

Regarding: <http://www.theage.com.au/opinion/society-and-culture/brushed-aside-artistic-landmark-must-return-to-1980s-glory-20111116-1nj56.html>

**We understand the use of exaggeration for emphasis, but for the record, the only Keith Haring mural that has ever been completely repainted is his 1986 "Crack is Wack" mural in NYC. It, too, is a landmark and highly valued by its community, and while no longer original, it most definitely remains a Keith Haring mural (just ask the community).**

**The Haring Foundation recommends a complete repainting only in extreme situations. After decades of exposure to the elements, periodic minor repairs, persistent tagging and unauthorized touch-ups, our foundation (whose board includes two Haring family members) agreed that repainting "Crack is Wack" was a viable solution. The sadly deteriorated (and still deteriorating) Collingwood mural is in a similar condition to that of "Crack is Wack", and that is why we recommend repainting, as opposed to preservation.**

**Several of Haring's outdoor murals are untouched: Tuttomondo in Pisa - its cleaning (supported by the City of Pisa, the University of Pisa, the Region of Tuscany, the Friends of American Heritage, the American Academy in Rome and the Haring Foundation, among others) was completed just this month by renowned conservators Antonio Rava and Will Shank (who has offered interesting solutions to the Collingwood mural); Necker Hospital in Paris; murals in Amsterdam and Phoenix, Arizona. Numerous other outdoor murals were only lightly repaired and there are over a dozen indoor murals in public institutions that are untouched. And of course there are many that no longer exist.**

**Further to "Crack is Wack", when Keith originally painted it, he had no permission, and was required by the city to paint it out, completely covering it over. Shortly thereafter, he was granted permission by the city, and the second version he**

**painted was different than the first version. Keith's first version is often reproduced in books and catalogs and this has led to the utterly incorrect assumption that the Haring Foundation intentionally destroyed his first version and replaced it with something completely different. Not true.**

**Sincerely,**

**Julia Gruen  
Executive Director  
Keith Haring Foundation**