

Keith

Haring

A major exhibition

22 February - 29 June 2008

at the **Museum of Contemporary Art of Lyon**



"Untitled" 1982 © Estate of Keith Haring

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— Press visuals



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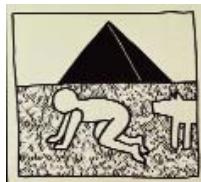
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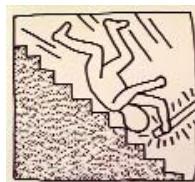
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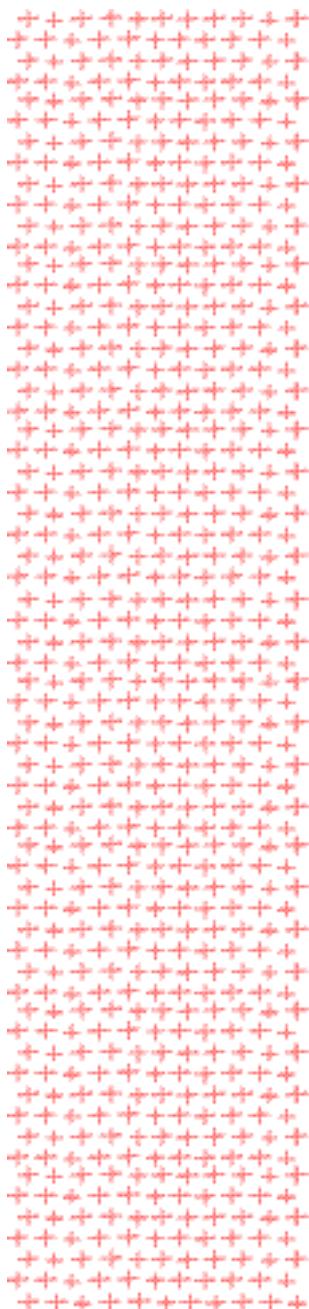
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Keith Haring

Exhibition from 22 February to 29 June 2008
at the **Museum of Contemporary Art of Lyon**



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"Untitled" 1982 © Estate of Keith Haring

Foreword

Recognized as one of the great artists of the 1980s, Keith Haring is above all an emblematic figure, constantly linking the art world of his time to the world of the street, and to the widest and most diverse public.

Keith Haring was born in America in 1958 (he would have been 50 in 2008). Before becoming a painter he studied commercial arts. He began by drawing on the walls of the subway, then finally had exhibitions in several prominent New York galleries such as Tony Shafrazi and Leo Castelli. In 1984 he started developing a colourful set of symbols related to the world of the media. His art stood out because of its synthetic forms outlined in black. Apart from this easily identifiable graphic style, his great popularity can also be explained by his predilection for unorthodox and universally accessible supports: the subway, city walls and streetlamps, all the way up to the multiples that he sold from his own shop.

The exhibition

From 22 February to 29 June 2008, the **Museum of Contemporary Art of Lyon** is presenting one of the biggest exhibitions ever organized in France in homage to Keith Haring, an emblematic figure of the New York art scene of the 1980s, who would have been 50 in 2008.

This exceptional exhibition has been entrusted to the Italian curator Gianni Mercurio and is being organised in close collaboration with the Keith Haring Foundation in New York. It presents an unprecedented ensemble of works from the most important American and European collections, both public and private.

The retrospective will be set out in a deliberately non-chronological sequence. The artist's short career, spanning the years from 1980 to 1990, is viewed as a whole. Like Keith Haring in his own work, filling the canvas, putting his art in the most unexpected places, covering even objects and bodies, the exhibition will take over the museum, taking possession of the spaces in order to immerse visitors in the colourful, dynamic and teeming world of this artist. It comprehensively deploys Haring's practice, including its essential paintings on tarpaulin and its monumental paintings (including the canvas made in 1987 for the Casino at Knokke-le-Zoute).

Most of all, though, it allows visitors to discover the extraordinary diversity of the supports and media that Haring used so freely - vinyl paint, acrylic enamel paint, chalk, ink, felt pen, on canvas, metal, paper, wood and even the human body (including that of Grace Jones in 1985).

A big ensemble of more than a hundred drawings reveals the diversity of Haring's graphic world and the directness of his style, expressing sincerity and passion by means of a continuous and consummate line. The influence of classical art is manifest here, as is that of African, Asian and South American cultures.

The exhibition conveys Haring's open, cultivated mind, as manifested in his formally diverse works nourished by his encounters, readings and the places discovered on his travels. Whether on relatively classical supports (canvas, paper, metal, etc.) or more unexpected ones, such as the BMW, also presented in the exhibition ("Original Keith Haring Object Z1", 1990), beyond the apparent gaiety of the images we are aware of Haring's interest in the big issues of the day: AIDS, drugs, the power of money, etc. For Haring worked at the heart of everyday life.

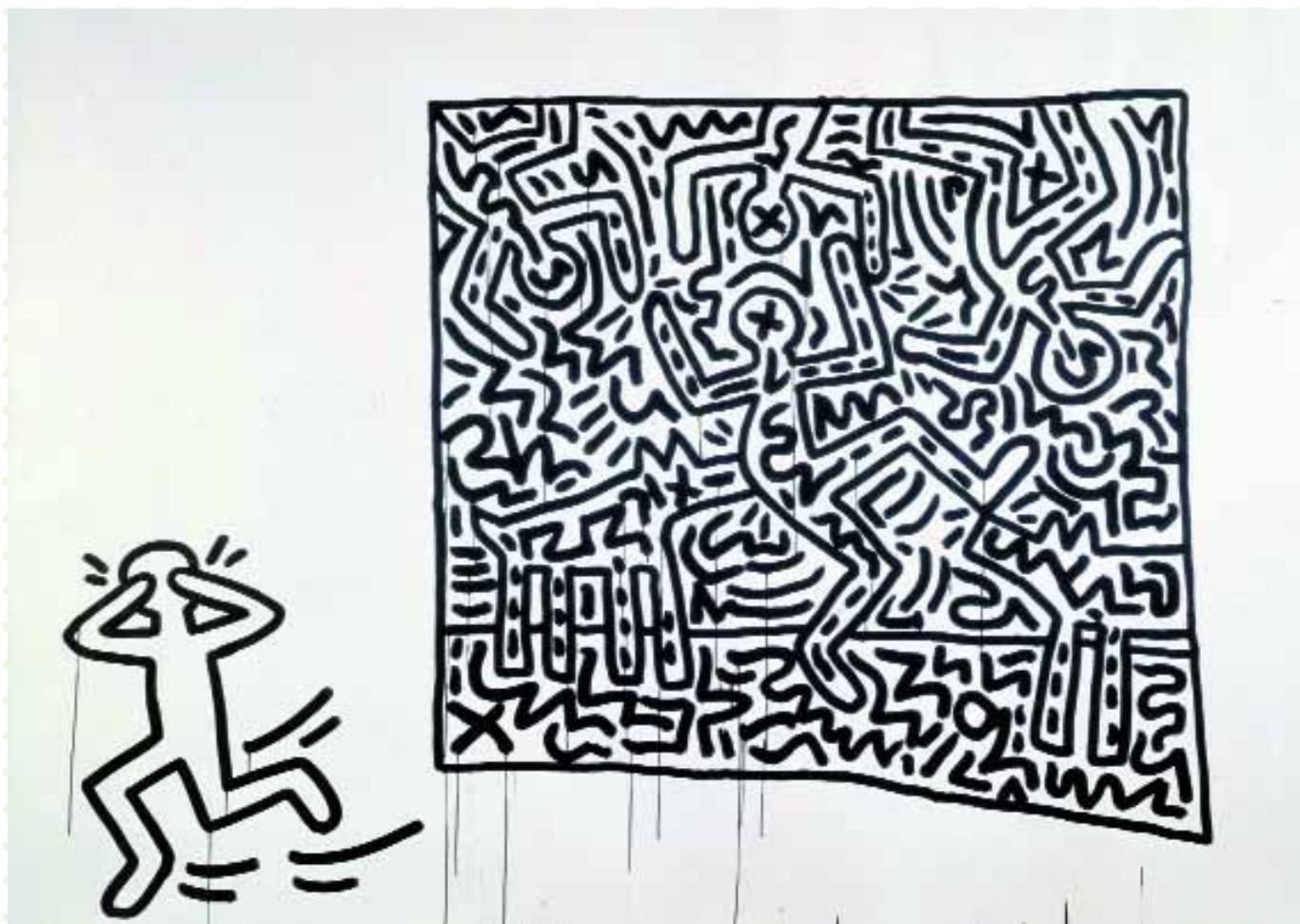
There are, too, moments of questioning and revolt: the apocalyptic visions and monstrous creatures in his work transcribe the scourges of the modern world, such as the nuclear threat and the AIDS virus, and heighten the intensity of his very personal iconography.

