

Keith Haring (American, 1958-90 – Artist Resources)

[The Keith Haring Foundation: biography, essays and press, interviews, artworks](#)

In 1980 [Rolling Stone interviewed](#) Haring while the artist was at work on a 500 ft mural with high school students in Chicago. Haring discusses his upbringing and education, relationships with Andy Warhol and Jean-Michele Basquiat, and AIDS crisis and his relationship with the disease. Speaking of his symbolic pictorial language, Haring remembers “trying to figure out where this stuff came from, but I have no idea. It just grew into this group of drawings. I was thinking about these images as symbols, as a vocabulary of things...Suddenly it made sense to draw on the street, because I had something to say.”

In addition to subway drawings, paintings, public sculpture, and art activism, Haring was [a prolific muralist](#).



Haring speaks about his subway drawings in a [brief interview for a local tv program](#) in 1983 while at work on a mural for the [Marquette University Campus](#) in Milwaukee, on the construction site for the Haggerty Museum.

[New York Times review](#) of the first retrospective of Haring's work in a major museum in the U.S., curated by [Eilsabeth Sussman](#), at the Whitney Museum of American Art

The Guardian remembered Haring's “radical joy” in 2019 with [a profile celebrating his consistent relevance](#), and a [collection of memories](#) from fellow artists and friends. “He was unique,” explains Carlos Rodriguez, a graffiti artist who worked with Haring. “The vernacular of his art was so appealing, with a quality of entertainment. But it was also a tremendous, beautiful response to the activism of the time... the really unusual thing about Keith is that he felt he could be of service.”

Artist Karey Maurice Counts [looks back on his friendship with Haring](#) and celebrates an enduring influence in conjunction with Haring's first retrospective in the UK, at [Tate Liverpool](#).

Haring, 1984, Photograph: Stuart William Macgladrie/Fairfax Media via Getty Images



Haring, 1986 at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam
Photograph: Nationaal Archief

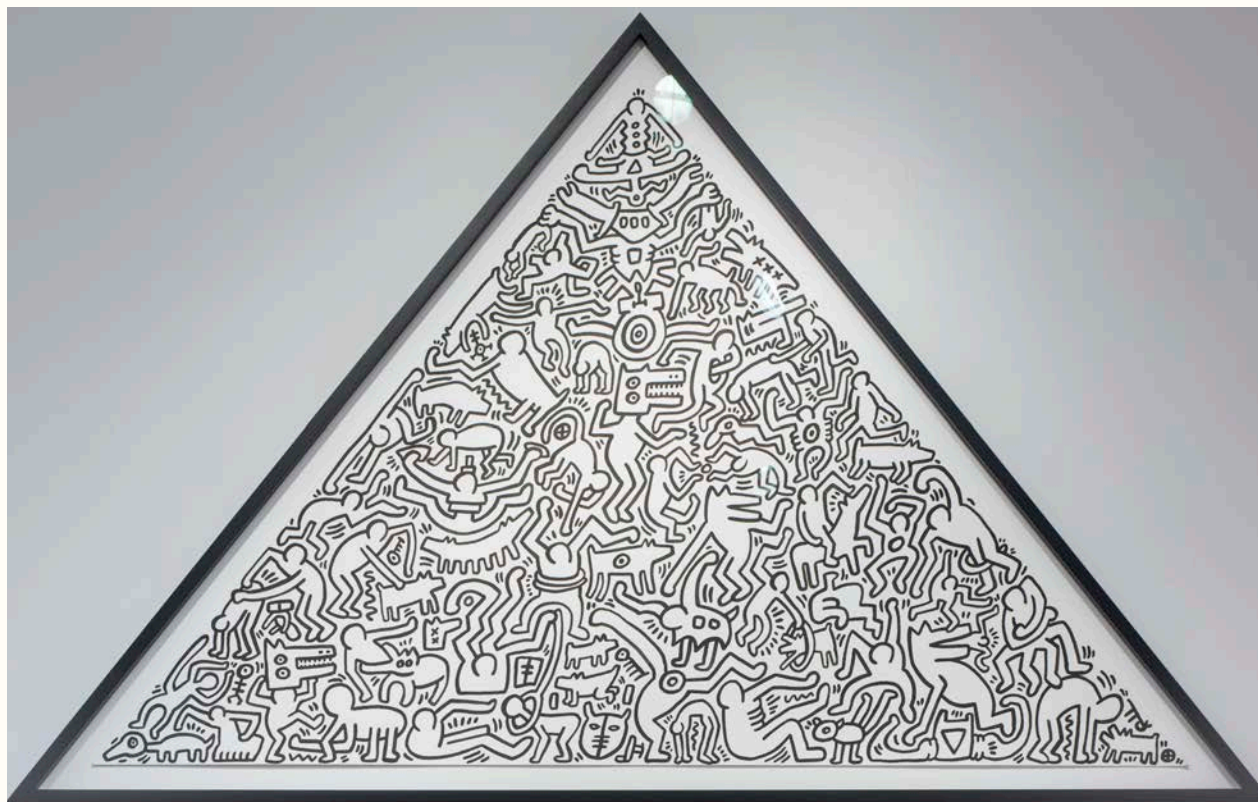
Keith Haring (American, 1958-90)

Untitled, 1990

Sumi Ink on board

Private Collection; L2019:155.1

Keith Haring moved to New York in 1978, beginning a short but prolific career inspired by the city's rich outpouring of masterful urban graffiti, its flowering hip-hop culture, and the conceptual gap between “high” and “low” art. Haring developed a deceptively simple pictorial language in which he rendered form, setting, and emotional energy through little more than line and monochromatic accents of color. An AIDS diagnosis in 1988 did little to deter the artist's creative output. **Untitled** features dozens of Haring's iconic characters, who seem to dance in a celebration of life, contorting wildly to music we cannot hear. Completed shortly before the artist's death, the painting demonstrates Haring's professional and personal ambition to infuse art with commentaries on global issues like the AIDS crisis. Haring saw his disease as a reason to celebrate living, not to fear pain or an inevitable end. Wishing to accept his impending death without regret and limitation, Haring explained, “No matter how long you work, it's always going to end sometime. And there's always going to be things left undone.... If you live your life according to that, death is irrelevant. Everything I'm doing right now is exactly what I want to do.”



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