

All About

Keith Haring

Graffiti Artist and Activist

An illustration of Keith Haring, a man with curly hair and glasses, wearing a black jacket with red and white stripes on the sleeves, painting graffiti on a brick wall. The graffiti consists of colorful, geometric shapes like zig-zags, circles, and triangles in shades of purple, blue, green, and yellow. The background is a brick wall with some bricks colored in these same vibrant hues. The overall style is graphic and colorful, characteristic of Haring's art.

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Keith Haring's Art

Keith Haring's style of art is well known for bold, bright colours with thick outlines and a cartoon-like style.



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Can you find
this bit in the
mural?



Fact File

Born: 4th May 1958 in Reading,
Pennsylvania, USA

Died: 16th February 1990 (aged 31),
New York City, USA



Family: He had three younger sisters
and his parents were Joan and Allen Haring.

Education: He attended Kutztown Area Senior High
School and then the Ivy School of Professional Art in
Pittsburgh but he never finished his course there. He
went to both Pittsburgh Centre for the Arts and School
of Visual Arts in New York City.

Jobs: He worked at Pittsburgh Centre for the Arts in
maintenance while he was concentrating on his own
artwork. He later became a full-time artist.

New York

Some of Haring's subway work is now in a museum.



In 1978, he arrived in New York where his interest in graffiti art grew while he studied at School of Visual Arts in the city.

New York was a vibrant and energetic city at this time and an exciting place to be.

Haring was blown away by the graffiti art and saw blank, black areas of space on the subway where he started to make his own, signed, graffiti art.

Graffiti can, of course, be vandalism when permission has not been granted and he was arrested a number of times for committing crime.

The Rest of the World

In the 1980s, Haring was becoming noticed further afield and he travelled to other countries painting murals.



Paris, France



Melbourne, Australia

He painted murals in Australia, Rio De Janeiro and Paris.

He was even asked to paint part of the Berlin Wall in Germany near to checkpoint Charlie (the gate between East and West Germany when it was split).

Pop Shop

In 1986, Haring opened his own art shops in New York City and Tokyo selling his graffiti artwork and also some Pop Art pieces. And yes... he had covered the inside of the shop in murals!

He said, "The Pop Shop makes my work accessible. It's about participation on a big level."

The original shops are now closed (Tokyo closed in 1988 and the New York branch much more recently in 2005).

Pop shop merchandise is still available online from the Keith Haring Foundation.



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Sculpture

Keith Haring sculptures can be found all over the world.
3D Versions of his artwork.



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Activism

During his lifetime, Keith Haring did a lot of work for the benefit of children, especially those in disadvantaged areas. He also provided the artwork for campaigns.

In 1989, he set up the Keith Haring foundation so that after his death, this important work could continue which it still does today.



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Have a Go

Keith Haring was passionate about taking art to the people (all people of all levels) rather than keeping it in galleries.

Why not have a go at creating your own artwork in the style of Keith Haring?

Bold colours, cartoon people shapes, black outlines and some movement lines.