Never before seen by the general public, the series of paintings on fences are highlight of the show, as are the "Subway Drawings" (some only as photographs, the originals having sadly been destroyed). This exceptional ensemble, made on a construction site fence in New York, shows the artist's powerful need to occupy urban space and to break free of the cultural milieu and the art market. In the same vein, and specially reinstalled for the exhibition, his astonishing "Pop Shop Tokyo" (1985) illustrates his desire to make art accessible to all and surrounds us from floor to ceiling with the incredible shop where he could make his work directly available to the general public.

To complete this teeming ensemble - to which must be added the monumental sculptures - projections and an exceptional series of photographs shed light on the production of Haring's work.

A video entitled "Haring ALL OVER" closes the exhibition. The film, shown on several screens, presents tributes to the artist as well as interviews never shown before. These images take visitors to New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Paris, Düsseldorf, Berlin, Antwerp, Knokke-le-Zoute and Monaco, where Haring made interventions in public space. The itinerary ends in Pisa, where the artist made his last mural painting, "Tuttomondo", only a few months before his death.

Faithful to the spirit of Keith Haring, who worked to make art accessible to all, the sequence continues outside the museum with an exceptional presentation at the Treasure's room of the museum of Fourvière, of the big altarpiece he made in 1990.



"Untitled" 1982 © Estate of Keith Haring

Gianni Mercurio, curator

Gianni Mercurio, curator and author, lives and works in Rome. He has worked with a number of institutions on projects involving American art, his speciality.

Among the many exhibitions he has organized are "Andy Warhol", "Journey to Italy" (Rome, Naples, Genoa, Turin in 1995/1996), "Roy Lichtenstein", "Reflections" (Rome, Milan, Wolfsburg Kunstmuseum in 1999/2000), "Keith Haring" (Pisa, Rome, Helsinki, Aachen-Ludwig Forum, Catania in 1999/2001), "Jean-Michel Basquiat" (Rome, 2002), "George Segal" (Rome, 2002).

He has also conceived exhibitions on graffiti ("American Graffiti" - Naples, Rome in 1997/1998) and the Photorealists (Rome, 2003), and curated "The Andy Warhol Show" (2004) and "The Keith Haring Show" (2005/06) at the Milan Triennial.

The artist

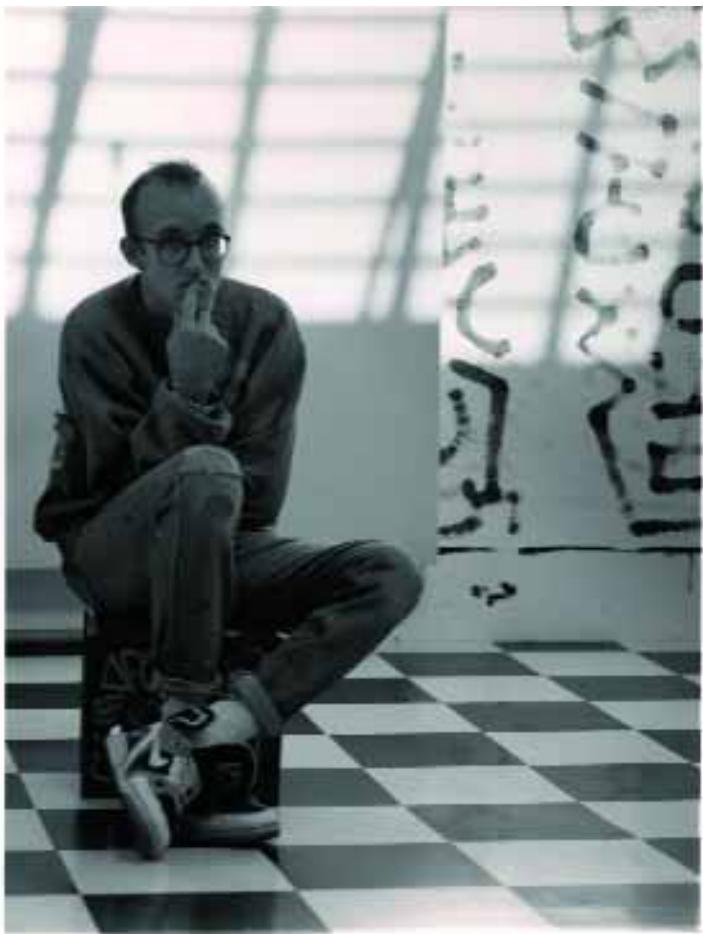
Born in Reading, Pennsylvania in 1958, Keith Haring became interested in drawing at an early age, learning basic cartooning skills from his father. Immersed in popular culture - the Beatnik movement, the rock music of the 1970s and psychedelic culture - he took inspiration from comic books and animated cartoons but also the works of the Cobra movement.

Up until 1978 he studied advertising drawing at the Ivy School of Professional Art in Pittsburgh where he discovered the work of Pierre Alechinsky. He then moved to New York to study at the "School of Visual Arts", the most prestigious in the city. There he was taught by Joseph Kosuth

and Keith Sonnier, experimented with video and took an interest in semiology. He later discovered Jackson Pollock and Andy Warhol, made increasing use of new techniques and moved up to bigger formats.

His style gradually took shape, combining hieroglyphs, geometrical lines, and collages of texts and video installations in work that expressed his colourful experiences and critical vision of his times. Imbued with youthful indignation and spontaneous humour, his art was also nourished by the writings of William S. Burroughs and the people he met, such as Jean-Michel Basquiat.

