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STORY PHOTO

Jumbos Are Coming: London Streets to Host 250 Model Elephants

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By Richard Vines



March 23 (Bloomberg) -- The jumbos are coming -- more than 250 of them.

Designers and artists aiming to protect the endangered Asian elephant have decorated fiberglass pachyderms that will pop up at locations across London on the night of May 2.

From the fashion world, the **Elephant Parade** has drawn the support of Lulu Guinness, **Tommy Hilfiger**, **Paul Smith**, **Diane von Furstenberg**, **Julien Macdonald** and **John Rocha**. **Marc Quinn** and **Jack Vettriano** are among the painters who are taking part.

Each of the brightly painted elephants weighs 70 kilograms (154 pounds) and will be mounted on a plinth in locations that include Buckingham Palace, Parliament Square and Carnaby Street. The artist Benjamin Shine has produced a black-cab jumbo, with headlamps for eyes and a "Taxi" sign in its forehead.

"My idea was to make something that is very much a statue in the street," said Guinness, whose contribution features her trademark bright-red lips on a white background. She was speaking in an interview today at a breakfast event in the Covent Garden home of the Dutch collector, Jan Mol.

The most-prized pieces will go on sale in a celebrity auction by Sotheby's at the **Royal Hospital Chelsea** on June 30, and others will be offered online, said travel writer and conservationist Mark Shand, author of "Travels on My Elephant."

"Elephant Parade is a brilliantly innovative way of using public art to benefit conservation," London Mayor **Boris Johnson** said today in a statement. "Not only will the parade brighten London's streets and enhance our public spaces, it will play a vital role in building a new generation of conservationists."

The organizers hope to raise as much as 2 million pounds (\$3 million) for the **Elephant Family** and other charities. Similar Elephant Parades have previously been held in the Netherlands and Belgium. Supporters include the Duchess of York and actors **Joanna Lumley** and **Goldie Hawn**, the statement said.

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