Bono Thanks Congress for Ignoring Trump…by Not Cutting AIDS Funds

Also: The rock star is prepping for the (RED) Auction at Art Basel, with works by Jeff Koons, Marilyn Minter, Ai Weiwei and more.

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Rock icon and legendary AIDS fundraiser Bono has a message for members of U.S. Congress: "Thank you for your leadership." Specifically, the U2 front man told the Associated Press that lawmakers "have so far turned down this president's request to cut AIDS funding"—even as Trump has requested that hundreds of millions of dollars be slashed from HIV programs, both nationally and globally.

Globally, the number of annual new HIV cases has been cut in half since 1996, to 1.8 million; AIDS-related deaths have dropped by half since 2004. But this good news could lead to complacency, Bono said.

"There's this gathering consensus and momentum—and now people are looking the other way, and it's just the wrong moment," he said.

To bring the global spotlight to the issue while raising money to fights AIDS, Bono has planned the third iteration of the (RED) Auction, featuring donated works by Jeff Koons, Marilyn Minter, Frank Gehry, Teresita Fernandez and others. The high-end pieces will be auctioned by Sotheby's on December 5 during Art Basel Miami Beach.

The event will be cocurated by Theaster Gates and Sir David Adjaye, big names in the art and architecture worlds, respectively. According to Red.org, the first two (RED) Auctions raised $68 million.

Bono and activist Bobby Shriver launched the nonprofit (Product) RED in 2006 to raise money for The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. (Product) RED collaborates with numerous brands to create specially branded products—ranging from cell phones to clothes to home accessories; a portion of the sales of these products benefits (Product) RED. For more info, visit RED.org.

For an idea of Trump's proposed cuts to HIV funding, read "What do AIDS Groups Say About Trump's 2019 Budget Proposal?" and "Congress Says No to Trump's Plan to Cut Funds for Health

Research” and “Trump Plans to Cut Global HIV Funds. How Much Will It Cost in Human Lives?”

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