



Split-Rocker

Jeff Koons, 2000

Stainless steel, soil, geotextile fabric, internal irrigation system, and live flowering plants

37 feet by 39 feet by 36 feet

(1128 centimeters by 1189 centimeters by 1097 centimeters)

© Jeff Koons

Jeff Koons (b. 1955, York, PA)

Jeff Koons is a Neo-Pop artist who inspires conflicted reactions to his over-sized sculptures of banal and sometimes shocking objects. Koons attended the Maryland Institute of Contemporary Art (MICA) in Baltimore, MD in 1972 before moving to New York City in 1977, where he began working at the membership desk at the Museum of Modern Art. Notorious for his outrageous clothes and hair, as well as his impressive salesmanship, he began to work with inflatable flowers and rabbits around this time. Koons quickly cultivated a media persona by hiring image consultants and placing strategic advertisements in high-class art publications. Most famous for enlarged objects such as *Puppy* (1992) and his huge sculptures of inflated balloons, Koons also works in series of paintings, prints, and collage, stating that he is attempting to make a body of work that anybody could enjoy.

Split-Rocker (2000)

In the first permanent installation of this piece, Split-Rocker was unveiled for Glenstone's Pavilions Groundbreaking Ceremony on June 24th, 2013. Glenstone embraces the life and death aspects of this organically-maintained piece; the flowers lose their luster in the fall, they are removed for the winter, and the piece is again replanted in the spring. At its unveiling, director and co-founder Emily Wei Rales called Split-Rocker "possibly the best embodiment of our mission at Glenstone to combine art, architecture, and landscape in a seamlessly integrated way." The piece represents the fusion of two plastic Little Tikes™ toy rockers - a Dinosaur and a Pony - which Koons divided in the middle then merged into one single piece of art. The split section of the sculpture is kept visible to highlight the space between the two shapes.

Measuring approximately 37 feet tall, the armature consists of 244 steel boxes filled with soil. There are 36 internal drip-irrigation zones, and the piece has its own 1,000-gallon cistern. Each year 24,000 annual flowers are planted on Split-Rocker; the blooming season of annual flowers is longer than perennials, so exclusively annuals are used. There are 5 color zones on each side of the sculpture.

From the Artist

"What I like so much about Split-Rocker, and what makes it different from Puppy, is that it's architectural. It's hollow... I've always enjoyed amusement parks, those grand steel structures that twist and twirl, supported by a very minimal architecture." (Jeff Koons on Split-Rocker, Artbase)

Reflections

What kind of response does Split-Rocker, 2000 provoke from you? What elements of the sculpture contribute to that response?

What is this sculpture's relationship to surrounding vistas, sky, and foliage? How do these elements impact your approach to Split-Rocker?