

# Victorian Heritage Database Report

Report generated 22/03/18

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## KEITH HARING MURAL



Haring Mural after conservation- Image:  
Courtesy Arts Vic



KEITH HARING MURAL SOHE 2008



h02055 mural 2



h02055 haring mural 1



h02055 johnston st view



h02055 mural 3



Keith Haring Mural Collingwood Making

## DIAGRAM 2055

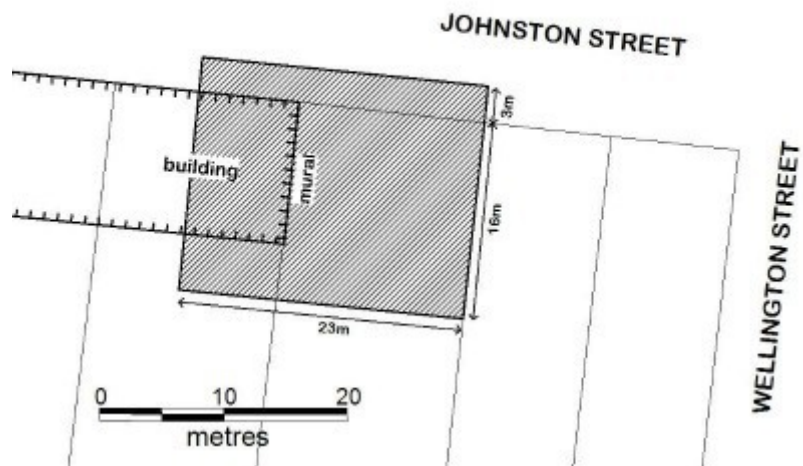


Diagram 2055

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### Location

35 JOHNSTON STREET COLLINGWOOD, Yarra City

### Municipality

YARRA CITY

### Level of significance

Registered

### Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H2055

### Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO354

### VHR Registration

March 11, 2004

### Amendment to Registration

August 14, 2014

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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### Statement of Significance

Last updated on - March 11, 2004

#### *What is significant?*

The Keith Haring Mural is a large work of art by Keith Haring. It is painted onto a cement panel which is located on the bottom half of the red brick wall at the eastern end of the former Collingwood Technical School. The cement panel and mural measure 7.4 x 11.5 metres. The mural has a yellow background and depicts moving red and green figures of people and a large creature. Three metal conduits and a pipe attached to the wall (three vertical and one horizontal) are also part of the composition (a fifth metal pipe and light which were originally part of the composition are no longer present). A small wooden door (measuring 70cm wide and 65cm high) has the artist's signature and baby symbol painted on it.

#### *History Summary*

The New York based artist Keith Haring (1958-1990) visited Melbourne between February and March 1984. During this time he created a number of works, the largest, most enduring and visible of which is the mural on the eastern wall of the former Collingwood Technical School. While Haring painted, he played hip hop music on his Kenny Scharf painted ghetto blaster, and spoke and danced with pupils from the Technical School.

From the early to mid 1990s the mural began to appear faded. The pale appearance was caused by a layer of white pigment which had migrated to the surface. The red paint was also peeling. Following several public campaigns, the vibrancy of the original paint was returned by conservation treatment, a technique which preserved Haring's artistic hand, or what he referred to as his 'line' later in his career.

#### *Description Summary*

The mural is painted onto a cement panel which is located on the bottom half of the red brick wall. The yellow background of the mural was painted using rollers by students of the Collingwood Technical College on 5 March 1984 using a colour believed to have been chosen by Haring. Keith Haring painted the red and green figures with a brush by hand on 6 March 1984.

The whole background of the mural is a bright yellow. The upper half depicts a green hybrid sphinx/caterpillar monster with a computer monitor for a head. The monitor has a red brain or intestines inside it. The monster is ridden by two faceless green human figures holding red radiating 'power' sticks. The lower half of the mural consists of vibrant dancing figures in red with green emphasis lines around them to create the effect of movement. A small wooden door has the artist's signature and baby symbol painted on it.

