

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

Gagosian Gallery

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JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT: Paintings & Drawings 1980-1988

Thursday, February 12 - Saturday, March 14, 1998

Opening reception: Thursday, February 12, 6:00pm to 8:00pm

Gagosian Gallery is pleased to announce the exhibition of a selection of important works by Jean-Michel Basquiat. Born in 1960, Basquiat moved from his father's home to a life on the street at the age of eighteen. His early works, moving from public graffiti to oil on canvas, include painterly gestures with symbols such as automobiles, policemen, children's sidewalk games and buildings -- all images reflective of his street environment. He also expressed an obsession with death by consistently depicting skeletal figures and mask-like faces. Along with the famed crowns and lettering, all of these symbols appear throughout his brief but highly productive career. Upon reflection, the work reveals an artistic statement that is cohesive and strong in expressing issues surrounding his tragically short life.

Basquiat first exhibited in Los Angeles at the Gagosian Gallery in 1982. He liked Los Angeles and was given a friendly reception by local collectors, prompting him to set up a studio in Venice Beach in 1983. His second L.A. show in 1984, and what would be his last exhibition on the West Coast, in 1986, were both at Gagosian Gallery as well. This 1998 showing marks the ten year anniversary of his death.

Please call the gallery for more information.