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## Artmobiles

A new exhibition displays Keith Haring's automotive works

BY PAUL CATES | FOR SCHOLASTIC ART

For artist Keith Haring, any surface had potential as a canvas. He applied his trademark **graphic style** to billboards, advertisements, subway walls, and T-shirts. The artist even painted on the metal surfaces of cars and motorcycles. A new exhibition at the Peterson Gallery in Los Angeles, California, focuses on Haring's works on vehicles.

### Street-Smart Artist

Haring developed his style in public places, creating white-chalk drawings on blank advertising panels in New York City subway stations. These images combined art with social activism. He hoped his **simplified** figures and designs would help people think about problems, such as war and the AIDS crisis, in a positive way. Haring created hundreds of these urban artworks, which became a common sight in New York City in the 1980s. He used the techniques he learned while making street art to create works on canvas as well.

Haring painted **stylized** figures in bright, bold colors. The figures were often in motion, waving their arms or jumping. He used **lines** to **emphasize** this sense of movement. Haring wanted to grab the viewer's attention so he could deliver his message.

### Art on Wheels

In his continuing effort to make his art accessible to everyone, Haring began using cars and motorcycles as canvases. They were easy to move, and the artist could display them outdoors on streets and in parking lots. Haring even painted on motorized play cars intended for children.

Haring chose paint colors that would **contrast** with the cars' **monochromatic** surfaces. In works like the one shown above, Haring's bold, erratic lines seem to swirl across the car, moving the viewer's eye.



A new exhibition in California explores Haring's work on vehicles like this one.

Galerie Hans Mayer, Dusseldorf/The Keith Haring Foundation



Haring even painted on motorcycles.

Kevin Krich/The Keith Haring Foundation

With five of Haring's vehicles on display, the Peterson Gallery is making these auto paintings accessible to the public once again.