

Jeff Koons: Unlimited Hardcover

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Holzwarth

Taschen, \$70.00, 592 pages

It takes a certain amount of egotism to call a \$70.00 art book “for the poor,” but when the subject artist is Jeff Koons, and the publisher Taschen, you can probably give them some leeway. The original edition was \$4500, and a signed Art Edition for an eye-opening \$15,000; so I guess at one two-hundred-and-fiftieth the price, this unlimited edition is for the “poor.”

Koons is both acclaimed and decried by art fans and collectors. He is often described as an artist of kitsch or the banal (or derivative of Duchamps), but the prices of his work keep skyrocketing. Here is a complete survey of his work, from a 43-foot-tall topiary sculpture of a dog (*Puppy*) to *Michael Jackson and Bubbles*, recently sold at auction for \$5.6 million. There are basketballs floating in water, stainless steel blow-ups of toys and explicit pictures, paintings and sculptures of he and his porn star ex-wife Cicciolina engaged in sex acts. Throughout it all is commentary from art historian and critic Katy Siegel deconstructing the work and putting it in its place through the explosive growth of the contemporary art market in the 1980s and 90s.

For Taschen, *Koons* is an affordable work. At almost 600 pages of art, it is a massive book and beautifully produced. If you don't like Koons, his attitude or

his work, you won't find anything here for you. But for collectors of contemporary art who didn't drop \$4500 (or \$15K) for a limited edition of the book, this \$70 “popular” edition will let you enjoy the content, and not the pain of purchase.

