

GLADSTONE

Gladstone Presents Paintings on Canvas and Tarps by Keith Haring

Gladstone Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of paintings by Keith Haring. The show includes canvases and tarps painted in the 1980s, which feature the iconic imagery and motifs that Haring developed earlier in that decade. Having first gained recognition for his public work, much of which was done subversively in the New York City subway system, Haring continued throughout his career to develop a populist aesthetic. The works on view are characteristic of Haring's artistic practice, featuring a bold, bright color palette, exuberant figures, and a thoughtful use of unconventional materials.

Though Haring created many works that initially appear to be celebratory and playful, he was a politically active and socially conscious artist, interested in reflecting and responding to the cultural climate in which he lived. Accordingly, his works frequently explore themes of sexuality, technology, the AIDS virus, and capitalist greed. This juxtaposition between aesthetic and subject matter is most readily apparent in his 1986 work *Untitled*. Painted in vibrant red and yellow, the work depicts his classic, simply outlined human figures; but unlike many of his other works in which the figures are dancing and bursting with energy, here they lie piled atop one another, with symbolic black x's over their faces, a haunting representation of the toll taken by the AIDS virus.

Haring was aware of what he perceived as the potentially negative impact of technology and the media on the world around him, and frequently addressed these subjects in his work, as exemplified by several paintings on view. Haring wrote in his journal, "The problem facing modern man now...is compounded by the increasing power of technology and its misuse by those in power who wish only to control. The mentality of people who are motivated by profits at the expense of human needs is perfect for the computer." A few of the works included illustrate these musings, as they variously depict television and computer screens filled with dollar signs and people being run down by anthropomorphized technology machines. The narratives contained in these works are not necessarily overt – Haring felt that images should always be left open to interpretation – but through his works clear themes emerge, reflecting the way in which he perceived his contemporary moment.

Keith Haring was born on May 4, 1958 in Reading, Pennsylvania and died at the age of thirty-one of AIDS-related illnesses in New York City. Since his death, his work has been the subject of several major solo exhibitions, including the recent major retrospectives *Keith Haring: 1978 – 1982* at the Brooklyn Museum of Art and *Keith Haring: The Political Line* at the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, which will travel to the de Young Museum in San Francisco in November 2014. In addition, Haring's work is in major private and public collections, including The Museum of Modern Art, New York; The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago; The Bass Museum, Miami; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Ludwig Museum, Cologne; and Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

G L A D S T O N E

Exhibition Details:

Keith Haring

May 3 – September 14, 2014

530 West 21st Street

New York, New York 10011

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