Photo by Lenore Seroka



Inspired by graffiti and concerned to reach a broad public, Haring made his "Subway Drawings" in chalk on advertising billboards covered with black paper.

He took part in group shows such as Club 57, starting in 1981, where he presented his monumental installations.

Gallerist Tony Shafrazi gave Haring his first solo show in 1982. The artist exhibited mainly paintings on tarpaulins, a financially accessible product that allowed him to paint large format works. He exhibited from Sydney to Tokyo, via Documenta in Kassel (1983), the Venice Biennale (1984), the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis (1984), Leo Castelli Gallery in New York (1985, showing for the first time his sculptures in steel and painted aluminium), and Hamburg.

His work is characterized by a continuous line, guided by chance, which becomes a contour and ultimately a symbol, a playful graphic style, or even invasive ornament. It was found on tee shirts, badges or posters derived from his works, which he began selling in 1986 in his "Pop Shop". This enabled him to make his art even more accessible, a part of people's everyday life. He liked to keep in contact with his public, and particularly with children, whom he reached by making many mural paintings outdoors and by working on initiatives to support children in need.

Behind the apparent insouciance of his drawings, Keith Haring speaks to us of love, happiness, joy and sex, but also violence, exploitation and oppression.

Towards the end of his life, his imagination remained just as busy and active but also became more complex as he became aware of the effects of HIV. He died at the age of 31 after having founded a charitable foundation to help children and support organizations fighting AIDS.

"Prophets of Rage", 1988 © Estate of Keith Haring



Keith Haring: a life in dates

1958

Born 4 May in Reading, Pennsylvania (United States).

1977/78

Takes art courses in Pittsburgh, where he sees a Pierre Alechinsky retrospective at the Carnegie Museum.
First solo exhibition of abstract drawings at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts.

1978/79

Moves to New York and enrolls at the School of Visual Arts. Makes large format paintings and studies semantics with Keith Sonnier.
Gets to know the work of William S. Burroughs.
Discovers the alternative artistic culture developing outside the galleries and museums in New York, in the streets of Manhattan, the subways and the clubs. He becomes close to several artists in the New York underground, including Kenny Scharf and Jean-Michel Basquiat, as well as to musicians, performance artists and graffiti artists.
He starts organizing and taking part in exhibitions and performances at Club 57, which is becoming the avant-garde hotspot.

1980

Exhibitions at Club 57.
Takes part in the Times Square Show. First drawings with flying saucers and animal and human figures.
Starts doing drawings in white chalk on black billboards in the New York subway.
Presents for the first time his "Radiant Baby", one of his best-known pictographs, in the subway.

1981

Paints on a multitude of materials (plastic, metal, found objects, tarpaulins and garden statues). Exhibits drawings and graffiti at the Mudd Club and at Club 57. Does his first wall painting in a schoolyard on the Lower East Side in Manhattan.

1982

Takes part in Documenta 7 in Kassel, Germany.
Has his first one-man show at the Shafrazi Gallery (New York). It is a huge success.

1983

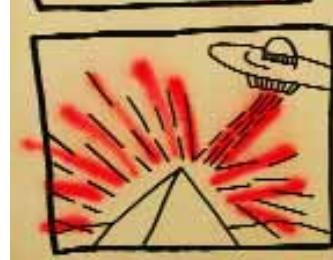
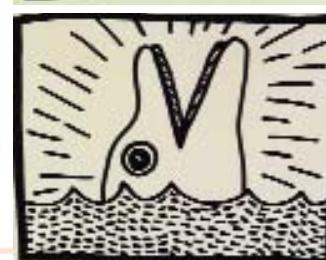
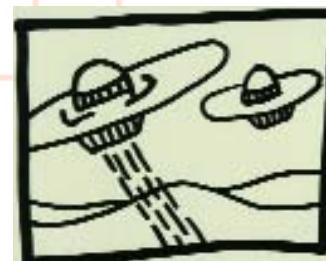
Exhibits at the Whitney Biennial and the São Paulo Bienal. First exhibition of sculptures and reliefs in wood at Tony Shafrazi Gallery.

1984

Paints mural frescoes in Sydney, Melbourne, Rio de Janeiro, Dobbs Ferry, Minneapolis and Manhattan.

1985

Stops doing drawings in the subway.



"Untitled", 1980 © Estate of Keith Haring

1986

Opens the "Pop Shop" to sell spin-offs.
Works with children on outdoor wall paintings all around the world. Creates one of his major sculptures, "Red Dog for Landois", for Münster. Makes a monumental sculpture for the Schneider Children's Hospital at the Jewish Medical Center on Long Island.

Open-air murals in New York ("Crack is Wack"), Amsterdam, Paris and on the Berlin Wall.

Solo exhibition at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. Makes a mural for the Necker children's hospital in Paris in 1987.



"Untitled" © Estate of Keith Haring

1988

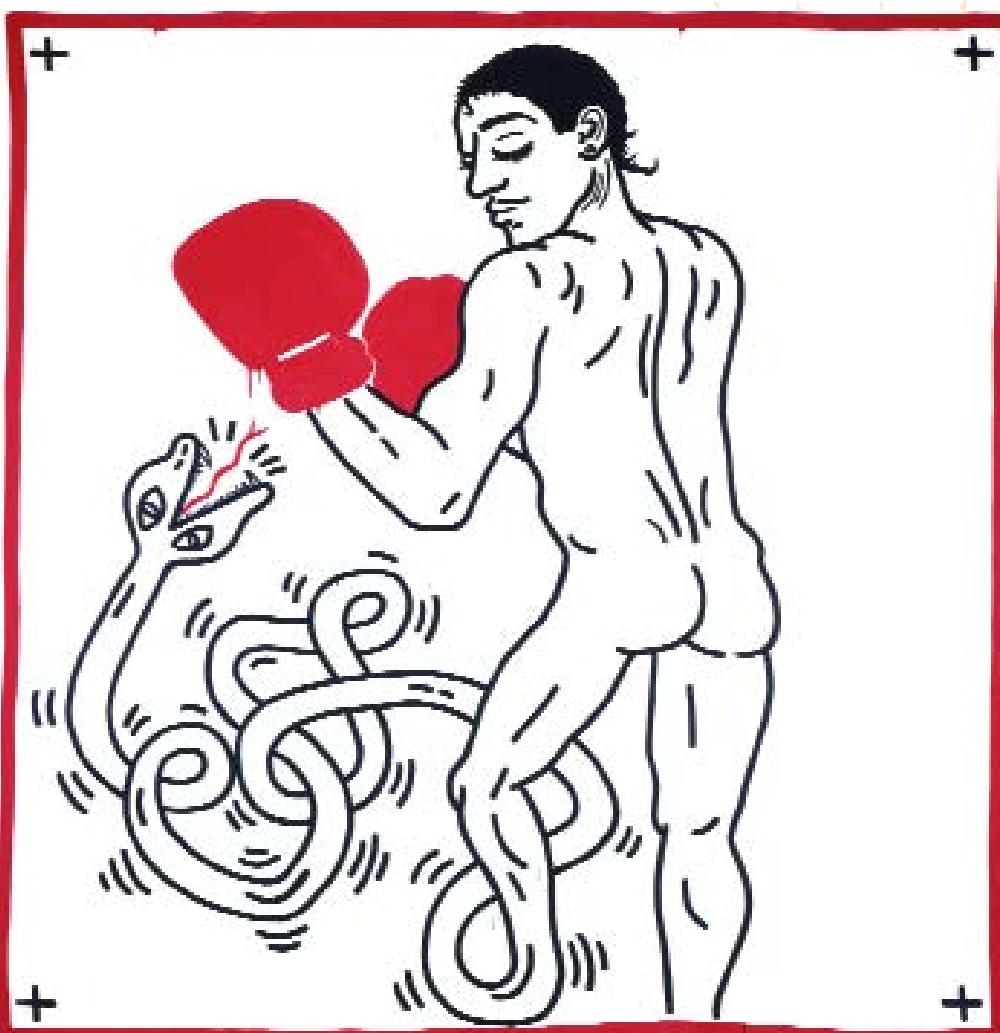
Collaborates with William S. Burroughs on "Apocalypse" and "The Valley" (1989) and creates a suite of images illustrating the texts of the Pope of the Beat Generations. Finds out that he is HIV positive.

