

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Bonnier Gallery Presents a Major Exhibition of Works by Jean-Michel Basquiat, 1978–1988, in Miami’s Little River

Opening Saturday, May 9 at 6PM— on the eve of the spring auction season at Christie’s, Sotheby’s, and Phillips — this focused presentation of approximately 100 works offers a rare opportunity to encounter the full arc of Basquiat’s documented career outside the sale room.

MIAMI, FL — The Bonnier Gallery is thrilled to announce *Jean-Michel Basquiat: Selected Works, 1978–1988*, a major exhibition presenting approximately 100 works, curated by Grant Bonnier. The exhibition opens Saturday, May 9, 2026, from 6-9:30PM at 7275 NW 1st Court in Miami’s Little River neighborhood, and is open to the public Wednesday through Saturday, 11 am–6 pm, through June 30, 2026.

The works on view span Jean-Michel Basquiat’s entire documented career, from early collages and postcards made while the artist was still a teenager in downtown New York through canvases completed in 1987, the year before his death. The exhibition includes significant paintings on canvas, works on paper spanning his entire career, a large three-dimensional sculpture composed of painted wood blocks, painted glass objects from the early 1980s, photographs by Andy Warhol, and a number of collaborative works and pieces of ephemera. Together, the works demonstrate the full range of Basquiat’s artistic practice and the consistency of his preoccupations — language, power, the body, heroism, and erasure.

“Jean-Michel Basquiat’s work remains one of the most urgent and unresolved conversations in American art, and this exhibition gives Miami the opportunity to encounter that conversation at its fullest depth — tracing the complete arc of a career that transformed what painting could say and who it could speak for. Bringing a presentation of this scale to Little River is a reflection of the cultural evolution happening across this city right now. Miami is becoming something new, and an exhibition like this is both a product of that moment and a contribution to it.”

— Grant Bonnier, The Bonnier Gallery

VENUE

The exhibition is hosted at 7275 NW 1st Court, located within AJ Capital Partners’ 25-acre adaptive reuse and mixed-use development in Miami’s Little River neighborhood. Little River has emerged in recent years as one of Miami’s most significant zones of cultural and commercial development. The Bonnier Gallery has maintained a presence in the neighborhood since 2025 and has an ongoing partnership with AJ Capital Partners to activate the area through cultural programming.

WORK HIGHLIGHTS

Among the exhibition's centerpiece paintings is *Krong Thip (Torso)* (1983), a large-scale acrylic rooted in a lifelong obsession with Gray's Anatomy — a book given to Basquiat by his mother during childhood recovery from a car accident, and later the name of the noise band he formed with Vincent Gallo and Michael Holman. The work maps the body with the precision of a Renaissance figure study while burying a second composition beneath the surface, a deliberate pentimento that invites the eye to sense what the painter chose to conceal.

Another large format painting, *Spain* (1985), layers Xerox collage around a silkscreen of Basquiat's recurring windmill diagram — part engineer's blueprint, part annotated riddle — surrounding it with mythological figures, a reference to Titian, and a notation identifying Galileo's first drawing of the moon, assembling Renaissance painting, astronomical observation, and mechanical logic into a single image that resists any hierarchy between them.

Made at the threshold of Basquiat's transition from the streets to the gallery system, *Untitled (from the Famous Negro Athletes Series)* (1981) was built from nine xeroxed drawings arranged into a patchwork and overpainted in gouache — treating the canvas the way he had once treated downtown walls. The series returns throughout his early career to figures such as Cassius Clay, Joe Louis, and Jackie Robinson — men of extraordinary ability whose public elevation was conditioned on its confinement to the domains a society was willing to celebrate Black excellence in — with Basquiat's three-pointed crowns conferring genuine status while his masklike handling of faces withholds individuality.

Boone (1983) renders Basquiat's dealer Mary Boone as the Mona Lisa — or dresses the Mona Lisa in the dealer's identity — the direction of the substitution deliberately unclear. Executed in paper collage, marker, and oilstick on a narrow vertical masonite panel, the work turns two of Western culture's most legible icons against each other to examine the commodity logic of the art market Basquiat had just entered — both figures containers of accumulated cultural value, simultaneously impossible to see clearly and impossible to look away from.

Brain (1985) is among the most structurally inventive works in the exhibition: a three-dimensional sculpture assembling Xerox paper collage, acrylic, and oilstick across twenty-seven individually painted wood blocks mounted on a bootblack stand — a piece of street furniture that carries its own freight of labor and public life. The work extends Basquiat's preoccupation with anatomy and cognition into physical space, the floor becoming part of the composition and the viewer's body drawn into the same field as the work.

Originally spray-painted on a downtown New York wall and captured on film in *Downtown 81*, the text of *The Whole Livery Line* (1987) — *the whole livery line / bow like this with / the big money all / crushed into these feet* — returned as a canvas in a suite of three large-scale text paintings from that year, all reaching back to the spontaneous street poetry Basquiat had once applied directly to buildings. The poem's compression of body, labor, and economic power into four lines — the big money crushed downward through every tier of a system until it lands on those at the bottom — gives the painting the weight of a decade's reckoning, made by an artist who had lived every word.

ABOUT THE BONNIER GALLERY

Founded in 2018, The Bonnier Gallery is a postwar and contemporary gallery dealing in primary and secondary market works with a principal focus in minimalist and conceptual art including, though not limited to, painting, photography, sculpture, and mixed media, as well as publications of art and poetry. Through unique exhibitions, art fairs, and scholarly catalogues, we seek to place our artists' work in a wide range of international private and museum collections. We also seek to promote the visual arts and literary arts in our community by contributing to local educational efforts and providing a space that fosters a dialogue between artists and poets.

ABOUT LITTLE RIVER

Situated just north of Wynwood and the Design District, Little River signifies Miami's epicenter for culture, cuisine, and the arts, reflecting the dynamic and diverse character and population of South Florida. Through a thoughtful approach centered on championing local talent, the area has become home to an ever-expanding roster of cultural and creative brands and businesses, such as SIMONMILLER, éliou, Sajo, and Primary Projects, as well as acclaimed food and beverage concepts including Sunny's, a popular restaurant by restaurateur Will Thompson of Jaguar Sun; Bar Bucce, an Italian restaurant and market by Jacqueline and Michael Pirolo of Macchialina; La Natural, a Michelin-approved sourdough pizzeria and eatery; and the reopening of one of Miami's most beloved eateries, Fooq's. While the area continues to draw thriving local brands in these sectors, it has also become a magnet for innovative retail concepts and up-and-coming businesses on the hunt for office space in creatively driven environments.

In 2021, AJ Capital Partners acquired a majority stake in Little River from local developer MVW Partners, who have been working on the redevelopment of Little River for the past decade and remain an on-site partner for the next evolution of the area. AJ Capital Partners seeks to elevate and enhance the historic neighborhood, while retaining the vibrant charm and character that has defined it in years past. For more information, visit littleriver.miami.

Exhibition	Jean-Michel Basquiat: Selected Works, 1978–1987
Gallery	The Bonnier Gallery
Venue	7275 NW 1st Court, Little River, Miami, FL
Public Opening	May 9, 2026 at 6PM
Public Hours	Wednesday–Saturday, 11 am–6 pm, from May 9, 2026
Closing	June 30, 2026
Inquiries	info@thebonniergallery.com · (786) 543-9161

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