

**BO
ZAR**

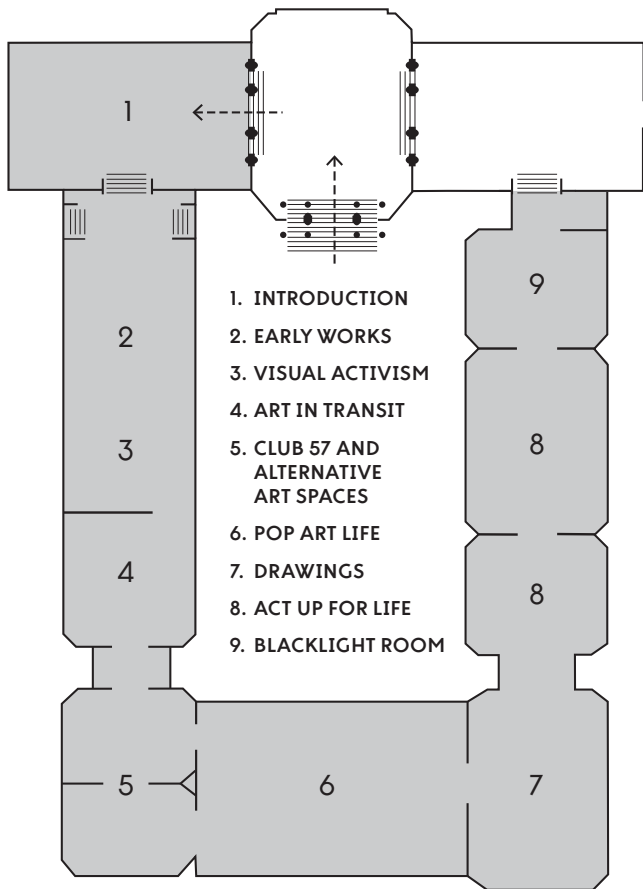


**KEITH
HARING**

**06 DEC. '19
– 19 APR. '20**

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KEITH HARING

06 DEC. '19 – 19 APR. '20

Cover: Keith Haring portrait by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders

Introduction

The brief but intense career of Keith Haring took place more or less completely during the 1980s. Haring became an icon of that decade. It was a time of partying, sexual and artistic experimentation, a combative gay rights movement, the first music videos and joysticks, the party tunes of Madonna, Grace Jones and Prince, hip hop, fluorescent colours and graffiti. However, it was also an era with a dark undertone: the nuclear arms race, demonstrations against nuclear energy, Apartheid, the iron fists of Reagan and Thatcher, the devastating arrival of the AIDS virus... Artists took art to the streets. Colour and line became political. Haring breathed the zeitgeist in and back out again - both as an artist and an activist.

This is not his first retrospective in Belgium, but it is the most comprehensive. BOZAR was incredibly keen to exhibit Haring in the present time because his work is still highly topical. The search for gender identity, the calls for an environmentally sustainable world and, sadly, racism are the order of the day. The fight against AIDS is still far from over on a global scale. Art can't save the world on its own. But artists can show us how we can represent differently a reality that is often sombre. This is the life-affirming mirror that Haring holds up to us, from his early collages to his final murals.



Keith Haring artwork, *Nelson Mandela 70th Birthday Tribute*, 1988
© Keith Haring Foundation

VISUAL ACTIVISM

Keith Haring felt that the artist is “a spokesman for a society at any given point in history.” His paintings and drawings present accessible iconography to address topics such as racism, nuclear war, the excesses of capitalism and what he regarded as the misuse of religion for oppressive purposes. Making posters allowed Haring to take a more overtly activist stance, not only designing them, but printing them at his own cost and distributing them at demonstrations.

This poster was one of the images Keith Haring created for Nelson Mandela's 70th birthday tribute. Haring was greatly concerned with racism and systems of state-sanctioned oppression. He expressed his thoughts on Apartheid in several paintings and posters. “All stories of white men's ‘expansion’ and ‘colonisation’ and ‘domination’ are filled with horrific details of the abuse of power and the misuse of people. I'm glad I'm different. I'm proud to be gay. I'm proud to have friends and lovers of every colour. I am ashamed of my forefathers. I am not like them.”

