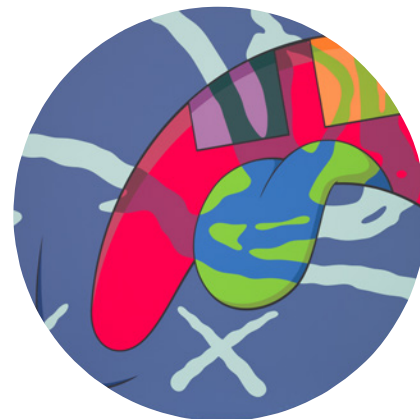
p. 30-31  
*Response Ability*  
2018



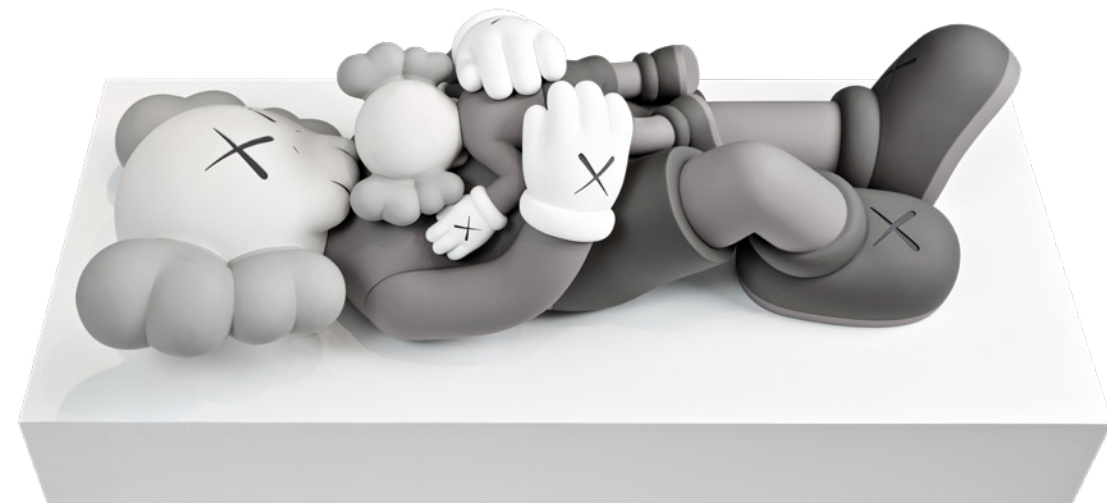
p. 16-17  
*Joe Kaws*  
2015



p. 20-21  
*The News*  
2017



p. 22-23  
*The News*  
2017



p. 34-35  
*Holiday*  
2020

This exhibition catalogue is created upon the occasion of the exhibition ‘KAWS’. Presented by Opera Gallery Bal Harbour from 18 December 2025 – 15 January 2026.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

We extend our gratitude to all the individuals who contributed to this extraordinary exhibition.

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Image Format

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**PHOTO CREDITS**

Page 4: Portrait of KAWS at the Serpentine Gallery on January 18, 2022 © Jonathan Brady – Alamy  
Page 18: KAWS’s sculpture on the IFS tower in Changsha, Hunan, China © Astudio via iStock by Getty Images  
Page 38: the artist’s portrait at the Serpentine Gallery on January 18, 2022 © Jonathan Brady – Alamy

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OPERA GALLERY