

# GLADSTONE

## Rare Presentation of Late-career Paintings by Keith Haring Opens at Gladstone this September

The presentation highlights emotionally charged works underscoring Haring's enduring commitment to unity, healthcare equity, and the expressive power of art

Produced towards the end of the artist's life, the works capture Haring's abiding concerns for global harmony, accessible healthcare in the face of the AIDS crisis, and the preeminence of art for expressions of joy and communion. Marking the first time in ten years that Gladstone has focused exclusively on Haring's canvas works and painted tarps, *Liberating the Soul: Keith Haring's Paintings* is on view September 18 through November 1 at the gallery's 24th Street location in New York.

Haring is renowned for his pop-inflected subway drawings and public art projects based on an enduring conviction that art should be accessible to everyone. He is also recognized as a painter of powerful, emotionally charged canvases, which vibrate with evocations of joy and humor, but in other instances, critique the world's injustices. An avid student of art history and keen interlocuter with his artistic peers, Haring cultivated a rich, formal painting practice in addition to his more outward-facing activities.

Fusing his political activism with a spirit of gay pride, two large canvases from 1985—pre-dating the artist's own diagnosis of H.I.V. and AIDS—revel in safe sex practices using graphic visual terms. They imagine a life of unbounded freedom and celebration in a world devoid of homophobia. Initially documented among the so-called “high-risk” groups—gay males, heroin addicts, and immigrants—AIDS was marginalized in America during the 1980s as a disease of “the other.” It wasn't until members of the LGBTQ+ community mobilized to educate (and empower) themselves to demand immediate care that federal attention began to shift from containment to cure. Haring was an engaged member of the activist organization ACT UP, which advocated for access to medical research and transparency in treatment. These large-scale, buoyant paintings are particularly relevant today as LGBTQ+ rights are increasingly under siege in the U.S., and AIDS treatment in developing nations, long a priority of the government, has been curtailed due to dramatic shifts in ideology.

Much of Haring's work is infused with personal content, reflecting upon his own life as an artist in a rich community of creatives including musicians, graffiti artists, writers, and activists. *A Pile of Crowns for Jean-Michel Basquiat* is a large triangular painting featuring a tower of crowns—Basquiat's signature motif—an elegiac expression of loss after the artist's death from an overdose in 1988. Basquiat and Haring were close, having each started their careers as street artists in early 1980s, quickly rising to fame and achieving economic success, yet never abandoning their instincts for provocation and visual poetry. The pyramidal construction at the center of the trilateral canvas forms a monument to Basquiat's towering creative genius and a testament to Haring's deep respect for his fallen friend.

In a separate vein, the *Untitled* canvas from 1989—the artist's last painting—evinces the more jubilant side of Haring's practice in its abstracted, all-over-patterning, which, on close inspection, reveals a repeating figure with arms outstretched, signaling an expression of

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elation—its interlaced limbs referencing the idea of community. The imagery suggests a euphoric crowd, coalescing in the fight against oppression and suffering that so motivated Haring's artistic vision. This painting is a remarkable, late-career example of Haring's fluid line-drawings of intertwined human figures, perhaps the most iconic aspect of his work. Throughout his practice, he was captivated by intricate surface patterns and bold color combinations juxtaposing warm and cool hues to create vibrant, entwined imagery. Haring collated visual influences from all over the world in his work, ranging from the dizzying effects of late-20<sup>th</sup>-century digital culture to Aztec, Mayan, North African, and Aboriginal iconography. *Untitled* is a perfect fusion of the varying sources that Haring translated into his signature painting style.

An illustrated publication will accompany the exhibition, shedding new, interpretive light on Haring's painting practice.

## About Keith Haring

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 in 1990. Since his death, his work has been the subject of major solo exhibitions around the world, including BOZAR, Brussels, Belgium; Museum Folkwang, Essen Germany; Tate Liverpool; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; the de Young Museum, San Francisco; the Kunsthalle der Hypo-Kulturstiftung, Munich Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati; Whitney Museum of American Art; Castello di Rivoli, Italy; Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna; and the Brooklyn Museum of Art. Haring's work is included 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.

## Exhibition Details:

September 18 — November 1, 2025  
Opening Reception: September 18, 6–8pm  
515 West 24th Street  
New York, NY 10011

## About Gladstone Gallery:

Gladstone Gallery is recognized for its embrace of experimentation and visionary practices. The gallery has long been an active partner with artists pursuing catalytic ideas and engaging with pressing issues. Headquartered in New York, Gladstone's impact extends globally with galleries in Brussels and Seoul, enabling it to present new bodies of work and evolve its program to advance the practices and reach of its artists through time. Alongside its work with contemporary artists, the gallery is a steward of the legacies of pivotal historical artists and an advocate for the enduring power of their work. Gladstone is led by a team of partners who spearhead its longterm vision and program, building on the values of its founder Barbara Gladstone.

## Press contact:

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