As his studio manager from 1984, Julia Gruen was also one of Keith Haring's closest friends. In 1989, the artist appointed Gruen as Executive Director of the Keith Haring Foundation. On 15 February she will come to BOZAR to discuss art and activism and her close friendship with the artist.



Keith Haring artwork, *Drawing on New York Subway Map*, c. 1981-1982

© Keith Haring Foundation

ART IN TRANSIT

Keith Haring believed that art should be for everyone. On arriving in New York City, he immediately recognised that the city streets were legitimate spaces for showing art. His subway drawings gave him an opportunity to work alongside the graffiti artists he admired without directly emulating them. Between 1980 and 1985 he executed thousands of these drawings in chalk on the blank black papers used to cover expired ads. These unsigned works and the public performance of their making turned Haring into a media phenomenon. As his fame grew, his subway drawings were increasingly being taken by people and he decided to stop producing them.

When Keith Haring talked about making art for everyone, he included children, who he viewed not just as audience but as collaborators. In 1986, for instance, he joined forces with 1,000 young people from New York to create a 10-story-tall banner depicting the Statue of Liberty. In 1989, just months before his death from AIDS/HIV, Haring enlisted the talents of 500 public school students to forge a 488-foot-long mural in Chicago's city centre. "Whatever else I am," he wrote in a journal entry, "I'm sure I, at least, have been a good companion to a lot of children and maybe have touched their lives in a way that will be passed on through time."

BOZAR has created, together with Cultureghem, a CREATE BOX for kids that will be available at BOZAR during Family Day (28 & 29/3/20) and at KETMET from 01/04/20. The box is filled with art materials to send children on a creative journey with Keith Haring and his art as inspiration.



Keith Haring, Malcolm McLaren - "Would Ya Like More Scratchin'?", 1984,
Collection Noirmontartproduction, Paris. © Keith Haring Foundation

CLUB 57 AND ALTERNATIVE ART SPACES

Haring's base in New York was the East Village in downtown Manhattan. Cheap rents made it a magnet for a diverse community of artists. With few opportunities to exhibit in conventional galleries, these artists created alternative art spaces and showed their art against the backdrop of a vibrant party scene. They also built on the DIY attitude of the punk pioneers by using photocopies, whose degraded black and white look seemed to be an expression of both the economy and the energy of the period. Haring produced elaborate poster and flyer designs for his own activities and those of his artist friends.

One of his key contributions to the scene was as exhibitions organiser at Club 57, located in the basement of a Polish church on St Mark's Place. Its atmosphere revelled in stylistic anarchy, improvisation and hedonism. In the early 1980s Haring also organised street art exhibitions at the Mudd Club. He fell in love with disco and house music ('garage music') and was a regular at the legendary Paradise Garage nightclub and designed record sleeves for artists like Malcolm McLaren, The Peech Boys and Sylvester.

On 15 February FOR ALL QUEENS! brings a representation of, and homage to, Keith Haring's sources of inspiration with Vogue Take Ovah - The Old Way/New Way experience. BOZAR also presents an oral anthology of the poetry of fashion designer, musician, painter, and Paris icon Vava Dudu (edited by Alberto García del Castillo and translated by Geo Wyeth) on 2 April.



Keith Haring artwork, Pop Shop © Keith Haring Foundation

POP ART LIFE

Keith Haring wanted to develop a broader interaction between artist and audience, he spoke of making works that embraced “music, performance, movement, concept and craft.” The making of his paintings was something of a performance. At the peak of his mid-1980s fame, he exhibited internationally and a party atmosphere followed his public projects. He would play music while painting and journalists and crowds of locals would gather to watch him work. “Every day was like a block party”, he said.

He would further extend his range through collaborations with fashion designers like Malcolm McLaren and Vivienne Westwood, and with a host of performers such as Grace Jones and Bill T. Jones. Madonna, on the verge of international stardom, performed Like a Virgin at one of Haring’s famed Party of Life birthday parties at the Paradise Garage Night Club.

In 1986 Haring opened his Pop Shop in Lower Manhattan, New York. His imagery had become globally recognisable, and the shop made his art and ideas accessible as affordable merchandise such as t-shirts, badges and posters. Under the guidance and encouragement from Andy Warhol, Haring was able to develop the Pop Shop as an extension of his artistic practice.

The outstanding American choreographer, director, author and performer Bill T. Jones will talk on 2 February about race and sexuality, the avant-garde and the New Wave in 1980s New York and above all about his collaborations with Keith Haring, among them when the artist body-painted him in 1983.



