

For Immediate Release

Press Contact:

Camille Wanliss, Media Coordinator, (718) 681-6000, ext.120 or cwanliss@bronxmuseum.org

*** *Open House:* Sunday, March 2, 2008, 2-6pm ***

THE BRONX MUSEUM'S TEEN COUNCIL HONORS FAMED PHOTOGRAPHER JAMEL SHABAZZ WITH EXHIBITION

(Bronx, NY, January 3, 2008) – On Sunday, March 2, 2008, The Bronx Museum of the Arts' **Teen Council** class of 2007-08 will honor world renowned photographer **Jamel Shabazz** (New York) with an exhibition of the artist's works, including photographs from the Museum's permanent collection. Working in collaboration with Shabazz and the Bronx Museum's assistant curator Erin Riley-Lopez, the Teen Council's exhibition will be on view through August 4, 2008.

During their tenure, the teens conducted an interview with Shabazz for the education department's DVD series that focused on the development of his career over the last thirty years. In the interview, Shabazz suggests that his images are not only a document of street culture, but that they actually represent a kind of social activism inspiring youth through unique portrayals of their peers and neighborhoods. In some instances, his popularity within inner city communities even helped squelch tensions between rival gangs.

"It has been an honor and a privilege to have spent quality time with the members of the Teen Council of the Bronx Museum for the Arts," said Jamel Shabazz. "The experience has been both rewarding and inspiring for me and when I look into their faces, I see young visionaries that hold the key to making this world a better place."

An artist and activist, Jamel Shabazz gained acclaim for his documentation of Bronx and Brooklyn street culture during the rise of hip-hop in the late 1970s and early 80s. Born in Brooklyn, Shabazz has been committed to recording "urban life" through his photography as well as exposing inner city youth to the arts. He has published several monographs, including the best-selling photo documentary *Back in the Days*, and most recently, *Seconds of My Life*. Shabazz's work has appeared in publications such as *The Source*, *Vibe*, *Trace*, *British Elle*, *Jalouse*, *Dune*, *GQ*, and *French Vogue*, as well as numerous group exhibitions. A former corrections officer, the artist also mentors at-risk youth in various community programs. His 1981 and 1982 photographs, *Untitled (Two Boys: Sizzlin' Chicken)* and *Best Friends (Brooklyn, New York)* respectively, are apart of The Bronx Museum's permanent collection.

"I fell in love with Jamel Shabazz's work," says Jon Gabriel Valestin, a member of the Teen Council. "His photographs not only capture the hard times of the past, but the happy times. They are truly works of art."

“Jamel Shabazz is passionate about what he does,” adds Fannieka Dawkins, another Teen Council member. “His works hold such meaning for me because I live in the kind of neighborhood that he photographs.”

The Bronx Museum’s Teen Council consists of a selected diverse group of area high school students working collaboratively with The Bronx Museum to produce podcasts and zines that explore, showcase, and contribute to the culture of the Bronx. Through its creative efforts, the Teen Council reaches out to fellow teens, promoting The Bronx Museum and its events, helping to strengthen and extend the bridge between the Museum and its ever-growing audiences: past, present, and future.

This ten-month program provides teens with an open forum for the expression of ideas and dialogue on issues affecting young people, and the promotion of the Bronx as an important cultural, political and artistic force.

For more information on the Teen Council, please contact education@bronxmuseum.org.

CONCURRENT EXHIBITIONS AT THE BRONX MUSEUM OF THE ARTS

Making It Together: Women’s Collaborative Art and Community

On view in the South Wing Small Gallery and Lobby

March 2 – August 4, 2008

Guest Curator: Carey Lovelace

Making It Together explores an important chapter in recent history, a period when women artists, inspired by the Feminist Movement of the late 1970s, worked collaboratively, using visionary and imaginative works, often involving performance and humor, in an attempt to engage the community and address social issues in new ways. The exhibition will coincide with *WACK! Art and the Feminist Revolution*, which opens at P.S.1 in February 2008.

Highlights of the Permanent Collection: Women Artists

On view in the North Wing

March 2 – August 4, 2008

Conceived as a counterpart to *Making It Together*, The Bronx Museum features *Highlights of the Permanent Collection: Women Artists*, a special exhibition from its permanent collection of women artists whose works comment on social and political situations. Artists include Tania Bruguera, Ana Mendieta, Adrian Piper, Elizabeth Rodriguez, Graciela Sacco, Gary Simmons and Rachel Lachowicz, and Carrie Mae Weems.

THE BRONX MUSEUM OF THE ARTS

The flagship cultural institution of The Bronx, founded in 1971, The Bronx Museum of the Arts focuses on 20th-century and contemporary art, while serving the culturally diverse populations of The Bronx and the greater New York metropolitan area. The museum’s home on the Grand Concourse is a distinctive contemporary landmark designed by the internationally-renowned firm Arquitectonica.

The Bronx Museum of the Arts maintains a permanent collection of 20th and 21st-century works by artists of African, Asian, and Latin American ancestry. Additionally, the Museum collects works by artists for whom The Bronx has been critical to their artistic practice and development. The Museum's educational offerings spring from these central programs with outreach to children and families as well as adult audiences. For more information please visit www.bronxmuseum.org.

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