

HHC Art – Artwork of the Month

The Keith Haring Legacy at Woodhull Hospital Medical Center

I don't think art is propaganda; it should be something that liberates the soul, provokes the imagination and encourages people to go further. It celebrates humanity instead of manipulating it. - *Keith Haring*

Keith Haring was born on May 4, 1958, in Reading, Pennsylvania. As a small child, he spent countless hours drawing and was fascinated by the visual dynamics of cartoonists Charles M. Schultz and Walt Disney. In 1978, Haring moved to New York City to study at the School of Visual Arts.



Quickly, his work began to earn acclaim. Haring used New York City as his canvas, creating vivid chalk drawings on sidewalks, walls, and subways. His unique, fanciful graphic style could be found in unlikely venues all over NYC, and his ability to transform an environment with the use of vibrant color, powerful symbology, and chaotic designs made him a critical success. His fame grew internationally, and he collaborated with several famous artists and performers of the time, including Andy Warhol and Jean-Michel Basquiat.



*Keith Haring in 1986,
creating his timeless
mural at Woodhull*

Haring believed that his art should be accessible to everyone, and his bold, cartoon- and graffiti-like style profoundly influenced art during the 1980s. Through his work, Haring advocated for children's rights and spoke out about social ills. Crack is Wack, Haring's mural on a handball court at 127th Street and 2nd Avenue, became an international commentary on the crack epidemic in New York City.

In 1988, Haring was diagnosed with AIDS. He spent the following year creating the Keith Haring Foundation to support AIDS organizations and various children's initiatives. Keith Haring died on February 16, 1990, at the age of 31. Today, many of his works are owned and exhibited by prestigious museums worldwide, including the Museum of Modern Art.

Remarkably, Keith Haring also created an extraordinary artwork as a gift to HHC. For



Today, the Haring mural in Woodhull's lobby



one week in 1986, Haring made Woodhull Hospital Center his home, painting a brightly colored parade of playful and friendly characters that welcome visitors from the walls in the main lobby and escort them down two corridors. During breaks from his work at Woodhull, Haring would join hospital staff, patients, visitors, and fans to sign autographs and create designs on poster boards and t-shirts for anyone who wanted them. Over the years, the Haring murals have remained a prized possession of Woodhull and the HHC art collection.

Did you know that HHC curates the largest public art collection in NYC? View it at www.nychhcart.org.



JUNE 27 IS NATIONAL HIV TESTING DAY

Like Keith Haring, HHC celebrates life. Our work and programs make the lives of our patients with HIV easier, and we are committed to early HIV diagnosis and linkage to care, with rapid testing a standard part of routine care.

In 2005, HHC began offering HIV screening as a routine part of medical care for patients ages 13 to 64. By the end of 2012, HHC facilities tested 1,157,878 New Yorkers. Within that same span, there were 11,781 HIV positive diagnoses made. HHC's eleven acute care hospitals are all Designated AIDS Centers.

"We're now reaching more teens and young adults - the age group where half of all new HIV infections occur," said HHC President Alan D. Aviles. "By making testing available as a routine medical screening, we can help overcome the stigma and barriers associated with the disease and reach more New Yorkers who may be HIV positive and not know it."