

SPOTLIGHT ON
KEITH HARING

Stonewall

Who are Stonewall?

This resource is produced by Stonewall, a UK-based charity that stands for the freedom, equity and potential of all lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace (LGBTQ+) people. At Stonewall, we imagine a world where LGBTQ+ people everywhere can live our lives to the full. Founded in London in 1989, we now work in each nation of the UK and have established partnerships across the globe. Over the last three decades, we have created transformative change in the lives of LGBTQ+ people in the UK, helping win equal rights around marriage, having children and inclusive education.

Our campaigns drive positive change for our communities, and our sustained change and empowerment programmes ensure that LGBTQ+ people can thrive throughout our lives. We make sure that the world hears and learns from our communities, and our work is grounded in evidence and expertise.

Stonewall is proud to provide information, support and guidance on LGBTQ+ inclusion; working towards a world where we're all free to be. This does not constitute legal advice, and is not intended to be a substitute for legal counsel on any subject matter. To find out more about our work, visit us at www.stonewall.org.uk.

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Keith Haring

(he/him)

Keith Haring was born in the USA in 1958. He had always loved drawing.

Keith learnt cartooning skills from his dad and from watching cartoons on TV.



From Pittsburgh to New York

Keith's first solo show was in 1978 at the Pittsburgh Arts and Crafts Center.

Soon after, Keith moved to New York.



New friends

In New York, Keith quickly became friends with like-minded artists.

Keith was gay and had was friends with other gay artists, such as Jean-Michel Basquiat and Andy Warhol.



Hip hop and graffiti

Keith often worked listening to hip hop and he took his inspiration from the world around him.

Keith's first works were on unused advertising panels in subway stations. He used white chalk on the black paper panels and he produced hundreds of these works – sometimes 40 a day!



“All kinds of people would stop and look at the huge drawing and many were eager to comment on their feelings toward it. This was the first time I realized how many people could enjoy art if they were given the chance.”

Keith Haring

Colourful and political

Keith is best known for his colourful works and simple figures.

A lot of Keith's work was political. His work also focused on challenges faced by LGBTQ+ people.



Art for all

Keith became successful around the world and especially enjoyed big projects in public spaces.

He even created a mural on the Berlin Wall.



Activism and art

In 1988 Keith was diagnosed with an illness called AIDS. At the time, there was no treatment for it, but there is now. Keith died in 1990.

His work remains popular and is celebrated around the world.

