EVERY KAWS HAS AN EFFECT

Artist Brian Donnelly—better known as KAWS—got his start as a New York City graffiti artist before moving on to subvert advertisements like billboards and phone booths in the '90s. His characters like Companion, Chum, Accomplice, and Bendy started as 2D renderings, and are largely his own creations. Currently, his work is on display at multiple galleries and museums around the world.

Once he got into the art toy game, he was able to fully realize his cartoonish characters in a more physical way. In 2006, he founded the clothing line OriginalFake in collaboration with Japanese toy company Medicom Toy. The high-end Japanese streetwear label provided him another platform for his work, before it shuttered in 2013. His collaborations have touched numerous aspects of pop culture, from limited-edition bottles of Hennessy cognac to packaging for Kiehl's cosmetics. KAWS even designed the perfume bottle for Pharrell's scent with COMME des GARÇONS, Girl. One of the most lauded artists in street culture, his career is an example of how deep it has permeated both the fine art establishment and the mainstream.