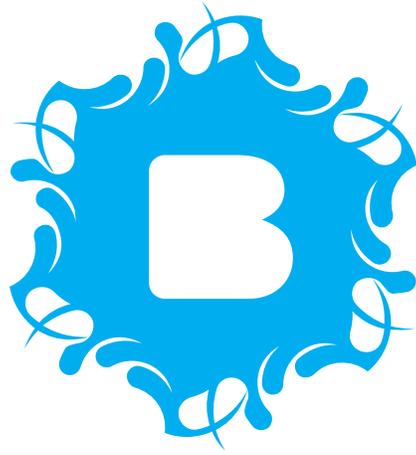


REVISED



February 2005

***Basquiat* on view at the Brooklyn Museum March 11 through June 5, 2005
with Over 100 Works By Celebrated Artist Jean-Michel Basquiat**

Sponsored by JPMorgan Chase

Media Preview Thursday, March 10, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Over 100 works by Jean-Michel Basquiat, whose meteoric career coincided with the emergence of the hip-hop movement and who contributed to the revival of painting in the United States before his untimely death, will be on view in the major exhibition *Basquiat*, March 11–June 5, 2005 at the Brooklyn Museum. A number of works in the exhibition have never been seen in the United States.

Basquiat is organized by the Brooklyn Museum. The national tour of *Basquiat* is sponsored by JPMorgan Chase.

The most comprehensive re-evaluation of the prolific artist's career since a 1992 retrospective at New York's Whitney Museum, the exhibition will include more than seventy paintings and fifty works on paper presented on two floors. This exhibition will celebrate the extraordinary achievement embodied in Basquiat's work—his skillful use of color, his aptitude at drawing, his unique and complex iconography, his integration of text into his canvases and his development of themes from the African Diaspora.

Born to a middle-class Brooklyn family of Haitian and Puerto Rican heritage, Jean-Michel Basquiat was active for just one decade, yet he is one of the best-known artists of his generation and enjoyed unprecedented international recognition. Basquiat died of a drug overdose in 1988 at the age of 27. His works continue to break auction records for art made during the 1980s.

Brooklyn Museum

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When still in his teens, Basquiat first gained recognition among New Yorkers for the cryptic graffiti poetry he sprayed on the walls of Lower Manhattan under the pseudonym SAMO. In 1981, however, when he was twenty years old, Basquiat burst upon the art scene under his own name with an original body of work that quickly developed toward a complex and highly diverse, mature style, marked by innovation, sophistication, skill, and a stirring emotional depth. By the age of 21, he had already enjoyed five important one-person exhibitions and been included in the prestigious Documenta 7 in Kassel, Germany.

A talented, self-taught artist, Basquiat's skill set him apart from many of the artists of his generation. He drew constantly, producing hundreds of works, which he sometimes photocopied to incorporate into his paintings as collage elements. He admired other draftsmen, including Leonardo da Vinci, whose anatomical studies he quotes, and Cy Twombly, whose influence is seen in many of Basquiat's earliest works. Among the finest examples of this aspect of Basquiat's work is a series of 32 drawings currently referred to as the Daros Suite, and once belonging to the legendary collector and dealer Thomas Ammann. The portfolio will be seen in its entirety for the first time in the United States.

Basquiat's paintings are frequently inhabited by primitive-looking figures with large, mask-like heads and consequently have been considered Neo-Expressionist in style. Nevertheless, although he exhibited many of the qualities of such modernists as Picasso, Matisse, Kirchner, Dubuffet, Rauschenberg, and, his friend Andy Warhol, he had a unique style, one that synthesized many of the main tendencies of the 20th century art.

Basquiat's art was also part of the cultural movement that began sweeping the country at the time: hip-hop. As a musician and performer, he was friendly with many figures on the downtown New York music scene and even performed in a feature film loosely based on his life entitled *Downtown 81*, directed by Edo Bertoglio. Indeed, a second film on his life, the posthumous *Basquiat*, directed by artist Julian Schnabel, achieved some critical success.

The co-curators for *Basquiat* include Marc Mayer, *Basquiat* Project Director, former Deputy Director for Art, Brooklyn Museum, and now Director of the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal; Fred Hoffman, Ahmanson Curatorial Fellow at The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Kellie Jones, Assistant Professor of the History of Art and African American Studies, Yale University; and Franklin Sirmans, an independent writer, editor, and curator based in New York.

Additional generous support has been provided by Fernwood Art Foundation.

The exhibition was also supported in part by the Brooklyn Museum's Richard and Barbara Debs Exhibition Fund and the Museum's Contemporary Art Council. The Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities has granted an indemnity for this exhibition.

The Village Voice and WBGO are media sponsors. Promotional support provided by MTA New York City Transit.

The Brooklyn Museum's Education Division, in partnership with the education departments of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles and the Museum of Fine Arts Houston, will launch a Web site, aimed at a teenage audience, based on the Basquiat exhibition. The Web site will be called *Street to Studio: The Art of Jean-Michel Basquiat Presented by JPMorgan Chase* and can be found at www.brooklynmuseum.org/basquiat

A full-color catalogue, published by the Brooklyn Museum in association with Merrell, with essays by the co-curators will be available. Following the Brooklyn Museum presentation, the exhibition will travel to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles from July 17 to October 10, 2005, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, from November 18, 2005 to February 12, 2006.

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BROOKLYN MUSEUM GENERAL INFORMATION

Admission:

Contribution \$8; students with valid I.D. and older adults \$4. Free to Members and children under 12 accompanied by an adult. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling extension 234.

Directions:

Subway: Seventh Avenue express (2 or 3) to Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum stop; Lexington Avenue express (4 or 5) to Nevins Street, cross platform and transfer to the 2 or 3. Bus: B71, B41, B69, B48. On-site parking available.

Museum Hours:

Wednesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; First Saturday of each month, 11 a.m. to 11 p.m.; all other Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.