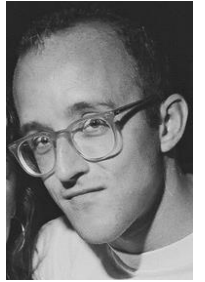


Keith Allen Haring

(May 4, 1958
– February 16, 1990)



He was an **artist** and **social activist** whose work responded to the New York City **street culture** of the **1980s** by expressing concepts of birth, death, sexuality and war.

Haring's work was often **heavily political** and his imagery has become a widely recognized **visual language of the 20th century**.

[...]

Haring was always a populist. This is borne out by his **graffiti**, accessible **pop imagery**, his many **community projects** undertaken **for free** and his Pop Shop boutique, on New York's Lafayette Street.

[...]

In 1982, for example, he painted an **anti-nuclear** poster, then gave away 20,000 copies that he'd paid for himself at a demonstration in New York's Central Park. Likewise, his Free South Africa posters were distributed at an **anti-apartheid** demo three years later.

He was fiercely **anti-Republican** – a portrait of Ronald Reagan had the president holding up a torch marked with the devil's number, 666. And, at the height of his fame in 1989, Haring attacked the prejudice surrounding the **growing Aids crisis** with his painting *Silence = Death*, which features figures covering their eyes and ears and a pink triangle (the badge gay men were forced to wear in the Nazi death camps, and appropriated in the 70s and 80s as a symbol of gay pride).

[...]

Keith Haring was openly gay and was a **strong advocate** of safe sex; however, in 1988, Haring was diagnosed with AIDS. He established the Keith Haring Foundation in 1989. [...] Haring enlisted his imagery during the last years of his life to speak about his own illness and generate **activism** and **awareness** about AIDS.

[...]

Haring died February 16, 1990 of AIDS-related complications.

Adapted from
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keith_Haring
http://www.haring.com/!selected_writing/thou-