1989

Campaigns actively for AIDS prevention.
Sets up the Haring Foundation in New York.

1990

Dies on 16 February in New York.



"Portrait of Macho Camacho", 1985 © Estate of Keith Haring

Keith Haring: aspects of the artist

Starting out in the subway



"Untitled" 1982
© Estate of Keith Haring

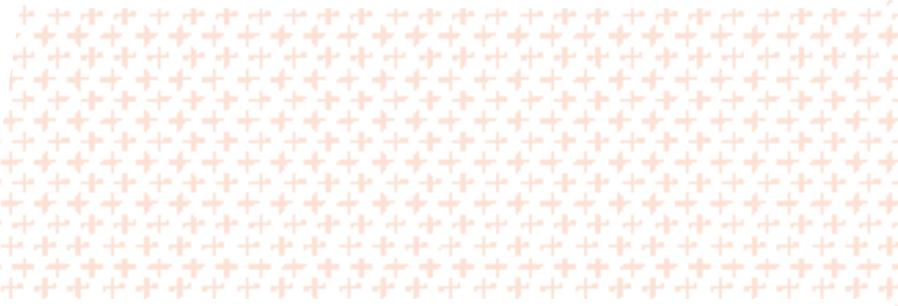
"As I kept seeing these black subway panels everywhere, I realized what I had discovered. Suddenly, everything fell into place. All that I had been watching and observing throughout the two years I was in New York made perfect sense. Now I found a way of participating with graffiti artists without really emulating them because I didn't want to draw on the trains and sneak into the yards and cover the sides and insides of the subway trains. Actually, my drawing on those black panels made me more vulnerable to being caught by the cops - so there was an element of danger."



Photo by Elinor Verhnes
Keith Haring artwork © Estate of Keith Haring

Inspired by graffiti and keen to touch a wide public, Keith Haring started drawing in the subway using white chalk on advertising billboards that had been left black pending commercial use.

Recognising their beauty and potential, he saw them as an invitation to improvise and rapidly became aware of them as a marvellous opportunity for getting his art seen. He therefore drew on any billboard left free. Every morning, he would get up, slip a box of white chalk into his pocket, and set off on the subway, travelling the lines from Brooklyn to Harlem, via Manhattan. Whenever he spotted an empty billboard at a station he would hop off the train and quickly cover it with spontaneous images, making hundreds of drawings on the way to his school.



For four years he made the subway his own personal gallery. His "exhibition" was open to the public 24h/24 for the price of a subway ticket. Between 1980 and 1985 he made hundreds of dynamic and rhythmic drawings, sometimes creating as many as forty "Subway Drawings" in a single day. The subway became a laboratory, allowing him to work out his ideas and experiment with his simple line. His method never varied: having outlined the pictorial surface, he sketched the image, which he never signed, in a few lines.

"Drawing with chalk on this soft black paper was like nothing else I had ever drawn on. It was a continuous line, you didn't have to stop and dip it in anything. It was a constant line, it was a really graphically strong line and you had a time limit. You had to do these things as fast as you could. And you couldn't erase. So it was like there were no mistakes. You had to be careful not to get caught."

"I kept seeing more and more of these black spaces and I drew on them whenever I saw one. Because they were so fragile, people left them alone and respected them ; they didn't rub them out or try to mess them up. I gave them this other power. It was this chalk white fragile thing in the middle of all this power and tension that the subway was. People completely enthralled. I was arrested (by cops) but since it was chalk and could easily be erased, it was like a borderline case. The cops never knew how to deal with it."

The "Subway Drawings" were conceived as temporary drawings that were covered over by new posters in the next advertising campaigns. Nevertheless, when recognition came, Haring's art was increasingly in demand, with the result that many of the drawings were taken by passers-by and sold shortly after being completed. The

interests of passers-by and Haring's conversations with them about his work added to the "performance" aspect of his works a direct relation with the public. To answer their questions, the artist had badges made with his "tag" on. These he distributed himself.

"The subway drawings were, as much as they were drawings, performances: It was where I learned how to draw in public. You draw in front of people. For me it was a whole sort of philosophical and sociological experiment. When I drew, I drew in the daytime which meant there were always people watching. There were always confrontations, whether it was with people that were interested in looking at it, or people that wanted to tell you you shouldn't be drawing there."

— The Haring style: the continuous line

"People understand my work, it can be read like a picture book. I do simple figures that are complex at the same time, like ideograms."

The Haring touch is a highly identifiable style involving the infinite repetition of synthetic forms outlined in black. It is an ongoing narrative in which we find babies on all fours, dolphins, televisions, yapping

dogs, snakes, angels, dancers, androgynous forms, flying saucers, pyramids and ringing alarm clocks, but also sexuality and the death drive.

"Untitled" 1980 © Estate of Keith Haring



"Untitled" 1983 © Estate of Keith Haring



His artistic signature is the line, reduced to the bare essentials, deployed in various ways within the limits assigned to it and the proportions that these imply. This line is always continuous, guided by chance. The line becomes contour, figure and, ultimately, symbol.

Whether working to commission or spontaneously decorating a wall, he never made sketches or preparatory drawings. The deliberate use of a monochrome ground, the rapid flow of a line of constant thickness and the simple formal repertoire designed to be quickly identified were the characteristic criteria used to achieve an immediate effect.

This is how his works could become icons. Haring's name is always associated with a graphic pictorial style involving bright coloured grounds with thick black lines. The colours red, blue, yellow and green constitute the artist's favoured palette.

The “Haring style” quickly became one of the most popular visual languages of the 20th century.