This site is part of the traditional land of the Kulin Nation.

#### *How is it significant?*

The Keith Haring Mural is of historical, aesthetic and social significance to the State of Victoria. It satisfies the following criterion for inclusion in the Victorian Heritage Register:

Criterion A: Importance to the course, or pattern, of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion B: Possession of uncommon, rare or endangered aspects of Victoria's cultural history.

Criterion E: Importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics.

Criterion G: Strong or special association with a particular community or cultural group for social, cultural or spiritual reasons. This includes the significance of a place to Indigenous peoples as part of their continuing and developing cultural traditions.

Criterion H. Special association with the life or works of a person, or group of persons, of importance in Victoria's

history.

*Why is it significant?*

The Keith Haring Mural is significant at the State level for the following reasons:

The Keith Haring Mural is historically significant because Haring's visit to Australia profoundly affected the course of Australian art. He influenced Australian artists, and in the time before mass media Haring brought the New York style of graffiti to Australia. The mural's popular culture themes, including an early warning about the effects of technology on humanity and the depiction of modern dance movements, remain relevant. [Criterion A]

The Keith Haring Mural is the only large scale and publically accessible work to survive from Haring's visit to Australia in 1984 and one of the very few of his outdoor murals worldwide which is still in his hand and has not been fully or partially repainted. [Criterion B]

The Keith Haring Mural is aesthetically significant as an excellent example of 1980s public art associated with popular music and dance culture. It is an outstanding extant example of Haring's work and demonstrates his strong confident lines, bright vibrant colours and kinetic figures. [Criterion E]

The Keith Haring Mural is socially significant for the diverse Victorian communities which feel attachment, associations and ownership of it. These communities include artists, the gay community, the general public, the Collingwood and Fitzroy communities, former staff and students of the former Collingwood Technical College, international visitors, people living with HIV/AIDS, contemporary art curators, conservators and heritage professionals. Little vandalism, graffiti or tagging has ever occurred on the mural also indicating, without words, the importance of Keith Haring's original work to the graffiti and street art communities. [Criterion G]

The Keith Haring Mural is historically significant as a rare work of Keith Haring (1958-1990) located in Australia. It is a rare example of an exterior mural by one of the most influential artists of the 20th century which is still in his own hand. Haring was is an internationally renowned Pop artist and was integral to the development of the now international phenomenon of street art. As a role model and advocate for gay artists, public and graffiti artists, and for his AIDS activism, Haring's influence was far reaching. [Criterion H]

The Keith Haring Mural is also significant for the following reasons, but not at the State level:

The mural is significant for its prominent inner city location and is indicative of the changing physical and social landscape of a former working class suburb. It has become highly valued by the residents of the City of Yarra and inner Melbourne.

## **Permit Exemptions**

### PERMIT EXEMPTIONS

#### **General Conditions: 1.**

All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object.

#### **General Conditions: 2.**

Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible.

#### **General Conditions: 3.**

Nothing in this determination prevents the Heritage Council from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions

#### **General Conditions: 4.**

Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable.

Specific exemptions:

Internal works to the non-registered areas of Building F of the former Collingwood Technical College should be undertaken so they do not transfer any vibration to the mural.

The following works do not require a permit:

1. Maintenance and repair works to the following, providing that these works do not impact (including through vibration) on the mural or the cement panel:

- . Walls along Johnston Street
- . Wall above the mural
- . Gate
- . Road reserve in front of the gate and Johnston St walls
- . Asphalt and kerb more than 0.4m in front of the mural
- . Footpath, garden and car parks on the south east side of mural
- . Tree and surrounding garden.

2. Graffiti removal to the north and south walls of Building F providing a waterproof physical barrier is erected to protect the mural; and graffiti removal methods are implemented as needed to ensure that the mural is fully protected from all chemicals, water and other graffiti removal tools and materials.

