

Media Alert

Jamel Shabazz: Faces and Places, 1980–2023 **Becomes the Latest Project to Take Over the Brooklyn Museum’s Plaza**

June 2–September 2023



Brooklyn-born and -based photographer Jamel Shabazz (born 1960) will activate the Brooklyn Museum’s outdoor plaza this summer with a site-specific installation featuring hundreds of portraits from the past four decades. Shabazz is one of New York City’s foremost street photographers, and he has documented the vitality of city life and hip-hop culture in the five boroughs and beyond, capturing enduring images of style, community, and joy. Drawn from the photographer’s remarkable archive, this presentation celebrates Shabazz’s significant contributions to Brooklyn, as well as the fiftieth anniversary of hip-hop. Through this project, the Museum continues its commitment to collaborating with local artists for its renowned outdoor exhibitions.

Shabazz’s earliest influences include his family’s photo albums, which have been passed down and expanded over generations. During the 1980s and ’90s, Shabazz had his film processed at a lab that provided two prints of each image. He would give one print to his subjects and archive the other in his own albums, which he often presents to potential models. Along with individual portraits, this installation features reproductions of several album pages, focusing on Shabazz’s extensive work in New York City parks over the past forty years.

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“The camera has served as both a compass and a record of time, leading me on numerous paths, allowing me to document my encounters, and creating a comprehensive visual diary,” says Shabazz. “It is through the unique language of photography that I have been able to find my own voice, communicating with so many intriguing people throughout my forty-five-year sojourn. The photographs in this project represent just a few of the faces and places I have been blessed to freeze in time and share with the world.”

Jamel Shabazz: Faces and Places, 1980–2023 is organized by Drew Sawyer, Phillip and Edith Leonian Curator of Photography, with Imani Williford, Curatorial Assistant, Photography, Fashion, and Material Culture, Brooklyn Museum.

IMAGE: Jamel Shabazz (born Brooklyn, New York, 1960). *The Art of Love*, Prospect Park, Brooklyn, 1988. © Jamel Shabazz