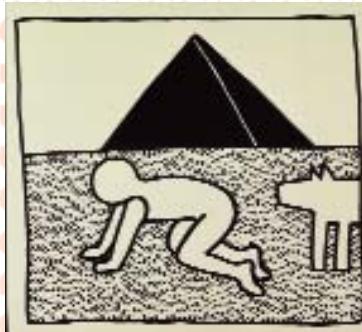
"One of the things I have been most interested in is the role of chance in situations - letting things happen by themselves. My drawings are never pre-planned. I never sketch a plan for a drawing, even for huge wall murals. My early drawings, which were always abstract, were filled with references to images, but never had specific images. They are more like automatic writing or gestural abstraction."



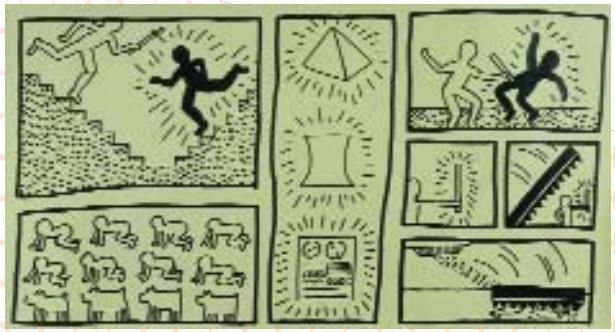
"Untitled" 1983 © Estate of Keith Haring

— His teeming iconography

"My contribution to the world is my ability to draw. I will draw as much as I can for as many people as I can for as long as I can."



"The Blueprint Drawings" 1990 © Estate of Keith Haring



"Fashion Moda" 1980 © Estate of Keith Haring

Haring used simple, explicit symbols, always the same ones, through the twelve years of his career as an artist: dogs (nature), flying saucers (a higher power), computers and television (dehumanizing technology), sticks (the instruments of power), snakes (energy or danger), pyramids (ancient civilisations and traditions), Mickey Mouse (popular culture).

Cartoons, atomic energy, consumer society, technological progress, the dangers of sexuality - Haring was at the heart of the issues facing members of his generation.

In the course of his intense career, which really began in 1980, Haring had more than 100 solo or group shows. In 1986 alone he was the subject of over 40 newspaper and magazine articles.



— The radiant baby

"I remember, one summer in New York, working in a day-care center in Brooklyn as an arts and crafts instructor, and being completely comfortable working with kids - it was one of the best jobs I ever had."

"What I like about children is their imagination. It's a combination of honesty and freedom they seem to have in expressing whatever is on their minds - and the fact that they have a really sophisticated sense of humor. Also, children have incredible instinct which get them through the world."

The "Radiant Baby" became the original sign of a world whose dreamlike atmosphere was close to that of the new American science fiction. The "Radiant Baby" was born in the same year as E.T., the extraterrestrial conceived by Steven Spielberg. It is a media-friendly message that would soon be appearing in a great variety of forms: badges, tee shirts, stickers, dolls, etc.

Keith Haring defined the figure of the "Radiant Baby", an extremely simplified human silhouette, as an incarnation of life, energy, joy and hope for the future. It is now universally recognized as the "Haring hallmark".

Times Square in New York celebrated its apotheosis in January 1982 when it appeared lit up and flashing on a giant screen at night.

— Interventions in public space

Throughout his career, Keith Haring devoted most of his time to public works, most of them carrying social messages. He produced over 50 public works of art between 1982 and 1989 in dozens of towns around the world, most of them for charity, and often for hospitals, orphanages and children's centres. The 1986 wall painting "Crack is Wack" became a landmark on the Franklin D. Roosevelt Drive, a very busy road running alongside Manhattan. Other noteworthy projects were the wall

painting for the first hundred years of the Statue of Liberty, which Haring conceived with the participation of 900 children, or the wall paintings for the Necker children's hospital, Paris, in 1987, and the Berlin Wall, three years before it fell. Haring also set up numerous workshops for children in schools and museums in New York, Amsterdam, London, Tokyo and Bordeaux, also producing images for many literacy and public service campaigns.



Keith Haring et le Pop Shop



— The "Pop Shop"

Keith Haring always wanted to be popular. This was evident in the graffiti, pop imagery and also the many collective projects of his early years. When his works were becoming more and more sought-after on the market, he tried to make his art even more accessible, a part of everyday life for all. Thus, in April 1986 he opened his Pop Shop in SoHo. There he sold toys, objects, clothes, posters, badges and magnets illustrated by him and other artists, which were so many inexpensive artworks for sale. The whole shop, from floor to ceiling, was covered with his famous black lines which, when seen from the right distance, represented interlocking figures in a unique

and striking environment. The point of this shop was to enable everyone to have access to his work in the form of inexpensive products. This approach, which was highly controversial in the art world, was nevertheless strongly supported by his friends and by his mentor Andy Warhol.

Ahead of his time, Haring now became a brand. He soon began developing special products for his shop, rather than just copying existing works. The Pop Shop was conceived as an extension of his work. Thus his name, his brand and his work were spread around the world. As he saw it, this was not a moneymaking

enterprise, for his aim was to redistribute the profits he made on behalf of various causes.

He understood the importance of distribution before anyone else did. Everything he produced was distributed around the world and sold, but also copied. His gallerist, Tony Shafrazi, explained the revolutionary significance of Haring's approach:

"Keith was a precursor. Today, there are so many artists, labels and brands that have their own shop."

"But in those days no one was doing this; it was comple-

tely new and revolutionary, both in the world of art and elsewhere. In fact, Haring did not charge much for his objects. He wanted to make art accessible to everyone. And so, of course, the microcosm of the art world didn't like it. Seeing art as something for an elite, above the masses, they were extremely critical of his approach and did all they could to ensure that it would fail. The Pop Shop in SoHo kept going until September 2005 - a fine career."



Keith Haring artwork © Estate of Keith Haring. Photo by Dolfo-Michels

— Keith Haring and young people

Keith Haring grew up in the age of mass media and consumerism. A real "kids' idol", he always sided with the youngsters.

Haring himself remained an eternal child, like a "Little Prince" from another planet.

"If I can have that effect on children, then it's the most important and useful thing I can do. To have a positive impact on people's lives is for me the closest thing I can think of to religion. Children know things that most people have forgotten. Children have that fascination in their daily life which is so precious and could help so many adults if they took the time to understand and respect it. I am 28 now on the outside and barely 12 inside. And I want to remain that young 12 year-old boy until the day I die."



"Untitled" 1989 © Estate of Keith Haring

The mural at the Necker hospital

In 1987, Keith Haring became even more involved in his work with children. He made a mural at the Necker children's hospital in Paris. To do so, he spent several days in a painter's cradle, which was all the more uncomfortable because he was suffering from AIDS.

All around the world, Haring worked with children on outdoor paintings. In his public commissions and works for children's charities, Haring returned to his old love for comics, and his art was full of paintings and sculptures inspired by the world of childhood. He also produced images for literacy campaigns in Germany and the USA. He devised and decorated an attraction in the Luna Luna theme park near Hamburg. Totally engaged with his times, he stood up to be counted, putting his art at the service of his chosen cause, childhood.

Although the Necker hospital is currently undergoing major renovation work, as a part of which the annexe for which the mural was painted must be destroyed, the municipality of Paris has nevertheless decided to save the painting by transferring it to the hospital's main building, in the new entrance area that will be completed in 2010.

