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Keith Haring, Untitled (FDR NY) #3 & #4, 1984



This pair of spray painted metal panels by Keith Haring was part of a unique continuous frieze by the artist, of an astounding 255 feet in length, which was created along a fence that lined FDR Drive at Asphalt Green Park in New York City. Painted in situ during 1984, the 30 or so panels were taken down in 1985 and subsequently dispersed.

1984 was a pivotal year for Haring. He was experiencing his second year of exhibiting internationally, and was buoyed by his recent shows at Tony Shafrazi Gallery, and the influential Robert Fraser Gallery in London the year before. His work was included in group shows at SF MoMA and the Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville in Paris, and he made murals in Australia and Brazil, as well as in New York. Arguably some of the most famous photographs of Haring were also taken that year by Andy Warhol, after Haring had body-painted the performer Grace Jones with tribal patterns.

ARTIST

Keith Haring (1958-1990)

TITLE

Untitled (FDR NY) #3 & #4

MEDIUM

Spray enamel paint on metal (2 pieces)

DATE

1984

SIZE

48 x 204 in : 121.9 x 518.2 cm

PROVENANCE

Originally part of a street installation lining the FDR parkway, New York, until 1985; Private collection, USA

EXHIBITED

Museum of Contemporary Art, Lyon, 'Keith Haring' February 22 -June 29, 2008; Beaux-Arts Mons and Anciens Abattoirs, Mons, Belgium, 'Keith Haring All-Over' May 9 -September 13, 2009; Mana Contemporary, Jersey City, NJ 'Keith Haring' November 4 -December 16, 2012; Gagosian Gallery, London, 'Sprayed: Works from 1929-2015' June 11 -August 1, 2015 (another pair of panels exhibited)

LITERATURE

Burroughs, William S., et al. Keith Haring: Future Primeval. Normal, Illinois: University Galleries Illinois State University & Abbeville Press, 1990. Illus. pp.116-117; Deitch, Jeffrey, Suzanne Geiss, and Julia Gruen. Keith Haring. New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2008. Illus. pp.300-301; Mercurio, Gianni, ed. Keith Haring. Milan: Skira Editore in conjunction with Musée de l'art contemporain de Lyon, 2008. Exh. cat. Illus. pp.176-189; Mercurio, Gianni, ed.Keith Haring All-Over. Milan: Skira Editore in conjunction with BAM (Beaux-Arts Mons), 2009. Exh. cat. Illus. pp.176-189; Keith Haring. Paris: Galerie Laurent Strouk, 2014. Exh. cat. Illus. p.105; Lueddeckens, Jona. Sprayed: Works from 1929-2015. London: Gagosian Gallery, 2015. Exh. cat. Illus. pp.76-79 (another pair of panels exhibited); Mercurio, Gianni, et al. Keith Haring, About Art. Milan: Giunti Editore in conjunction with Palazzo Reale, 2017. Exh. cat. Illus. pp. 82-84

NOTES

Referred to on the Keith Haring Foundation website, with the reference SP.1984.02



Keith Haring

Keith Haring was an American artist, active in the 1980s in New York, who is considered to be the first 'street artist' in the sense that is now more widely understood. Haring used a visual language composed of outlined intertwining figures, objects and animals, in his graffiti and street works, often to express deeply held political and social beliefs.

Haring was born in Pittsburgh, where he would study commercial art before losing interest and taking a maintenance job at Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. There, surrounded by important works of contemporary art, he rekindled his passion and developed his style, culminating in his first one man show there in 1978.

He moved to New York, where he would become close friends with the artists Jean-Michel Basquiat, Andy Warhol, Maripol and the performer Madonna. Relatively quickly, he began to attract attention for his subway drawings and his easily recognised calligraphy, and he participated in the prestigious

Whitney Biennial in 1983. He made over 50 public murals during the 1980s, becoming something of an establishment figure despite the subversive nature of his work.

Haring was concerned with breaking down the barriers between high and low art, and what work he did sell he sold cheaply, prioritising the distribution of his ideas over profit. He opened a shop, 'Pop Shop' in SoHo, and used it to further awareness about safe sex, the anti-apartheid movement and the growing epidemic of crack-cocaine use. Haring was diagnosed with AIDS in 1988, prompting him to set up a foundation tasked with increasing AIDS awareness and to spend his last years generating activism over the subject.

The artist died in 1990 at the age of only 32, leaving an enormous legacy of work and influence which continues to be widely felt. His work is held in the collections of MoMA and the Whitney Museum in New York, and the Pompidou Centre in Paris amongst many others.





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