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Keith Haring. Radiant Vision

Reggia di Monza. Orangerie

September 30, 2022 - January 29, 2023

Press preview: Thursday 29 September at 11.30 am

Monza, July 2022 - After the success of the four stops of the American tour - in Missouri, New York, Florida and Pennsylvania - Keith Haring's pop art arrives in Italy with the exhibition **Keith Haring. Radiant Vision** presented in the *Orangerie* of the **Royal Palace of Monza** from **30 September to 29 January 2023**.

The exhibition is produced by *General Service and Security*, GCR and Saga MDS in collaboration with the Consortium Villa Reale e Parco di Monza. Artistic and Production Direction by *Beside Studio*.

The exhibition Keith Haring. Radiant Vision is made possible thanks to Pan Art Connections.

Over **100 works** of the most famous pop artist of the 80s, from a private collection, including lithographs, serigraphs, drawings on paper and posters, illustrate the entire span of Haring's short but prolific career, examining different aspects of the artist's life and production, including drawings on the subway and street art, exhibitions in some of the most famous galleries in New York, the Pop Shop and his commercial work.

An advocate for nuclear de-escalation, civil rights, child welfare, and AIDS awareness, Haring spent his career making posters, public artwork, and charitable commissions in support of these vital causes.

In the exhibition visitors will immediately recognize the iconic "Radiant Baby", which permeated American culture in the 80s and became emblematic symbols of the time. The images are powerful examples of how Haring fought for change using art as a platform for his activism.

The exhibition project aims to be a tribute to the artist, a passionate supporter of social justice and who has always dedicated himself to young people all over the world, supporting their health and rights while supporting their creative development.

Keith Haring (1958-1990) was probably the most established and prominent American artist of the eighties. Over the course of his short career, Haring rewrote the rules of contemporary art, integrating the seemingly discreet arenas of the gritty counterculture of downtown New York and the artistic aristocracy of uptown. While working with a variety of different mediums – including paintings, prints, posters, drawings, sculptures and street art – Haring's style is instantly recognizable. Bold lines, iconic symbols and bright colors abound in all his works. A friend of Andy Warhol, Haring represented the apotheosis of Pop Art, unrestrainedly exploring the marketing potential of his "brand" through commercial partnerships, consumer products and even his own showcase.

The exhibition is divided into nine sections: from the "ICONOGRAPHY", which describes how Haring became passionate about the study of symbols and despite his skills as a draftsman,

improve the lines evolving into runic pictograms giving life to his visual lexicon: barking dogs, radiant babies, smiling faces, marked men, dancing figures, crazy buttons, glowing televisions and UFOs coming out, among other symbols. To then tell about his beginnings and life in the city of New York, where Haring moved in 1978 to study at the School of Visual Arts. A section dedicated to "SOCIAL JUSTICE", with works such as "Free South Africa"—a complete three panel suite in support of the anti-apartheid movement, depicting a large black figure struggling to free himself from the noose of the white oppressor.

A section is dedicated to the work made with young people, on display, the Kalish Suite a group of eleven prints representing the joint effort of Haring and Sean Kalish, a pre-teen who frequented the Pop Shop and showed an early talent for dynamic, linear drawings similar to Haring's own. The two struck up a friendship and created this suite of wild, surrealist images together over the course of several studio visits, passing each work back and forth until it was jointly deemed complete.

Also on display is Medusa Head, the largest print ever made by Haring, more than two meters long and almost one and a half meters high. The work was created in collaboration with the Danish typographer Borch Jensen who, after meeting Haring at a dinner, invited the artist to experiment with his three meters long, just installed, printing press. The work is a modern reinterpretation of the Greek tale of Medusa, a winged woman whose hair was composed of snakes capable of transforming bystanders into stone. For Haring, who in 1986 had witnessed the deadly effects of AIDS but had not yet been diagnosed, the mythical monster was an appropriate symbol of the terrifying disease that killed his healthy young friends in the blink of an eye.

Biography

Born May 4, 1958, Keith Allen Haring grew up in a middle-class family of six in the small neighborhood of Kutztown, Pennsylvania. His father, an amateur cartoonist, taught Keith to draw his own characters, inspired by Disney and Dr. Seuss, as early as the age of four. A boy who "never stopped drawing," Haring enrolled in a commercial arts school in 1976, only to realize that graphic arts were of little interest to him. Two years later he moved to New York to study painting at the School of Visual Arts. There he befriended Kenny Scharf and Jean-Michel Basquiat. Together, the three artists immersed themselves in the underground art scene and their large-scale paintings draw inspiration from the graffiti, music, dance and counterculture that surrounds them in the city. In the summer of 1980, Haring left SVA and began making street art works. His satirical posters and images are of great impact. His satirical posters and enigmatic subway drawings earned for him rapid notoriety among the public, the police and, above all, the artistic establishment. In 1982 Haring exhibited his works – now painted colorfully on vast expanses of tarpaulins or oak cards – in fashionable galleries, accumulating buyers and critical acclaim. Taking advantage of his new influence, Haring spent much of the mid-eighties making works of public art, including commemorative murals, charity commissions, and humanitarian poster campaigns. He was a staunch supporter of "art for all" and developed collaborations with celebrities (Madonna, Grace Jones), advertising campaigns (Adidas, Absolut) and even his own shop (the Pop Shop) in an attempt to share his work with people from all origins of life. Tragically, in 1988, at the peak of his career, Haring was diagnosed with AIDS. He died of complications of the disease on February 16, 1990 at the age of 31.

Exhibition information

Keith Haring. Radiant Vision

Exhibition curated by Katharine J Wright

Reggia di Monza, Orangerie

September 30, 2022 - January 29, 2023

Press preview: Thursday 29 September at 11.30 am

Tuesday - Sunday 10.00-19.00. Mondays closed

Tickets (including audio guide) General admission: 14 euros – Reduced admission: 12 euros

Combined with ticket of the Royal Villa of Monza: 10 euros

Schools: 6 euro

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