Keith Haring, graffiti and hip-hop

Keith Haring was linked with the New York hip-hop scene (graffiti, rap, break dance). Julia Gruen, who was his assistant from 1984 to 1990, and now directs the Keith Haring Foundation, recalls: "Haring was a young white man from a small town in America who drew on the energy of the culture and music of the Latino and Black population of New York."

At the end of the 1970s, alternative culture and graffiti were a booming phenomenon in the streets and subways of New

York. The movement was driven by artists, writers, youths and polemicists who wanted to reshape the urban environment.

Fascinated by the graffiti he saw when he arrived in New York, Haring admired the way these artists worked with sprays and approved their infiltration of public space with actions whose results were visible to everyone.

"Almost immediately upon my arrival in New York in 1978, I had begun to be interested, intrigued, and fascinated by the graffiti I was seeing in the streets and in the subways. (...) At The School of Visual Arts, I met Kenny Scharf, and he became one of my closest friends. Kenny was cool because he would continually find things in the streets and drag them to school and into the sculpture studio, especially abandoned or broken television sets, electronic tubes and all that stuff. He had this hot glue gun and he would just glue all this things together".

— Keith Haring and 1980s New York

For a whole generation enamoured of the art of the 1980s, Keith Haring is emblematic of the period. He threw himself into collaborative projects and worked with artists such as Madonna, Grace Jones, Bill T. Jones, William S. Burroughs, Dennis Hopper, Timothy Leary, Jenny Holzer, Yoko Ono and Andy Warhol, most of whom became friends. Elton John and David Bowie collected his paintings.

Keith Haring was the perfect embodiment of the New York underground culture of the 1980s, with

its happenings at Club 57 and the Mudd Club and the affirmation of a gay creative milieu.

The chosen venue of the avant-garde elite, Club 57 was a space for art and performances, located in the basement of a Polish church on St Mark's Place in the East Village.

It hosted musical shows but also exhibitions, public readings and live performances, in which Haring participated. This club frequented by artists, musicians and actors was the launch pad for many a career.

Keith Haring with hat



Keith Haring and Madonna 1989



"Untitled" 1981 © Estate of Keith Haring



"There was Club 57, which became the neighbourhood hangout. It was totally unique, and a whole bunch of us kind of ran it. (...) But for me, Club 57 not only meant dancing and drinking and sex and fun and craziness, but the beginning of a whole career as the organizer and curator of some really interesting art shows. A lot of people gravitated to Club 57 and they became the central figures of the scene."

— Keith Haring and sexuality

Keith had the audacity of youth. In a morally liberal America, he was soon forced to confront his identity as a young homosexual artist.

In 1978, at the height of the sexual revolution, Haring came to New York. There he discovered the "back-rooms" and bathhouses frequented by the gay community, and the busy sexual activity of his nights soon became the main subject of his art. Throughout his career, Haring's representations of the male genitalia acted as both the sign of an incessant, voracious and overwhelming desire, and an allegory of nirvana. Sex was portrayed in its truth as a binder of human relations and a symbol of reconciliation, of union and harmony

between beings. Contrary to many other homosexual artists, who sought to keep their sexuality hidden and invisible, Haring made its artistic expression a way of asserting his pride in being gay through the explicit homoeroticism of his works.

AIDS forced Haring to the painful recognition that sex and love could be associated with the idea of illness and death. His works now took on a defiant quality, a sense of danger attesting the artist's dilemma in relation to his work. Far from expressing fatalism in his art, right to the end of his life Haring poured his energy into his work in order to proclaim the value and richness of life, of love and sex.

— Keith Haring and his causes

Keith Haring and the fight against drugs

Haring was personally committed to the fight against drugs, a problem he knew well for having suffered from it in his own life. He produced murals and posters for prevention campaigns. On a giant wall painting near the highway in New York he painted a brilliant orange piece shouting the words "Crack is Wack" to passing drivers. His posters, which were usually given out free, served as a way of warning youngsters of the dangers that lay in store for them, with the messages conveyed in his characteristic style. Drugs were in fact wreaking havoc in his personal entourage. Jean-Michel Basquiat died of a heroin overdose in summer 1988 and Haring, who loved him and admired his work, created an artistic monument in his memory. For the painting "A pile of crowns for Jean-Michel Basquiat", made in the year of the artist's death, he chose a triangular canvas around which he painted a wide red band, making it look like a warning sign. Royal crowns painted in black and white pile up in the centre. By quoting the three-pronged crown, with which Basquiat used to sign his paintings, Haring was expressing his friendship.

"Throughout the eighties, I always knew I could easily be a candidate for AIDS. I knew this because there was every kind of promiscuity in every corner of New York City - and I was very much a part of all that."

"I didn't stop having sex, but have safe sex or what was considered and understood to be safe sex at that point. I became more conscious of being self-protective."



"A pile of crowns for Jean-Michel Basquiat" 1988 © Estate of Keith Haring

Keith Haring and the fight against AIDS

In the mid 1980s there was a real leap in public awareness of AIDS. There was a new attention to the deadly danger of this sexually transmitted illness and an emphasis on protection. Haring observed its ravages in his own close entourage, where many of his friends and acquaintances had already been killed by AIDS. He knew that he too was threatened: "Life is so fragile. There is a very fine line between life and death. It is clear to me that I am living on that line" he noted in his journal in 1986.

Even if he did not know that he would himself be killed by the illness, during the last years of his life he painted more and more about AIDS, hoping that their dissuasive effect would save lives. His tough, grating images show the different causes of the illness's spread, including the unsterilised syringes of drug addicts and the absence of condoms, illustrated by male and female genitalia spilling deadly sperm.



"Untitled" 1981 © Estate of Keith Haring

— The Keith Haring Foundation

Throughout his career, Keith Haring made paintings and sculptures to benefit hospitals, public health organizations and charities for children.

In 1989 he set up the Keith Haring Foundation to do this work, bequeathing responsibility for the organization to Julia Gruen in his will.

As Haring wanted it to, the Keith Haring Foundation helps organisations and institutions active in the charitable and educational fields, and especially those that help and protect children and encourage them to develop their potential, as well as organizations active in education, public health and care for AIDS victims. The Foundation also works with institutions that bring Haring's works to public attention in exhibitions and supports the publication of his writings, drawings, paintings and other works in the form of books, films and electronic media, and by licensing his images. The Foundation promotes the work of Keith Haring but also the social causes that he championed.

