

Brooklyn Museum

Press Release

January 2018

The Brooklyn Museum Presents *One Basquiat*

Jean-Michel Basquiat's *Untitled* (1982) on view January 26 through March 11, 2018

The Brooklyn Museum is proud to present the first museum exhibition of Jean-Michel Basquiat's *Untitled*. Created in 1982, a breakout year in Basquiat's meteoric career, *Untitled* is emblematic of his early success and ranks among the artist's most powerful paintings. *One Basquiat* is just the latest of many links between the artist and the borough—from his birth at Brooklyn Hospital, to childhood visits to the Brooklyn Museum, where his mother enrolled him as a Junior Member when he was six years old, to the Museum's retrospective *Basquiat* in 2005 and its critically acclaimed presentation *Basquiat: The Unknown Notebooks* in 2015.

The work will be on view in the Museum's Robert E. Blum Gallery from January 26 through March 11, 2018.

One Basquiat and surrounding public programming have been made possible by collector Yusaku Maezawa. Commenting on the exhibition, Mr. Maezawa said, "I am thrilled to be sending Basquiat's masterpiece home to Brooklyn. It is my hope that through the exhibition and extensive programming accompanying it, the young people of the borough will be inspired by their local hero, just as he has inspired so many of us around the world." Following a world tour, *Untitled* will eventually be housed in a museum that Mr. Maezawa is building in his hometown of Chiba, Japan.



Jean-Michel Basquiat (American, 1960–1988). *Untitled*, 1982. Acrylic, spray paint, and oilstick on canvas. Collection of Yusaku Maezawa. © Estate of Jean-Michel Basquiat. Licensed by Artstar, New York

One Basquiat is organized by Eugenie Tsai, John and Barbara Vogelstein Senior Curator of Contemporary Art.

Anne Pasternak, the Brooklyn Museum's Shelby White and Leon Levy Director, noted, "We are extremely grateful for Mr. Maezawa's generosity and for this tremendous opportunity to present this stunning painting in Basquiat's hometown. *One Basquiat* is the continuation of a relationship the Museum has had with the life and art of Jean-Michel Basquiat, from his early visits as a child to our recent exhibitions."

The Museum's celebrated education programs will be robustly augmented during the seven-week presentation of *Untitled* with a number of Basquiat-specific offerings. In particular, an intensive series of school visits by children grades K–12 will be organized by museum educators and Education Fellows and accompanied by inquiry-based gallery lessons focused on developing observation and critical-thinking skills. *One Basquiat* will also be the centerpiece of the Museum's programming around February's annual observance of Black History Month.

Untitled features a bold, crowned, spectral head that hovers against a vibrant blue background. Basquiat's skeletal and sometimes cartoonlike heads first emerged in 1981 in the large, well-known canvas *Untitled (Head)* and continued in both small works on paper and large compositions throughout his decade-long career. *Untitled* is considered the artist's second painting of a monumental head, yet even in comparison to *Untitled (Head)* the ferocity and daring of *Untitled* stand out.

Eugenie Tsai states, "In the single decade of Basquiat's artistic career, he went from spray-painting witty, cryptic aphorisms on the street to being an international art star whose paintings were highly coveted by collectors. The simplicity of *Untitled's* composition and the raw energy of the brushwork and drawn lines create an iconic painting that represents Basquiat at his artistic height."

One Basquiat is a prelude to an upcoming series of spotlight presentations, each of which will feature a single work of art from the Museum's encyclopedic collection.

#onebasquiat
@brooklynmuseum

Related Public Programs

Target First Saturday: Black History Month Saturday, February 3, 5–11 pm

Museum-wide
Free

February's *Target First Saturday* celebrates Black History Month with an evening of music, storytelling, scholarship, dance, film, and literature. At 6 pm, join curator Eugenie Tsai as she leads a talk in *One Basquiat*. For the evening's full lineup, visit www.brooklynmuseum.org/visit/first_saturdays/.

Brooklyn Talks: "A Tribute to Basquiat" Thursday, February 15, 7 pm

Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Auditorium, 3rd Floor
Tickets start at \$20 and include Museum admission.

Contemporary artists speak on one artwork by Jean-Michel Basquiat that has inspired them and their practice. Afterward, the participants come together for a conversation on Basquiat's legacy. Participants include graffiti artist and Creative Director of Def Jam Cey Adams and photographer Maripol, among others.

Little Cinema Presents *Basquiat* Thursday, March 8, 7 pm

Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Auditorium, 3rd Floor
Tickets are \$16 and include Museum admission.

Little Cinema presents an immersive screening of *Basquiat* (Julian Schnabel, 1996, 108 min.) layered with live theatrical performances. Founded by audio-visual artist CHNNLS (Jay Rinsky), with the support and partnership of House of Yes, the Little Cinema series blends cinema and live performance. The program has adult content and is recommended for adult audiences.

About Jean-Michel Basquiat

Born in 1960, Basquiat was raised in the borough of Brooklyn, in the Park Slope, East Flatbush, and Boerum Hill neighborhoods. He attended the Brooklyn Heights location of City-As-School, an alternative high school with programs in cultural institutions around New York. As a student he developed a fictional character, called SAMO© (a play on the expression "same old, same old"), and under this pseudonym he achieved underground recognition by spray-painting sayings

on walls in Lower Manhattan. He participated in the sprawling group exhibition *The Times Square Show* in 1980. The following year, the group show *New York/New Wave* launched his fine art career. He had his first solo exhibition at Annina Nosei Gallery in 1982, became one of the youngest artists ever to take part in the Whitney Biennial in 1983, and was included in the inaugural reopening exhibition, devoted to contemporary art, at the newly expanded Museum of Modern Art in 1984. Ten years after leaving high school, Basquiat died, of a drug overdose, in 1988 at the age of 27. He was laid to rest in Brooklyn's Green-Wood Cemetery, amid Civil War heroes, Abolitionists, and a number of other major American artists.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Admission:

Contribution: \$16; students with valid I.D. and seniors \$10. Ages 19 and under FREE. Also FREE first Saturday of the month (except September), 5–11 pm. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling 718.501.6234.

Programs are subject to change without notice. For more information, visit www.brooklynmuseum.org.

Directions:

Subway: 2 or 3 to Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum; 4 or 5 to Franklin Avenue; B or Q to Prospect Park; S to Botanic Garden. Bus: B41, B69, B48, B45. On-site parking available.

Museum Hours:

Wednesday and Friday, 11 am to 6 pm; Thursday, 11 am to 10 pm; Saturday and Sunday, 11 am to 6 pm; first Saturday of each month (except September), 11 am to 11 pm. Closed Monday, Tuesday, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.