

Keith Haring: Art and Activism in 1980s New York (Liverpool, 7–8 Nov 19)

Tate Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University, Nov 7–08, 2019

Deadline: Aug 5, 2019

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On the occasion of Tate Liverpool's exhibition, Keith Haring (14 June – 10 November 2019) a two-day conference is planned in partnership with The Keith Haring Foundation and Liverpool John Moores University.

Keith Haring developed his practice at a time of immense social and political change. As an artist, Haring's work constitutes a form of visual activism exemplified in many works including *Poster for Nuclear Disarmament* (1982). Haring forged a deceptively simple visual language, that drew on the archetypal imagery of ancient and modern cultures and traditions while also reflecting the cultural energies of his time from street art and hip hop to video games and robotics. While he engaged with both uptown high art and downtown street culture, thereby expanding the legacy of pop art, Haring also addressed the urgent political and social issues of his time, including the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the environmental movement, ideological resistance to the Berlin Wall, racism, and the excesses of capitalism.

As a consequence of this, his work inspired generations of artists to work with communities and expand the reach of the arts into many areas of society. Although he was based in New York, Haring worked internationally in collaboration with artists, communities and young people to generate imagery that was political, born from his activist spirit. He is best known for his activism around HIV/AIDS, and for creating posters, drawings and paintings such as his, *Ignorance = Fear, Silence = Death* poster (1989).

While Haring is perhaps symptomatic of a range of energies associated with 1980s New York, we wish to address the spectrum of visual culture related to Haring's practice within art and in other disciplines such as social anthropology, film studies, literature, design culture and public discourse. His practice reflected a changing world, where artists positioned themselves to enact social and political change. The complexities and paradoxes surrounding this require further debate and analysis, and we encourage contributions from artists, theorists, curators, and writers to discuss these issues.

The conference seeks to generate new and thoughtful scholarship around Haring's work and his continued significance, and we welcome papers and artistic contributions addressing, but not limited to, the following themes:

- Art and Activism after Stonewall

- HIV/AIDS Activism and Advocacy
- Art and Environmentalism
- Visual Activism: Semiology and Post-structuralism
- Performance/Painting and Post-Studio Art
- Art and Collectivism
- Between East and West: Post-Pop in the Cold War Era
- Alternative Art Histories: 1960 - 1990.
- Protest and Youth Culture

Submission Guidelines

Abstracts should include author's institutional affiliation (if applicable), paper title, abstract (400 words maximum), 5-6 keywords, author's biography (up to 150 words) and contact details.

Please submit abstracts to: michael.birchall@tate.org.uk

For any queries please email the conference organisers: Dr Michael Birchall, Michael.birchall@tate.org.uk and Dr Emma Vickers, E.L.Vickers@ljmu.ac.uk

Abstracts will be assessed by: Darren Pih (Curator, Exhibitions & Displays, Tate Liverpool), Tamar Hemmes (Assistant Curator, Tate Liverpool), Dr Michael Birchall (Tate Liverpool & Liverpool John Moores University), Dr Emma Vickers (Liverpool John Moores University), and Christopher Griffin (Tate Research).

Deadline for abstract submissions: Monday 5th August 2019.

Further conference details, including how to book, will be posted on the Tate Liverpool website in due course.

Further particulars:

Keith Haring is curated by Darren Pih (Curator, Exhibitions & Displays), and Tamar Hemmes (Assistant Curator, Tate Liverpool). It is realised in collaboration with Tate Liverpool, the Keith Haring Foundation and in partnership with Centre for Fine Arts (BOZAR), Brussels, and Museum Folkwang, Essen. The exhibition will tour to BOZAR (5 December 2019 to 19 April 2020) and Museum Folkwang (22 May to 20 September 2020).

We are grateful for support from The Keith Haring Foundation and Liverpool John Moores University for making this programme possible.

Reference:

CFP: Keith Haring: Art and Activism in 1980s New York (Liverpool, 7-8 Nov 19). In: ArtHist.net, Jun 20, 2019 (accessed Jun 29, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/21106>>.