

*If I look at a soup can [by Warhol] or a urinal by Duchamp, these are really cries of communication. I don't think they're about the objects. I think objects are metaphors for people. And so it's not about accepting that object in high-mode culture. It's about acceptance of others.*

## DISCUSS

### Before Viewing

■ How has technology changed the ways in which art can be made and who makes it? What new tools, equipment, and methods are artists using that integrate technology into their processes?

■ What are the personal items and objects that are most significant in your life? How or in what ways might these objects be transformed into art?

### While Viewing

■ List all the references to **popular culture** that you recognize in Koons's work.

■ Recount the steps in the process of making one of Koons's paintings. What technologies and innovations are utilized to create a finished work?

### After Viewing

■ Koons speaks about his desire for communication and interaction. How does his choice of media, materials, and subjects relate to his desire to communicate through his work?

■ How does Koons's painting process differ from the process of painting ten years ago, 100 years ago, 1,000 years ago?

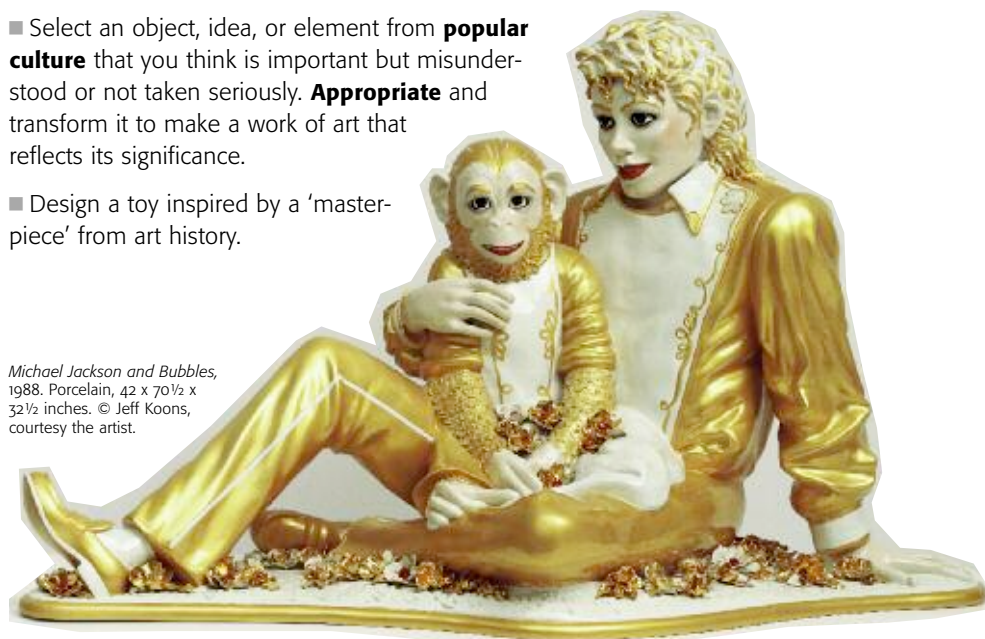
## CREATE

■ Select an object, idea, or element from **popular culture** that you think is important but misunderstood or not taken seriously. **Appropriate** and transform it to make a work of art that reflects its significance.

■ Design a toy inspired by a 'masterpiece' from art history.



*Play-Doh*, 1995–2008. Oil on canvas, 131¼ x 111¼ inches. © Jeff Koons, courtesy the artist.



*Michael Jackson and Bubbles*, 1988. Porcelain, 42 x 70½ x 32½ inches. © Jeff Koons, courtesy the artist.



### Born

1955, York, PA

### Education

School of the Art Institute of Chicago  
 BFA, Maryland Institute College of Art,  
 Baltimore. MD

### Lives and Works

New York, NY

### About the Artist

Jeff Koons plucks images and objects from **popular culture**, framing questions about taste and pleasure. His contextual sleight-of-hand, which transforms banal items into sumptuous **icons**, takes on a psychological dimension through dramatic shifts in scale, spectacularly engineered surfaces, and subliminal allegories of animals, humans, and anthropomorphized objects. The subject of art history is a constant undercurrent, whether Koons elevates **kitsch** to the level of Classical art, produces photos in the manner of Baroque paintings, or develops public works that borrow techniques and elements of seventeenth-century French garden design. Organizing his own studio production in a manner that rivals that of a Renaissance workshop, Koons makes computer-assisted, handcrafted works that communicate through their meticulous attention to detail.

### Teaching Connections

#### Media and Materials

**installation**, painting, public art, sculpture

#### Key Words and Ideas

**collaboration, fabrication, juxtaposition, kitsch, metaphor, popular culture**

#### Related Artists

Paul McCarthy, Yinka Shonibare MBE,  
 Doris Salcedo, Jessica Stockholder,  
 Inigo Manglano-Ovalle