Keith Haring artwork, *Silence = Death*, 1989
© Keith Haring Foundation

ACT UP FOR LIFE

The pink triangle in *Silence = Death* from 1989 was adopted as a symbol of LGBTQ pride in the 1970s. It was reclaimed from Nazi Germany where it was used to identify gay and bisexual men, as well as trans women imprisoned in concentration camps. The triangle, alongside the slogan "Silence = Death" quickly became one of the main images used by the activist group Act Up. Haring joined their protests and made a number of posters for them. He created many potent images which contributed to AIDS/HIV awareness, education and activism.

In 1987 he wrote "I am quite aware of the chance that I have or will have AIDS. The odds are very great and, in fact, the symptoms already exist. My friends are dropping like flies and I know in my heart that it is only divine intervention that has kept me alive this long. I don't know if I have five months or five years, but I know my days are numbered. This is why my activities and projects are so important now. To do as much as possible as quickly as possible. I'm sure that what will live on after I die is important enough to make sacrifices of my personal luxury and leisure time. Work is all I have and art is more important than life."

Realising that his time might be short, Haring established the Keith Haring Foundation in 1989, which continues to support AIDS/HIV organisations and charities as well as marginalised young people. On 16 February 1990 Haring died from AIDS-related complications. He was 31.

On 11 January BOZAR spends the day debating, discussing and discovering HIV+ lives and AIDS issues today. Taboos, daily realities and personal testimonies mix with contemporary art and opinions in Positive Expressions: Art, HIV and I.

VISUAL DICTIONARY

BARKING DOG

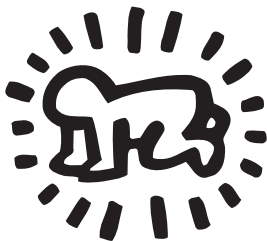
“My dad made cartoon characters for me, and they were very similar to the way I started to draw - with one line and a cartoon outline.”



As a child, Haring greatly enjoyed drawing with his father, Allen, and dogs were a favourite subject. The image conjures ideas of both a protector and a predator, barking as a call to attention, either as a warning or an outburst of anger.

THE BABY

“The reason that the ‘baby’ has become my logo or signature is that it is the purest and most positive experience of human existence.”



While he could be cynical about the world around him, Haring always held a special affinity for children, appreciating their sincerity and honesty. The prominence of the baby is a reminder of the underlying optimism in his work. Both the barking dog and the baby were developed as Haring was beginning to react to New York's graffiti, when he started to draw his 'tag' on the streets in the early 1980s. These tags gradually developed

into their now iconic forms, which would remain a key part of his style throughout his career.

NUCLEAR

“Living under the threat of possible destruction in the form of nuclear war, etc. the most important thing to me is the present.”



Living through the Cold War made Haring profoundly aware of the possibility of nuclear war, shown through his regular use of the atomic symbol, even in works unrelated to the topic. As a young child he lived through the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis. Later in 1979, the United States' worst nuclear accident happened at Three Mile Island, only 65 miles from his hometown of Kutztown. Incidents such as these helped inform Haring's work as a nuclear disarmament activist.

TV

“It was incredible - those pop colours!”

As a child, television entranced Haring, particularly cartoons. In 1981 MTV (Music Television) was launched and shaped the cultural taste of a generation by popularising music videos and focusing on youth culture. It would also play a direct role in Haring's career, when he appeared on MTV with the band Duran Duran, and featured in the video for Grace Jones' *I'm Not Perfect (But I'm Perfect for You)* together with Andy Warhol.



THREE-EYED FACE

“It became this profound thing about the third eye and about subconscious and just one step beyond the normal.”

Haring initially developed this motif by accident. He was painting a smiley face and left too much room between the eyes, so he added a third eye to bring balance to the image. Audiences interpreted it as a spiritual reference, and so Haring began to use it as such.



MORE KEITH HARING

06.12.2019 · 20:30

TALK: East Village and the Underground Artistic Scene of New York in the Early 80s

With Leonard Abrams, Gil Vasquez, Dany Johnson & Belgian guest.

