

PRESS RELEASE

WARHOL & BASQUIAT

The WARHOL & BASQUIAT exhibition tells the story of an unusual collaboration between two very different artistic temperaments. Together, the established Andy Warhol from New York and the young shooting star Jean-Michel Basquiat created more than 100 works. Now ARKEN is reuniting the two legends in a large special exhibition opening 3 September.

Press conference, Wednesday 31 August 2011 at 12.00. Please register with Lea Bolvig, lea.bolvig@arken.dk

WARHOL & BASQUIAT
3 September 2011 – 11 January 2012

In autumn 2011, ARKEN is presenting a large special exhibition of two American art legends, Andy Warhol (1928-1987) and Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960-1988). Featuring more than 65 works, the exhibition includes paintings by Warhol and Basquiat along with a wide selection of the more than 100 collaborative works that the two artists created over a short, intense period from 1983 to 1985.

Warhol and Basquiat were fixtures of the New York art scene in the mid-eighties, a time when artists, musicians and actors experimented with art, identity, sexuality and drugs. In this environment, appearances and personas were crucial to an artist's career and key ingredients in the finished work of art. Warhol created the "scene" and Basquiat splashed onto it as a young graffiti artist shooting to stardom. Celebrated in life, they were mythologized in death. Their intense lives, great art and early deaths, are the stuff of legend.

Basquiat was infatuated with Warhol's work already as a teenager. From 1980 on, he was a repeat visitor to Warhol's studio, *The Factory*. It was Warhol's dealer Bruno Bischofberger who suggested that the two paint together, and a unique collaboration took form. In 1983-1985, the two artists collaborated on paintings in equal dialogue and picture-making one-upmanship. Warhol traced subjects, Basquiat painted them over, changing them and adding new elements. Work after work came into being as a conversation in colour on canvas.

The exhibition also includes examples of the paintings that Warhol and Basquiat made with a third collaborator, the Italian artist Francesco Clemente.

In numerous paintings, mainly from private collections, the exhibition offers a rare window into an unusual collaboration between two artistic temperaments that are opposites in many ways. While Warhol had long perfected the look of mass-production and Pop Art, Basquiat, as a young man, was the first black artist to make it big in the New York art world, his fiercely expressive painting style a raw mix of symbols and lettering mimicking the unpolished look of graffiti.

ARKEN's exhibition is the story of Warhol and Basquiat – the times they lived in, the artist's roles,

the myths and the unique collaboration that made sparks fly on canvas.

The exhibition is organized by Curator Dieter Buchhart in collaboration with ARKEN Museum of Modern Art.

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