

## JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT A MASH-UP PIONEER

Jean-Michel Basquiat is considered one of the most significant artists of the twentieth century, and in the course of his brief career he produced an extensive body of work. This new volume, *Xerox*, is the first comprehensive examination of the pieces that the artist made using Xerox copies as his main medium and compositional focal point.

Berlin, August 27, 2019 - Jean-Michel Basquiat (1960–1988) was an artist who broke boundaries during his brief life. Emerging out of the post-punk underground art scene in Lower Manhattan, his multi-disciplinary works of art helped him to become the art world's first African-American star. In his works, which are often described as neo-expressionist, the son of a Puerto Rican mother and a Haitian father combined elements of pop and consumer culture with anti-cultural slogans, elements of African art, and the-then up-and-coming street art movement.

Like his friend and mentor Andy Warhol, Basquiat began his art career working with the means of reproduction—the copy, the imitation, the mimicry. Language played an important part: Basquiat put words or entire sentences into a new context. His encyclopedic source materials ranged from literature, hip-hop music, and bebop jazz to film and television history or text fragments from corn flake packaging. His themes were exploitation, consumer frenzy, repression, racism, and police brutality. He knew how to make art out of everything around him. “I have to have some source material around me to work off,” he once said in an interview.

Considering Basquiat's aesthetics, it was only logical that he would make his first series of collages in 1979 using Xerox copies, named after the company that made the copy machines. Their rough, full-surface compositions contain recycled and transformed signs and words from his daily life, including motifs from earlier works. In these pieces he often explicitly refers to the pioneer of the literary cut-up, the Beat poet William S. Burroughs. The complex web of content in this series anticipates the copy-and-paste features of the later Internet and post-Internet generations, and positioned Basquiat as a pioneer of the mash-up, the meme, collages, and remixes from the pre-digital age.

Accompanied by essays on art history, history, and semiology by Dieter Buchhart, Eric Robertson, and Christopher D. Stackhouse, this new book is the first to present the Xerox works in their entirety.



**JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT  
XEROX**

Ed. Dieter Buchhart, texts by Dieter Buchhart, Eric Robertson, Christopher D. Stackhouse

English  
2019. 216 pp., 135 ills.  
hardcover  
27.90 x 30.50 cm  
ISBN 978-3-7757-4585-7

40,00 EUR

**ABOUT HATJE CANTZ**

Hatje Cantz is a groundbreaking international publishing company specializing in art, architecture, and photography. Since 1945 Hatje Cantz has been using its profound expertise and enthusiasm for craftsmanship to produce and publish books of the highest quality.

Especially in the digital age, Hatje Cantz regards itself an element linking museums, artists, galleries, collectors, and art lovers. Conveying knowledge - in terms of both content and visuals - as well as an enthusiasm for art is always at the heart of our engagement.

In keeping with our ambition to make it possible to experience art beyond the medium of the book, Hatje Cantz has launched the EDITION HATJE CANTZ as we continue to expand our portfolio of strictly limited, signed editions featuring works on paper, photographic works of art, and art objects.

[www.hatjecantz.de](http://www.hatjecantz.de)

**PRESS CONTACT**

Jennifer Berndt  
Press Director  
(on parental leave)

Max Schadow  
Junior PR Manager  
[presse@hatjecantz.de](mailto:presse@hatjecantz.de)  
Tel. +49 30 3464678-23

**HATJE  
CANTZ**