11.01.2020 · 16:00 - 21:00

SPECIAL DAY: Positive Expressions: Art, HIV and I

Collaboration: Ex-aequo

28.01.2020 · 19:00

DOCUMENTARY: The Universe of Keith Haring

Collaboration: Jeunesse & Arts Plastiques, jap.be

12.02.2020 · 20:00

TALK with Bill T. Jones

Keith Haring, my friend and collaborator

Support: Open Society European Policy Institute

15.02.2020 · 19:00 - 01:00

SPECIAL EVENING: 1990-2020: 30 Years Already

19:00 TALK WITH JULIA GRUEN (Director of the Keith Haring Foundation)

20:30 FOR ALL QUEENS! presents; Vogue Take Ovah - The Old Way/ New Way experience

Co-production: FOR ALL QUEENS!

02.04.2020 · 21:00

PERFORMANCE: Vava Dudu

12.12.2019, 30.01, 27.02, 26.03, 16.04.2020 · 19:00 - 20:30

WALK WITH ME (€ 14: walk + expo ticket)

With: Chille Deman, Dema, Rachael Agnes Moore, Jaouad Alloul & Gia Abrassart

28 & 29.03.2020 · 10:00 - 17:00

FAMILY WEEKEND (6+) (€ 9)

Partners: Circus Zonder Handen, Cultureghem, Fais le trottoir

04.04.2020 · 10:00

SLOW ART DAY (Free with expo ticket)

Every Friday · 12:30

LUNCH TOUR (€ 13)

Every Saturday · 14:30 - 16:00

DISCOVERY TRAILS WITH THE FAMILY (6>12) (€ 9)

Except 28.03.2020

CATALOGUE

BOZAR BOOKS & Mercatorfonds (FR, NL 128p.)

TATE Publishing (ENG 128p.)

€ 19.95 (BOZAR BOOKSHOP)

KEITH HARING

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Scenography Bold at Work, Émilie Lecouturier

Head of Production Evelyne Hinqué

Technical Coordinators Frédéric Oulieu, Gert Baart, Colin Fincoeur

Publication Coordinator Gunther De Wit

Press Officer Leen Daems

Audience Developer Sylvie Verbeke

Audience Engagement Laurence Ezjin, Melat Gebeyaw Nigussie, Lieve Raymaekers

Curatorial Coordination Public Programme Alberta Sessa in collaboration with Juliette Le Corre

This exhibition is organised by Tate Liverpool in collaboration with BOZAR, Centre for Fine Arts Brussels and Museum Folkwang, Essen.



Museum Folkwang

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**BO
ZAR**

**POETRY FOR
KEITH HARING**

CURATED BY CHRIS KRAUS

RUBY BRUNTON

ROBERT DEWHURST

CECILA PAVÓN

FAITH WILSON

STEVEN ZULTANSKI

**Five poets draw
inspiration from the
art of Keith Haring**

RUBY BRUNTON

How Slow the Water Shifts and Turns

The New York subway A blank tarp
 Waiting Every wall calls for disrupting
Softly Precisely Making marks
 Rounded eyes of glitter Fluffed peak

Open mouth flanked by swine Cheek of cherub
 Whole world gagging over such Explosions
Of joy Simple set of lines become signature
 Man communes with earth
 Man communes with beast

Blank spaces fill with chalk squeaks Ownership
 Not sought Never needed
 Explanations for all to make A child
A baby A DJing dog Milk teeth flashing

Sweat drips down concave chest Short shorts with
 worn down seat Ask not for meaning
Watching is pleasure Process is pleasure We are all
 Riding this train together No one there to buff

The lady Grace's body covered
The Madonna's body covered
Buildings covered School books covered
Every open space An invitation

Isthmus between street and tower A pop to power
Flames drew in Moth wings spread over mouth
A light out before dark

Somewhere, trains still whizz past
A flying cock A baby halo
Extraordinary schema

Ask not for favors Eye of beholder
All is in plain sight
Softly
Precisely

ROBERT DEWHURST

He's Gone

Sonnet for Kevin Killian

*Art is life. Life is art. The importance of both is over-exaggerated
as well as misunderstood. —Keith Haring*

