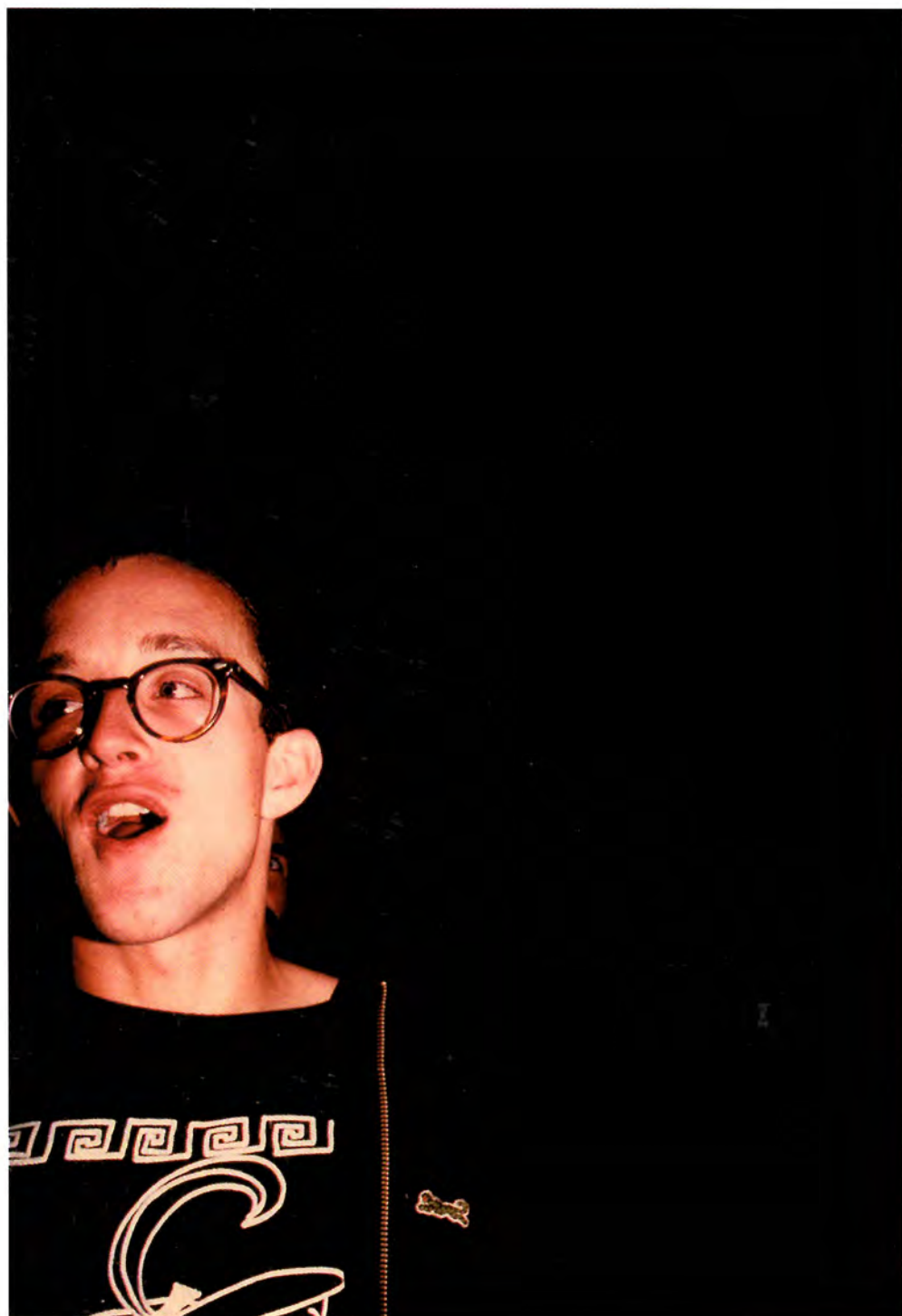


THE DUTCH ADVENTURES OF
KEITH HARING
AMSTERDAM NOTES



CHRIS REINWALD

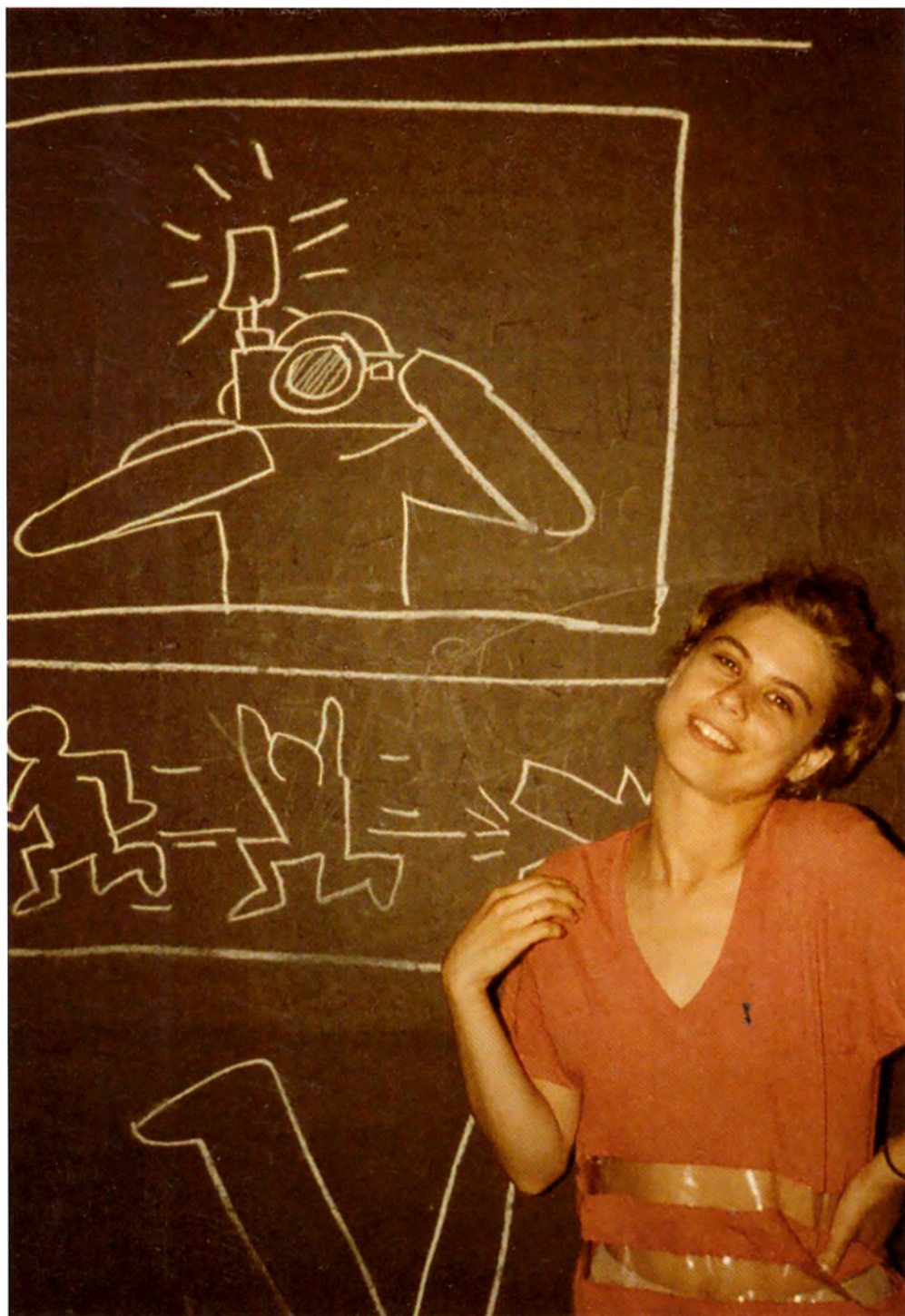


Keith Haring enjoying New York, FUN Gallery 1982. Photo: © Anita Rosenberg

*You feel the deal is real
You're a New York City boy
So young, so run
into New York City*

*New York City boy
you'll never have a bored day
'cause you're a New York City boy*

'New York City Boy' – Pet Shop Boys, 1999
Chris Lowe, David Morales, Neil Tennant



'HIS DRAWINGS WERE SEEN AND APPRECIATED, AND EVEN COLLECTED. TEENAGERS ADORE HIM'

When American artist Keith Haring, then 27, comes to the Netherlands for his first solo exhibition in Amsterdam in the spring of 1986, he doesn't spend all his time at the Stedelijk – he goes out, into the city. Haring, a former art school student, gained attention by making chalk drawings on empty advertising signs in the New York subway. His drawings were seen and appreciated, and even collected. Teenagers adore him. Haring's vibrant bouncy figures are a perfect match with hip-hop street culture. So, when Wim Beeren (58), appointed director of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam in 1985, stages a major show of Haring's work, it turns out to be a good move.

After his European debut in Rotterdam (1982), Haring becomes an overnight sensation following an exhibition at Tony Shafrazi in New York, later that year. By showing Haring's work, Beeren brings youth street culture into the Stedelijk. Things were very different under the directorate of his predecessor, Edy de Wilde. Haring achieves his much-coveted museum status, but loses none of his street credibility. He won't compromise – for anyone or anything.

Outside and inside the Stedelijk, Haring spray-paints a velum, a woven canopy that filters daylight, and creates an equally monumental wall painting using paintbrush and ink. With the help of a hydraulic platform, he energetically paints a mural on the exterior of the Stedelijk's storage depot at the Markthalen. Keith's a social being who lives to share his work with everyone. During the Kunstrijken at the Stedelijk, he makes a large wall drawing in the museum with

Strike a pose next to a
Haring chalk drawing in
86th Street subway station,
New York 1982.
Photo: © Anita Rosenberg



Clubbing at the Kenny Scharf show in the FUN Gallery, New York 1982.

Photo: © Anita Rosenberg