"Keith and Julia" 1986 © Estate of Keith Haring



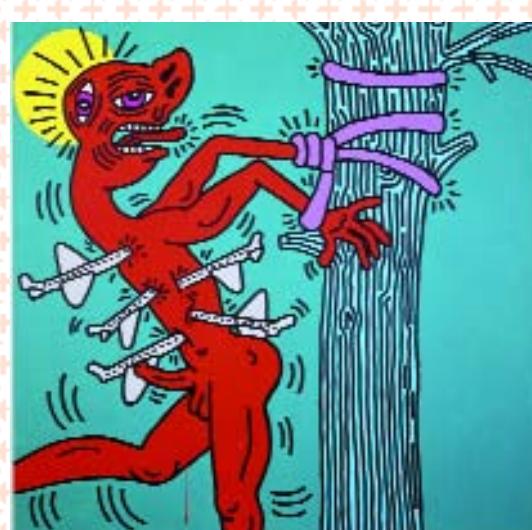
For more information:

www.haring.com and www.haringkids.com

— Keith Haring and the art market

"What I can't understand is that in 1989 and going into 1990, there is still resistance to my work from the American art establishment - from the American museum world. In a way, I'm glad there's resistance, because it gives me something to fight against. As always, my support network is not made up of museums and curators, but of real people."

Keith Haring enjoyed an excellent reputation in Europe. His paintings were collected there in the early 1980s well before the American market began to react. In 1983 his prices on the art market really began to take off, especially in auctions at Sotheby's



"San Sebastian" 1984 © Estate of Keith Haring

and Christie's. While he was delighted by this enthusiasm, Haring disliked the idea of having a price set on his work, and that his art might become a currency of exchange or for speculation. While the recognition of ordinary men and women was essential to him, he still suffered from the indifference of museums. *"But I really do believe that it will come - that I am going to be recognized. It will happen when I'm no longer here and I am unable to enjoy it."*

He was right: it was only after his death that the art world became aware how very important he was and demonstrated the fact in major exhibitions. The art market was quick to recuperate Haring: "He enjoys global popularity and his market is totally international", explains Artpiece. "Keith Haring's position in the art market has never been higher and his index has risen by more than 120% since 2003, the year when works going for more than USD 100,000 began to accelerate. [...] 2007 looks like being a bumper year for his works after the first sale above a million dollars, a large painting from 1982 which went for USD 2.5m at Christie's NY."

Catalogue and bookshop



"Untitled" 1984 © Estate of Keith Haring

The catalogue

A generously illustrated catalogue published by Skira will accompany the exhibition. It includes texts by David Galloway, Timothy Greenfield-Sanders, Julia Gruen, Kim Hastreiter, Arturo Schwartz, Tony Shafrazi and Pierre Sterckx. There are also interviews with Jeffrey Deitch and Peter Halley as well as previously unpublished interviews by John Gruen, Haring's biographer, with the artist and friends of his such as Yoko Ono, William S. Burroughs, Leo Castelli, Henry Geldzhaler, Timothy Leary, Roy Lichtenstein and Madonna.

The bookshop

On both its site (www.librairie-descours.com) and in its shop at the Museum of Contemporary Art of Lyon, Librairie Descours will offer a selection of Keith Haring multiples and a selection of books about the artist (including no. 134 of "Dada", a journal introducing readers to contemporary art, conceived specially for the exhibition), as well as the exhibition catalogue.

The Librairie Descours has existed for nearly 27 years. It remains one of the rare independent bookshops specialising in art and aesthetics in France. Its great strength is its stock of over 30,000 titles, which are also available on its website, ranging over the visual arts, architecture, painting, sculpture, drawing, prints, decorative arts, tribal arts and contemporary arts, plus writings on aesthetics, journals, European and North American books, exhibition catalogues, monographs, catalogues of museums and collections, specialist studies, etc...



Around the exhibition

Enjoy Keith Haring your way

"Kids' special"

For families

For grown-ups

Group activities

The children's workshop:

So, Keith Haring wanted to make painting accessible to all? This workshop takes him at his word and gives children an experience of the graphic sign. After seeing the works, the budding graffiti artists try out the graffiti artist's gestures, forms and collective markings. Each child will leave with his or her own souvenir object, at once an individual work and a memento of a moment spent with others.

Workshop for children aged 6-12, Wednesday and Saturday at 15:30, booking recommended.

My birthday in the museum:

An original way of celebrating your birthday, by inviting your friends to experience contemporary art before blowing out the candles.

For upwards of age 5, Wednesday and Saturday. By booking.

Together, meeting Keith Haring:

Children and parents discover the Keith Haring exhibition with a guide who encourages them to dialogue and share their points of view on the works.

Family tour at 15:30, booking recommended.

Children's workshop/parent's tour:

Children take part in a fun workshop while parents make the most of the guided tour.

Children's workshop and adults' guided tour, Wednesday and Saturday at 15:30, booking recommended. Special rates for families.

Guided tour of the exhibition:

Designed for adults, this guided tour takes visitors into the world of Keith Haring and encourages dialogue.

Wednesday at 15:30, Saturday and Sunday at 14:30, 15:30 and 16:30, booking recommended.

Conferences:

Figures close to the artist, art historians and critics analyse Haring's work and locate it in its artistic and historical context, cumulatively offering a rich and diverse set of perspectives on the artist.

One Friday per month at 19:00. Admission free.

Tours and workshops by reservation:

- Guided tours, from general to more specialist, are available for groups of adults (associations, company groups).
- Tours adapted to the visitors (schools, students) establish links with the programmes..
- Workshops, including graphic expression workshops, are organised with children outside school hours and for classes in relation to art projects.
- Several workshops offer initiations into scratch music, beatbox, customisation and hip-hop dance for groups of youngsters outside school hours.

Preparing your visit:

- Special events introducing the exhibition have been programmed for children and group leaders in early March.
- Teaching materials will be available on www.moca-lyon.org to help teachers prepare or follow up their exhibition visit.

Keith Haring with L'Original

To convey the New York underground atmosphere that Keith Haring frequented, the Museum of contemporary art of Lyon has joined forces with L'Original. This international hip-hop festival was founded in Lyon in 2004 and quickly became a major event in France and in Europe. Every year, it looks at certain aspects of the history of hip-hop, its sources and influences. On the occasion of the Keith Haring exhibition, the Museum of contemporary art of Lyon and L'Original have worked out a programme of screenings, events and workshops.

Experience the atmosphere of New York in the early 1980s where hip-hop developed thanks to the two films screened in the Museum of contemporary art's conference room during the exhibition:

“Wild style”

“Wild style”, made in 1982 by Charlie Ahearn, is an emblematic film about hip-hop culture which describes its emergence and the appearance of break-dance, smurf, graffiti and rap. It features legendary dancers and rappers like Rock Steady Crew, Rammellzee and Grandmaster Flash. A monument not to be missed.

“Freestyle”

“Freestyle: The Art of Rhyme”, which came out in 2002, retraces the history of hip-hop, rap, freestyle, and musical improvisation. It represents ten years of work by Kevin Fitzgerald, who did the interviews with key figures from the hip-hop scene such as Tupac Shakur, The Roots, Mos Def, Craig G, etc. A rare, jubilant and ferocious portrait of the musical universe of hip-hop seen from inside.

“Wild Style” evening

Meet the actors from the film “Wild Style” at an exceptional screening. This emblematic film about hip-hop culture will be celebrating the 25th anniversary of its release. Its actors, who frequented Club 57 in Keith Haring's day, will be at the Museum of contemporary art in early April.