Today we woke at sunrise, & walked to Kite Hill

Where Bruce said he'd slept with 4,000 men

Are you shocked? I pictured Keith Haring, *Untitled*,

1979, a field of floral-print penises, in those days

A poet, you said, would have named the plants

In trace I saw you as a bumblebee, pollinating

Everything, an orange sunshine sort of feeling,

Kevin we love you get up. I thought art was infinite,
Insatiable, “an eternal pasture,” like, you know,
“folded in all thought,” ocher handprints on rock,
Keith Haring selling T-shirts in a Dead lot, St. Paul,
May '77, before you wanted to be a genius, & were
I'll always hear your voice in this world of echo,
Your gossip in this garden of delights

CECILA PAVÓN

Untitled

The way art affects you always goes back to your childhood
I was born in a farming province without museums next to the Andes.
In my childhood, art existed only in books,
And those books had only European art
(The great European art produced in early-20th-century Paris).
When, at 13, for the first time, I saw a Keith Haring drawing
On a postcard at a friend's house, I didn't think it was art.
Art that isn't art:
Now I think that may be every artist's great fantasy,
To make art that isn't art.
Or at least that's my dream as a poet:
To make poetry that isn't poetry.
I'm working at home and need to go collect
A wire transfer sent all the way from Belgium
For writing a poem inspired by Keith Haring.
I've never been paid to write a poem before.
I live in Oncé, a neighborhood that feels like 1983 Brooklyn.
I step out in the afternoon; the sun is beaming in the air.
There's a van double parked on Alberti Street,

All covered in tags; my neighborhood has lots of graffiti.
The black lines drawn by markers are nests for taking shelter
Or irregular pentagrams—graffiti are pentagrams for dancing without music.
I go to the supermarket on Alberti Street.
Several thousand kilometers north, the Amazon is on fire.
The cost of food is rising at an alarming rate since the elections,
But people smile. It's a big mystery. They meet up for coffee, kiss, converse, smile, hug—it's a big mystery
how they can still smile.
I think about art that isn't art, art that isn't art, art that isn't art,
Poetry that isn't poetry,
I'm sure if he were alive, Keith Haring would call his art religion.

FAITH WILSON

Love song for Keith Haring and NYC

Kiss me full on the mouth in a New York City Subway. I'm
Early this time, want to catch the city before it wakes, wanna know it from the
Insides. Yeah, the subway is kinda like the city's nervous system, keeping secrets, telling
Tales and we're no different: two lovers trying to find a place to fuck without anyone seeing.
Here, love and death are just two words for the same thing.

Here, the trains are the bass and the streets sing, and the colours, and the pain
And the love. O, this isn't just a corny ode to love or sex, it's a corny ode to the streets
Realising that all the fucking beauty of this place was born from an
Interruption, transmogrified into some kind of cracked joy, a city that never sleeps cos
Night is the only time you get a sense of the real. You were more than just an artist,
God, you were its heart, for a time, now, locked into its eternal embrace.

STEVEN ZULTANSKI

Loop for Keith Haring

What I love in Haring's work is its directness of statement: when he wants to bring attention to the AIDS crisis, he just does; when he wants to condemn apartheid, he just does; when he wants to paint Reagan as a murderous pig, he just does. It's not likely that anyone would be confused about his political positions: the paintings are unambiguously angry at racial and sexual injustice. But this anger is at once eclipsed by an excessive joy that can be seen in the work's incessant motion—a celebration of the vibrancy of life, collective ecstasy, and the radiance of love.

What I love in Haring's work is its directness of statement: when he wants to celebrate the vibrancy of life, he just does; when he wants to represent the collective ecstasy of dancing, he just does; when he wants to evoke the radiance of love, he just does. It's not likely that anyone would fail to see his enthusiasm: the paintings are unambiguously overflowing with vitalist glee. But this vitality is at once eclipsed by an underlying terror that can be seen in the work's incessant motion—an acknowledgment of existential fear, the body's instability, and psychic uncertainty.

What I love in Haring's work is its directness of statement: when he wants to hint at existential fear, he just does; when he wants to illustrate the body's instability, he just does; when he wants to conjure the shakiness of psychic uncertainty, he just does. It's not likely that anyone would overlook his anxiety: the paintings are unambiguously filled with trembling bodies, hearts about to burst, and figures trapped in inscrutable, maze-like landscapes. But this anxiousness is at once eclipsed by a

faith in fantasy that can be seen in the work's incessant motion—an idealization of the imagination, the mingling of bodies, and the impossible brightness of the world.