3. Research and testing on any paint used to graffiti the Keith Haring Mural. This must be conducted by a conservator qualified in painted mural conservation and only to the extent required to formulate a proposal to remove this graffiti and provide this report to the Executive Director.

4. A permit will be required if the **registered door** is relocated from the Public Record Office Victoria for exhibition or safe keeping purposes. However, once it is located in an approved institution, the conservation, research or analysis of the registered door is exempt from requiring a permit where the activity is performed in accordance with the accepted standards, policies and procedures of the National Gallery of Victoria. A permit would be needed to return the door to the mural.

5. Works to any **replica door** (re-produced from the registered door) except for works that impact on the mural wall.

6. Works to the **non-original yellow painted wooden door** (currently in place on the mural as at May 2014) except for works that impact on the mural wall.

7. Maintenance of roof and rainwater goods to Building F providing that these works do not transfer any vibration to the mural or cement panel or have any other impact on the mural or cement panel. Where these works take place directly above the mural or close to the edges of the mural a waterproof physical barrier should be erected between the works and the mural to ensure that the mural is fully protected from all chemicals, water, tools and other materials.

8. Temporary scaffolding providing that the scaffolding does not touch the mural or transfer any vibration to the mural or cement panel or have any other impact on the mural or cement panel.

9. Installation of free standing signs in the garden surrounding the tree or on the Johnston Street walls and changing of the skins on the existing free standing signs.

10. Removal of existing sign and attachment of a new sign to the existing signage frame on Johnston Street providing that these works do not transfer any vibration to the mural or have any other impact on the mural or cement panel.

Temporary signage associated with construction projects provided this does not obscure views to the mural from within or outside the site.

Construction dates        1984,

Heritage Act Categories    Heritage place,

Other Names               NORTHERN METROPOLITAN TAFE MURAL,  
Hermes Number           12532  
Property Number

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## History

In 1982 John Buckley, inaugural director of the new Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, first saw Haring's early subway drawings during a research visit to New York. As a result of their first meeting at this time, John Buckley invited Keith Haring to come to Australia; and Haring arrived in Australia in February 1984, for a month long visit. John Buckley arranged for the artist to execute major murals at the NGV (Feb 21-21 1984) and the Art Gallery of NSW (28 Feb-1 March 1984).

Aware that both the NGV and the AGNSW murals were intentionally impermanent, and knowing of Keith Haring's interest in working with and for young people, Buckley developed a proposal for a more permanent project that would possibly involve Haring working collaboratively with Australian youth. He approached Collingwood Technical College prior to Haring's arrival in Australia and organised the Collingwood project as a permanent mark of Keith Haring's Australian sojourn. The mural was subsequently painted on Tuesday 6 March 1984.

Notes about Keith Haring

Born 1958 in the US state of Pennsylvania.

1978 went to New York and enrolled in the school of Visual arts

Began his graffiti work in the NY subway in 1980.

1982 had his 1st exhibition

1984 visited Melbourne

Throughout the 1980s held various exhibitions and painted murals throughout the world.

1984 Rio

1986 Amsterdam, Paris, Berlin Wall,

1987 Paris, Belgium, Dusseldorf,

1989 Pisa

plus ½ dozen or so in New York

Gay Activist and Aids Activist, his life and work were influential

He died in February 1990. He was only 33

## Extent of Registration

### NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

As Executive Director for the purpose of the Heritage Act, I give notice under section 46 that the Victorian Heritage Register is amended by amending Heritage Register Number H2055 in the category described as Heritage Place.

Keith Haring Mural  
35 Johnston Street  
Collingwood  
Yarra City

All of the place shown hatched in Diagram 2055 encompassing part of Lot 1 on Title Plan 895370, part of Lot 1

on Title Plan 690038 and part of the road reserve of Johnston Street, and including a small painted wooden door held at the Public Record Office Victoria (as at May 2014).

Dated 14 August 2014  
TIM SMITH  
Executive Director

[*Victoria Government Gazette* No. G33 14 August 2014 p.1757]

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 1995. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place data owner.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*