



Keith Piper

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“Contrary to the view that history came to an end with the arrival of postmodernism, Piper’s oeuvre offers a broader vision arising from the post-colonial diaspora brought to England when the Others arrived to make it a place called home. Uniquely placed at the crossroads between the postmodern and the post-colonial, Keith Piper can be seen as a history painter of the Black Atlantic. He is a ‘history painter’ not on account of his chosen medium—for he is happy to migrate from banner-like paintings, mobile sculptures and photographic image-text, to site-specific public art, computer-generated animation, multi-monitor video installations and the occasional critical essay—but on account of the insights wrought from his agile standpoint that consistently returns to representation as a site of struggle over how the past is made sense of by the present.”

extract from ‘Witness at the Crossroads:  
An Artist’s Journey in Post-colonial Space’  
Kobena Mercer

Kobena Mercer is the author of *Welcome to the Jungle: New Positions in Black Cultural Studies* (Routledge, 1994), the editor of *Black Film/British Cinema* (ICA, London, 1988), and co-editor (with film-maker, Isaac Julien) of *Screen* (v29n4, 1988). He has lectured and written widely on the visual arts of the African diaspora and is currently Visiting Professor, Africana Studies Program, New York University.

*With the publication of this monograph, the work of Keith Piper— one of the most consistently original, innovative and challenging black British visual practitioners of his generation— gets, at last, the serious critical assessment it deserves.*

Stuart Hall

*Artists of colour are routinely asked to choose between ‘political resistance’ and ‘artistic freedom’, understood as mutually exclusive projects. Throughout his career, Keith Piper has stubbornly refused this devil’s bargain. Merging social critique and technical innovation, his art has consistently challenged viewers on both fronts with a fierce brilliance.*

Judith Wilson, Yale University

*Keith Piper is an artist whose work purposefully embraces the full breadth of the history of the African diaspora. ‘Sampling’ from both ‘high’ and ‘low’ culture, he redefines what it means to be both black and British. Keith Piper is a creative force whose imaginative passion is a gift that we are privileged to share. He is unquestionably the most important visual artist that the black British tradition has so far produced.*

Caryl Phillips

## Keith Piper Relocating the Remains



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