What I love in Haring's work is its directness of statement: when he wants to invent strange creatures, he just does; when he wants to romanticize the mingling of bodies, he just does; when he wants to paint an impossibly bright world, he just does. It's not likely that anyone would mistake his curved lines for drab description: the paintings unambiguously emerge from fantasy; they spring from intuition and dream. But this embrace of the fantastic is at once eclipsed by a political stridency that can be seen in—

I feel like a squeezed tomato—
full heart, bad sleep, head dangling from a broken neck—
no words for how I feel—
head leaking juice, spurting juice, juice
running down my arm—
slippery little yellow seeds clinging to my fingers.

CHRIS KRAUS

Impossible brightness - afterword

When Tom Van de Voorde invited me to commission these original pieces by five poets in response to this exhibition, I was curious about how these younger, and mostly international poets, might perceive it. I lived in New York during the years when Haring did most of his public work, disliked it reflexively, and haven't considered it since. Perhaps it was time to reconsider these prejudices?

Cecilia Pavón, in her poem 'Untitled,' recalls seeing Keith Haring's work for the first time when she was thirteen, growing up in an Argentine agricultural province. She saw it as a friend's house on a postcard, and she knew right away that it "wasn't art" - at least not art in the way she'd been accustomed to viewing it, in art books of European avant-garde modernism - and she would go on to aspire to become a poet who wrote poems that "weren't poems," as she

demonstrates deftly in this one.

Ruby Brunton, Robert Dewhurst, Faith Wilson and Steven Zultanski were all born in the 80s and 90s, so whatever response these writers had to Keith Haring's work would be dislodged from its overwrought context - the East Village 80s. I imagined his works floating at them through time like a meteor shower.

I remember viewing each new Keith Haring chalk drawing that appeared in the Astor Place subway with dread. Haring's cartoonish and upbeat personal lexicon - the shining heart, the radiant child, the dancing stick figures - felt like both the end and beginning of something.

His work came on the heels of an astonishing array of street art in Lower Manhattan that began in the late 1970s. Alongside graffiti, these works transmitted a steady pulse of subliminal messages to every pedestrian. Prolific, insistent,

they were the streetscape's visual backbeat. The young Jean-Michel Basquiat and his friend Al Diaz strategically sprayed their cynically copyrighted SAMO graffiti outside CBGB's and the Soho art world's discreet minimal spaces. SAMOc 4 THE SO CALLED AVANT-GARDE; SAMOc 4 MASS MEDIA MINDWISH. SAMO stood for Same Old Shit, and it was, and it felt great to see somebody call it. Jenny Holzer's strange posters, her long lists of non-sequiters, appeared intermittently, wheat-pasted on lamp-posts and billboards. Some of the most powerful street interventions never entered the gallery system. There were the red outlines of bodies, straight out of a CSI crime scene, sprayed onto the sidewalk, forcing the viewer to step onto the site of a missing corpse. There were dozens of menacing black human silhouettes sprayed onto buildings alongside interstitial dark alleys and corners.

Within this context, Haring's upbeat and likeable figures and symbols seemed to belong to the same order as the new Mexican restaurant

with blue margaritas: a harbinger of the gentrification that would soon bring an end to our cheap apartments and lives sustained on part-time casual labor. Along with most of my friends, I decided to hate it. Although of course the aggressively brutal street art that felt so pure and uncompromising turned out to be just as co-optable. Remember the Urban Decay line of lipgloss and nail polish? Once it's been eliminated from the real world, urban grit lingers as a dreadful cliché, so it seemed worth reconsidering those first impressions.

Cecilia Pavón is the author of five books of poems and three collections of stories. She's lived in Buenos Aires since 1992, when she was a student, but since everyone says Buenos Aires today is just like New York or Berlin in 1983, I thought she'd be well placed to connect with Keith Haring. In fact, Buenos Aires is far more magnificent than New York was in those days, partly because of Pavón's work and presence. Between 1999 and 2007, during the isolate years of the economic crisis, Pavón and her collabora-

tor Fernanda Laguna ran a kind of highly-curated 99 Cent store out of a disused pharmacy. Its name, Belleza y Feliciad, Beauty and Happiness, was also the name of a 'zine that they edited. Her poems, to me, are pure happiness, although they aren't always about happiness, or about happy things. As Cesar Aira has noted, her writing creates a parallel world that unfolds "like a dream, just like reality."

