

Lifestyle

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2019



.....
Spectators attend the unveiling of the 'Bouquet of Tulips' sculpture by US artist Jeff Koons near The Petit Palais Museum in Paris. — AFP
.....

Jeff Koons' controversial 'Bouquet of Tulips' unveiled in Paris

A controversial work by American pop artist Jeff Koons, aiming to symbolize US solidarity with France in the wake of the 2015 jihadist attacks, was unveiled in Paris Friday after becoming mired in years of controversy. Onlookers cheered and applauded as a white sheet was lifted to reveal a massive "Bouquet of Tulips"—a sculpture of a human hand grasping a multicolored bunch of flowers. Koons created the monumental work after being asked to come up with something to rep-

resent America's solidarity with France after the 2015 Paris attacks carried out by Islamic State jihadists, which left 130 people dead.

But the proposed site for the 12-metre work—outside the Palais de Tokyo contemporary art museum, on an esplanade facing the Eiffel Tower—quickly ran into resistance. A site was finally chosen in a green space near the Petit Palais museum in the city centre that is partly obscured from view by trees, ending a four-year row over

its location. Speaking after the ceremony attended by Paris mayor Anne Hidalgo and former US ambassador to France Jane Hartley, who commissioned the work, Koons expressed pleasure that the situation had been resolved.

"When some controversy came about, the city offered this location, and I have to say I think everything really worked out very, very well. "I'm very happy just to have the piece be with Parisian citizens and with the French people. And the work... feels at home." "It's a beautiful

location," he added. He said 80 percent of revenues from the copyright of the work will go to the victims' families and the remaining 20 percent will go to the city for maintenance of the sculpture. Koons, seen as the king of kitsch contemporary art, told Le Figaro earlier this week he was "saddened" by the row, which he claimed was triggered by "a lot of misunderstandings and misinformation".—AFP

Kim Kardashian's Paris robbery to be made into movie

The dramatic Paris gems heist in which Kim Kardashian was tied up and robbed of jewellery worth some nine million euros is to be made into a movie. "Fashion Week" will be adapted from a 130-page graphic novel that cult French writer and director Joann Sfar has written but which has yet to be published, the producers said Thursday. The American reality television star was threatened with a gun, tied up and gagged in the bathroom of a luxury residence in the French capital where she was staying during fashion week in October 2016.

Eleven people have since been charged in connection with the robbery, the biggest heist of one individual in France in two decades. Despite the wave of arrests of mostly well-known and ageing French career gangsters, only one piece of jewelry has been recovered. A total of 9 million euros worth of jewelry was taken.

One of the team of five robbers who forced their way into Kardashian's apartment dropped a diamond-encrusted cross worth 30,000 euros while he was fleeing the scene on a bicycle. It was found by a passer-by a few hours later. The suspected ringleader, 61-year-old Aomar

Ait Khedache, told investigators he had struggled to find a buyer for Kardashian's 18.88-carat ring, which she had flaunted on Instagram.

Old school crooks

The huge gem was given to her by her husband, the rapper Kanye West. Ait Khedache said it was "too recognisable" and that he had given it to an unidentified third party. Sfar is one of France's best known comic and graphic novel authors, and also made "Gainsbourg", the acclaimed 2010 biopic about the hard-living French singer and songwriter of "Je t'aime". He said that like the graphic novel, the movie would be about "a group of old school crooks who eye up the jewelry of a influential celebrity and find themselves swept up in the whirlwind of the fashion world."

Sfar admitted it was "liberally based on the raid on Kim Kardashian". "It is going to be a popular comedy inspired by the real events... about the dying days of the patriarchy. The 'Museum of the Man', to put it briefly," he added. The producers said the film, which will be co-written by "Moloch" screenwriter Marion Festraets, has been "in development since the beginning of the year" and talks were going on with distributors.

French police are still trying to track down the missing jewelry, and believe part of the loot was sold in Belgium. Last year Kardashian's insurance company launched a \$6.1 million lawsuit in the US against her former bodyguard Pascal Duvier and the company he worked for, ProtectSecurity, for breach of contract.—AFP

Trailblazing performer Diahann Carroll dies at 84



In this file photo actress Diahann Carroll arrives at the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Funds annual dinner at the Sheraton New York Hotel in New York City. — AFP

Diahann Carroll, the first black woman to star in her own primetime show and who later gained international acclaim for her role in the 1980s series "Dynasty," died Friday. She was 84 years old. The performer died at her Los Angeles residence after a years-long battle against breast cancer, according to her publicist. The Oscar-nominated actress—who won a Tony Award for her star turn in Broadway's "No Strings" in 1962 — was known for her chic elegance as well as her trailblazing performance in 1968's "Julia."

Born July 17, 1935 in New York's Bronx borough, Carroll proved a gifted singer from a young age, and worked as a model as well as in musical theater before being cast in the 1959 screen adaptation of "Porgy and Bess." It was "Julia" that catapulted her to celebrity—nabbing her a Golden Globe award and an Emmy nomination—as she portrayed a professional black woman in an era when black actresses generally played stereotypical secondary roles.

But while "Julia" was seen as groundbreaking it also fell under sharp criticism for allegedly white-washing the black experience in a tumultuous 1960s America plagued by racial inequality. In films she starred opposite performers like Sidney Poitier, Paul Newman and Michael Caine. The primetime soap opera "Dynasty" saw Carroll establish herself on the global stage, playing a glamorous schemer—and the antagonist to Joan Collins' character in the series about a well-heeled Colorado family.

"I wanted to be the first black bitch on television," Carroll said in an interview on her first day on the "Dynasty" set. "I've never played a role quite this unlikeable," she said. "I like that very much because I think very often, particularly minorities, it's almost required of them that they are nice people." "And I don't want to play a nice person."—AFP