“Wild Style” block party

The “Wild Style” evening will be followed by a block party, as part of the L'Original festival. This block party will revive the spirit of the early days, with a panorama of music from the times. A DJ will mix disco, soul, funk, reggae and all the music out of which rap grew. A festive way of getting into the spirit of New York in the 1970s.

Scratch music workshop:

Transform turntables into musical instruments as you discover scratch music and its techniques!

Beatbox workshop:

Learn all about beatbox, the art of using your mouth to imitate rhythms and instruments.

Customisation workshop:

Personalise everyday objects using stencils, paintbrushes, spray paint and scissors. A playful approach to the history and development of graffiti.

Echoing the Keith Haring exhibition

The exhibition backstage:

By observing the preparations for the Keith Haring exhibition, three classes (aged around 15, the Charcot and Bellecombe schools in Lyon, the Balzac in Vénissieux) discovered what goes on behind the scenes in the museum, how it works, the people who work there and what they do. The school students investigate, report and discuss their experiences.

Culture in the hospital:

With the association ECHO (Echanges Cultures Hôpital), the Musée d'Art Contemporain is organising a course in contemporary art for personnel in the private hospitals of Lyon, completed with visits to the Keith Haring exhibition.

Art and prison:

On the occasion of the Keith Haring exhibition, the Museum of contemporary art is continuing its partnership with the Rhône region penitentiary integration and probation service. Visits to the exhibition are offered to prison personnel. A workshop with a graphic artist has been specially organised for inmates.

For more information on the programme of activities and rates, see www.moca-lyon.org, "Publics"

Information and reservations: +33 (0)4 72 69 17 19

Keith Haring, Düsseldorf, 1987. Photo by Jansen



Visitor information

Admission :

Full rate: 8 euros
Concessions: 6 euros
Family ticket: 10 euros (2 adults and 2 children or more)
Free for visitors under 18.
Subject to modification

Ticketing :

Priority tickets :
- Fnac, Carrefour, 0892 684 694
(0.34 euros TTC/min), www.fnac.com
- Ticketnet: le Progrès, Auchan,
Leclerc, Virgin, Cultura

Extended opening hours :

Thursday and Friday, from 12 am to 7 pm.
Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday, from 10 am to 7 pm

Visitors to the Keith Haring exhibition will be offered a second glass of champagne at Sunday brunch at the Hilton Brasserie.



Address :

Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon
Cité Internationale
81, quai Charles de Gaulle,
69006 Lyon - France
Phone: + 33 (0)4 72 69 17 17
www.moca-lyon.org

Easy access :

By bus, stop Musée d'art contemporain :
- Line C1 from Part-Dieu station
- Line 4, change with métro A at Foch or métro B and D at Saxe-Gambetta
- Line 58, from Bellecour via Hôtel de Ville

By car, along "Quai Charles de Gaulle", follow "Cité Internationale".

Visitors to the Keith Haring exhibition are given a reduction at all car parks in the Cité Internationale:
40 minutes free at P0 and P2, the first hour free at P1, on presentation of their parking ticket at the museum reception.

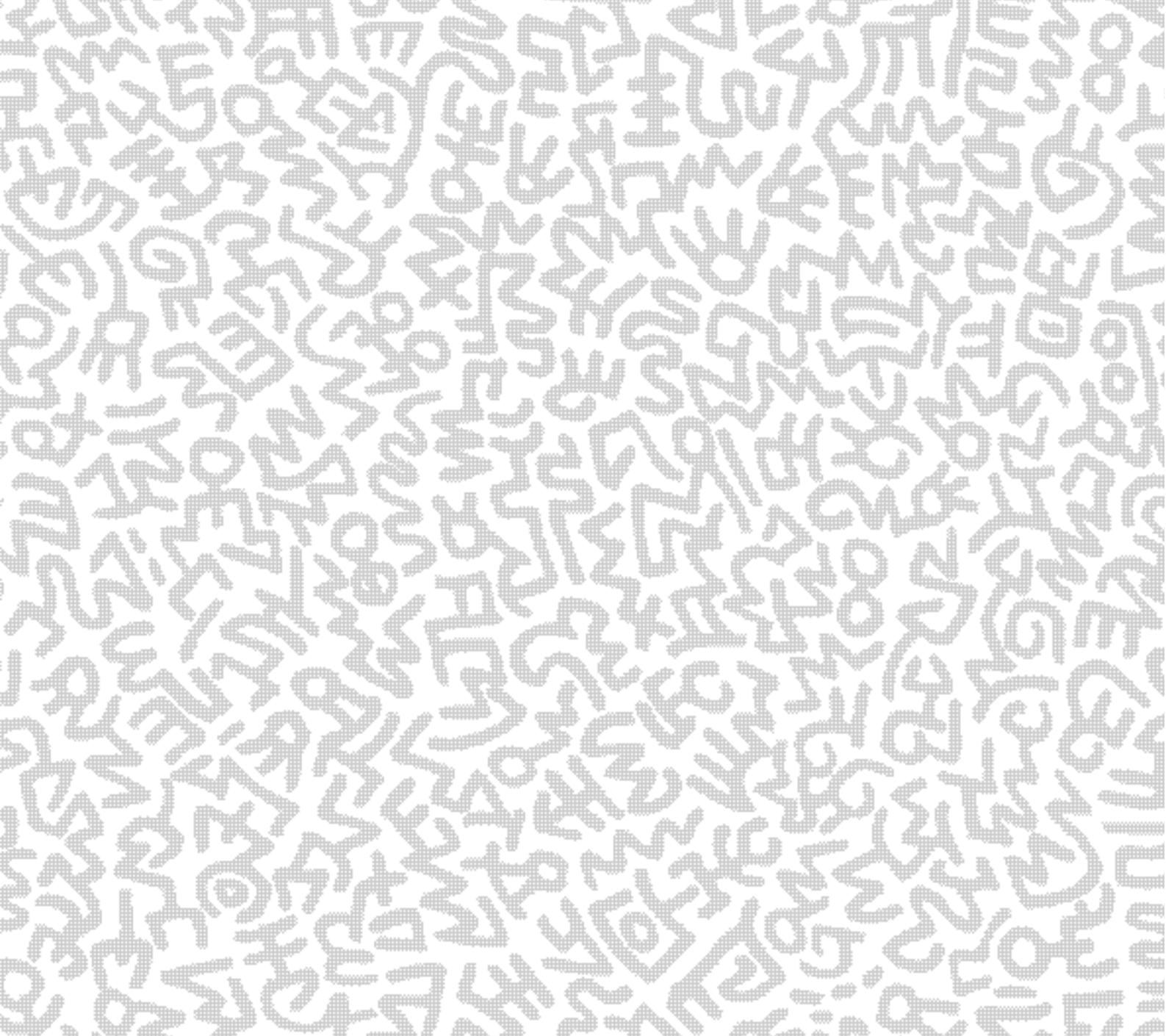


By bike: several Velo'V stations are located around the Museum.

The Museum and Museum Café are accessible to disabled visitors

The exhibition :

Curator of the exhibition: Gianni Mercurio
General curator: Thierry Raspail
Associate curator: Isabelle Bertolotti
Communication: Muriel Jaby
Heymann, Renault Associées



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