I met Faith Wilson for the first time in 2017 at a workshop at Winnipeg's Plug In ICA that I directed. Wilson is a Samoan/Palagi artist and writer from Aotearoa/New Zealand, and I first became aware of her work through a notorious fracas she had with illustrious Berlin-based New Zealand artist, Simon Denny. Nearly every illustrious New Zealand artist under age forty is an expatriate. If you've heard of a New Zealand artist, than means they probably don't live there. Invited to submit work for an exhibition at Artspace in Auckland whose artists would be selected by Denny, she chose to confront him, submitting a video of herself in a pink bathrobe

condemning the project and Denny himself: "How is Simon Denny relevant to new perspectives in Aotearoa art? And why are we getting NZ's biggest WMA bro artist to curate this? Fuck Simon Denny." The last sentence became an Instagram handle. I thought Wilson's attack was a courageous initiative - she was, at the time, younger, unknown, and still living in Auckland - although the encounter between them ended sweetly. Denny invited Wilson to be in the show, and Wilson conceded that Denny wasn't a monster or even a terrible artist. The two arrived at a point of respect for each other's positions and differences. In Winnipeg, Wilson wrote torrents of poetry that blew everyone away, and then she moved to British Columbia. I invited her to write for this catalogue curious about what she's been up to, and certain that she'd encounter Keith Haring's work with truth and immediacy. Ruby Brunton, a New Zealand/American writer and performer, is presently based in Mexico City. Brunton's choreographic, dance and performance practice is separate from, but has

always proceeded in tandem with, her writing. Since moving from New York to Mexico City two years ago, she's taken apart old poetic constructs that were closer to monologues, and begun writing poems that at once were more abstract and specific. Like Buenos Aires, contemporary Mexico City is often compared to New York in the late 20th century. Viewing Keith Haring's drawings she projects herself back into his time, but this projection is prompted solely by visual cues from the work. There are no preconceptions. The ekphrastic transmission occurs almost electrically between Haring's drawings and Brunton's clusters of images.

Although he's best known as a scholar and critic, Robert Dewhurst is one of my favorite American poets. I still remember a line from one of the poems he wrote about a decade ago when he was in grad school: "All my relationships are with dead people." (The Interdependence of Interpretation and Emotion Makes Semiotics an Emotive Field) He'd started researching his John Wieners biography, and that seemed to

sum up that kind of endeavor exactly. Dewhurst and I have worked as co-editors of Hedi El Kholti's *Animal Shelter - A Journal of Art, Sex and Literature* - and, alongside Eileen Myles and Lynne Tillman, we organized a two-day tribute to the work of the late David Rattray. It seems fitting to me that Dewhurst chose to center this occasional poem around the occasion of the poet Kevin Killian's abrupt, recent death. Dewhurst's drift towards Keith Haring's work is a drift back to the poet Bruce Boone's hyperbolic remembrance of Killian during that era. He cuts through the legend surrounding Keith Haring's career to an image of youth the two may have shared as contemporaries- "Keith Haring selling T-shirts in a Dead lot, St. Paul, /May '77, before you wanted to be a genius, & were ..."

Writing in the *New Yorker* in 2015, Kenneth Goldsmith described Steven Zultanski as an exemplar of what others might call "post-Internet" poetry. Some of Zultanski's previous works have been composed almost exclusively from texts found online, snatch and grabbed, cut

and pasted, although my first encounter with his writing was the 2018 book-length poem *Honestly*. *Honestly* suggests that the long-poem could be the most perfect vehicle for writing subjective critical biography. In it, Zultanski investigates the life of a great-uncle, Dick Stryker, who was a participant in New York City culture in the early 1960s, writing music for The Living Theatre and hanging out with Frank O'Hara and John Ashbery. The book is discursive, digressive, pushing the limits of individual expression, talking and listening. Zultanski seems to hold nothing back, and I wanted to know what he'd make of Keith Haring. His 'Loop for Keith Haring' shows how Haring's work vibrates against all possible limits, containing anger, joy, fear and terror. Unencumbered by the era's cultural politics, Zultanski circles around Haring's work and sees how Haring sees the world's impossible brightness.

Colophon

Poetry for Keith Haring is a project of BOZAR that took shape in December 2019 as a literary intervention in the exhibition Keith Haring.

Editing Tom Van de Voorde

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Lay-out Koenraad Impens

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