

## Dogs As Muse

**Artist Jeff Koons draws inspiration from dogs.**

*Maureen Kochan*

Visitors to Venice, Italy this summer will be treated to gorgeous architecture, divine food and a 40-foot-tall magenta balloon dog, courtesy of artist Jeff Koons.

The sculpture, appropriately titled Balloon Dog, is part of billionaire Gucci Group owner Francois Pinault's private art collection on exhibition here until Oct. 10. The canine-inspired artwork will reside outside the newly reopened Palazzo Grassi museum along the Grand Canal.

Dogs have appeared in Koons' artwork before. A 43-foot-tall topiary sculpture of a West Highland White Terrier that sits outside the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, Spain has become a treasured local landmark.

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