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The Keith Haring Foundation Makes \$500,000 Grant to New Museum

**Second Major Gift by Foundation Continues Support of
School, Teen, and Family Programs**

New York, NY...Lisa Phillips, *Toby Devan Lewis Director* of the New Museum, has announced that the **Keith Haring Foundation** has made a generous gift of **\$500,000** to support and name the **Museum's School, Teen, and Family programs**. The Foundation **previously made a \$1 million gift** in 2008 to establish the School and Youth Programs Fund and to name the Keith Haring Director and Curator of Education and Public Engagement—a post currently held by Johanna Burton.

Keith Haring's work, created from an iconic language of signature lines and symbols, blurs the boundaries between art, popular culture, and the urban environment, and mirrors the New Museum's own ideals of fearlessness, activism through art, and accessibility to broad audiences. This second major gift continues this legacy and celebrates the artist's devotion to public service through art.

Thanks to the continued partnership with the Keith Haring Foundation, the New Museum's School, Teen, and Family programs have flourished, serving a greatly expanded audience of students, teachers, and families. Over the last six years, the New Museum has welcomed approximately **twenty thousand young people and families** to participate in education and community programs. The vast majority of these participants are from the Museum's surrounding neighborhood in the Lower East Side including Chinatown and the East Village. The next phase of the partnership will prioritize bringing youth together around issues of social responsibility.

"The New Museum's Keith Haring School, Teen, and Family programs are essential to opening young people's minds and inspiring learning about the world through contemporary art," said Lisa Phillips. "With this essential support from the Keith Haring Foundation, we provide free access to the Museum and expose young and diverse audiences to new art and ideas."

"With this gift, the Keith Haring Foundation is delighted to continue our collaboration with the New Museum," said **Julia Gruen, the Foundation's Executive Director**. "We remain deeply impressed by the Museum's continuing effort to seek out and highlight vibrant contemporary artists who share Keith Haring's spirit and energy. We are committed to supporting the Museum's youth and school program fund and securing the curatorial position as a tribute to Keith's dedication to inspiring and working with young people, something that was very close to his heart."

The Keith Haring School and Youth Programs Fund supports the New Museum's innovative **Global Classroom (G:Class)** program for high school students. The G:Class program employs contemporary

art and artists to strengthen students' and teachers' awareness of global culture and to develop visual literacy and critical thinking skills both in the classroom and at the Museum. Other Education programs that are supported include the monthly **First Saturdays for Families** program, **Teen Nights**, the annual neighborhood **Block Party**, and the Department's most recent programmatic addition, the **Experimental Study Program for Teens (ESP)**. This fall, the New Museum launched ESP, a ten to twelve week, application-based Experimental Study Program for young people aged fifteen to twenty years old. The program offers twelve teen participants the chance to work closely with artists, engage in critical discussions around contemporary art and culture, and contribute directly to the New Museum's ongoing commitment to social analysis and change by involving youth in research and development projects connected to the Museum's public programs.

About Keith Haring

During his lifetime (1958–90), Haring was keenly aware of the positive impact that early exposure to artwork and uncensored creative expression can have in expanding a child's view of the world, and he made it a priority to work with youth of all ages and backgrounds. "Children are the bearers of life in its simplest and most joyous form," Haring said. He dedicated himself to an array of youth-oriented projects, such as collaborating on murals with kids in America's inner cities, and leading drawing workshops at museums internationally. Between 1982 and 1989, he produced more than fifty public artworks in dozens of cities around the world, in many cases for charities, hospitals, children's day-care centers, and orphanages. In 1986, he worked with nine hundred at-risk teens to create a mural for the centennial anniversary of the Statue of Liberty. In 1989, he painted a 450-foot plywood wall in Grant Park in Chicago as the debut project of Gallery 37, an annual summer arts program for inner-city youth. He collaborated on this mural with five hundred public school children, after which the individual panels were donated to and divided among the participating schools. Through this extensive work with young people, Haring tirelessly promoted the idea that racial, cultural, and sexual differences are insignificant compared to our common humanity. In 1989, Haring established the Keith Haring Foundation to ensure that his philanthropic legacy would continue indefinitely.

Keith Haring, New Museum, and the Bowery Neighborhood

The New Museum was founded in 1977, the year before Haring moved to New York, at a time when a thriving downtown alternative art community was developing outside of the traditional gallery and museum system. The newly founded Museum and the newly arrived artist both quickly settled into the emerging scene. From 1981 to 1986, Haring lived and worked nearby, at the intersection of Broome Street and Bowery, and befriended fellow downtown artists Kenny Scharf and Jean-Michel Basquiat, as well as the musicians, performance artists, and graffiti writers who comprised the burgeoning downtown art community. Swept up in the energy and spirit of the time, he began to organize and participate in exhibitions and performances on the streets of New York and at alternative venues. In 1982, the artist created a limited-edition lithograph for the New Museum's collection. He also painted a fluorescent mural at Houston Street at Bowery on what was then a cement handball court. Haring's work was in early group exhibitions in the New Museum's former SoHo location, including "Events: Fashion Moda" in 1981 and "Language, Drama, Source, and Vision" in 1983. The New Museum's 2004 exhibition "East Village USA" celebrated Haring's influence on the downtown arts community and the more recent 2012 exhibition "Come Closer: Art Around the Bowery 1969–89" included Haring's graffiti-covered front door to his former apartment in the Bowery neighborhood. Visit the New Museum's Bowery Artist Tribute for more information on Haring and other artists who had a strong impact on the Bowery neighborhood.

About The Keith Haring Foundation

Established by the artist in 1989, the Keith Haring Foundation's mission is to sustain, expand, and protect the legacy of Keith Haring, his art, and his ideals. The Foundation supports not-for-profit organizations that assist children, as well as organizations involved in education, research, and care related to AIDS. Visit haring.com for more information.