

PRESS RELEASE

HOW QUANTEL'S PAINTBOX CHANGED OUR WORLD

THE COMPUTER ARTS SOCIETY



© Keith Haring Foundation. Courtesy of Andrea De Gioia/Young B&V

Design by Kimmanesabbott.com

Paintbox has totally revolutionized the notion of art
and the image - why hasn't anyone noticed?

Keith Haring

May 2023 Phoenix, Leicester

Dec 2023 BCS, London

computer-arts-society.com

curated by Adrian Wilson



The Computer Arts Society



PRESS RELEASE

The Computer Arts Society Presents
HOW QUANTEL'S PAINTBOX CHANGED OUR WORLD
AN EXHIBITION OF WORK CREATED ON DIGITAL'S FIRST GLOBAL ART STAR

**Including Never-Before-Seen 1980's Digital Art
By Keith Haring, David Hockney and Sidney Nolan**

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of Quantel, who first brought digital art into all our homes, the Computer Arts Society are revealing twenty pieces of digital art, created on Quantel's Paintbox in the 1980s by some of the world's most famous artists, a third of which are pioneering women artists

Launched in 1981, this full-colour, 24 bit, broadcast-quality, stylus-operated digital art studio was so user-friendly, Quantel quipped that it took 3 years and a day to become a Paintbox Artist: 3 years at Art College and a day on the Paintbox. April Greiman described the Paintbox she had used to create a poster for MoMA as "training for the release of the Macintosh", adding "The Mac seemed like it mimicked everything the high-end Paintboxes could do." This small company in the English countryside got a decade ahead of Silicon Valley's best by including artists in the User Interface and software design, by funding digital dozens of art scholarships and by donating millions of dollars of equipment to art colleges.

David Hockney raved about this "new medium" while using a Paintbox in 1985, referring to the digital art on the screen as his "first coloured glass drawings", two decades before his famous iPhone/iPad artwork. Nam June Paik incorporated the iconic Paintbox palette and menu into his 1990's artwork and Andreas Gursky was still relying on one to construct his complex photographs in 2010.

"Paintboxed" was the verb for digital image retouching years before Photoshop 1.0 was released. The iconic Silence of The Lambs poster, Nirvana's Nevermind and even a promo for Apple's photo manipulation tools were created on Paintbox. The exhibition includes digitally manipulated images which laid the foundations of our 'Photoshop Age'. Adrian Wilson, a Quantel historian and Paintbox artist since 1985, curated the exhibition and owns one of the last working Paintboxes in the world, which he is using to restore Keith Haring's unseen digital work.

After flying to Rome just to try a Paintbox shortly before he passed, Haring excitedly wrote in his Journal that "It has totally revolutionized the notion of art and the image - why hasn't anyone noticed?".

By revealing Haring's 30 year old Paintbox art for the first time, they finally will.



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This Exhibition Is Funded By The Computer Arts Society

Special thanks to the **Keith Haring Foundation, Jennifer Bartlett 2013 Trust, David Hockney Foundation, Richard Bernstein Estate, Sidney Nolan Trust** and **Larry Rivers Foundation** for their support and endorsement.

Plus, Chiara Boeri, April Greiman, Richard Hamilton, Martin Holbrook, Ellen & Lynda Kahn AKA TwinArt, Lea Lublin, Kim Mannes-Abbott, Stephen Partridge, Kiki Picasso, John Sanborn, Mechthild Schmidt Feist, Hervé Télémaque, Adrian Wilson, Dean Winkler and Brandon Wisecarver

May 9-Jun 30, 2023
Phoenix Cinema and Art Centre
Leicester

Dec 6, 2023-Feb 23, 2024
British Computer Society
London

The UK's **Computer Arts Society** (CAS) was **founded in 1968** to promote the understanding of the role of digital and electronic media in the arts. As it has developed over time, a key aim has become to ensure that the long history of the computer arts is recognised by contemporary artists, technologists, audiences and collectors. The society organises exhibitions such as this, plus talks, events and performances to highlight the ways that digital and electronic technologies can be of value to the creative sector

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Exhibition Curator **Adrian Wilson** is regarded as the first photographer to specialize in image manipulation, using a Paintbox from 1985. He was a guest artist at Quantel and his work was used on the front cover of their Paintbox brochure in 1986. One of the foremost Quantel historians and co-producing a documentary, Wilson has selected key pieces from his extensive **Paintbox Archive**, along with important artwork loaned by original artists or their Estates, to create this, the world's first Paintbox Art group exhibition.

Wilson owns one of the last Paintboxes, on which he still creates art in NYC

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Exhibition and Poster designer **Kim Mannes-Abbott's** iconic work was chosen for the cover of the 1994 book **Paintboxed!** A Paintbox artist since 1984, Mannes-Abbott travelled the world for Quantel, working on Paintbox in Japan, Europe and the US. She now runs a successful design agency in Amsterdam

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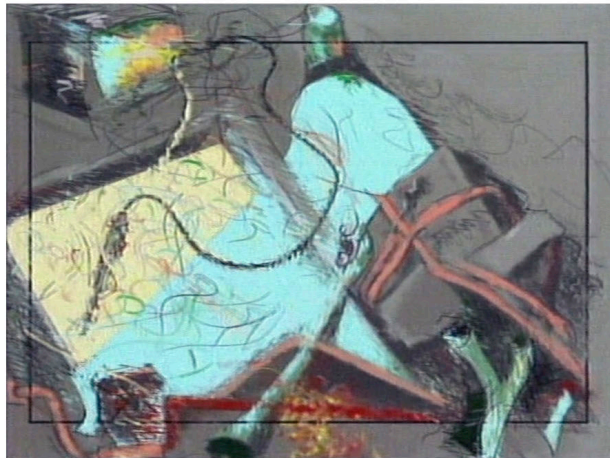


CAS ORIGINAL PAINTBOX ARTIST TALK

Paintbox artists Kim Mannes Abbott and Adrian Wilson will discuss their work, the Paintbox's overlooked creative legacy and curating/designing this landmark exhibition at 7pm on May 25th, Phoenix Centre, Leicester



© David Hockney, 1985



© Hervé Télémaque, 1985



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