Abstract:

Having originated in the 1970’s in the neighborhoods of the Bronx and Kingston, Jamaica, hip hop moved into the mainstream and has been a part of youth culture ever since. Hip hop is a lifestyle populated by several ethnic groups and includes the enthusiasm of break dancing, rap music, rhyming, fashion and visual graffiti. This unit relates hip hop to the School District’s Core Curriculum. Students would be able to demonstrate some aspect of hip hop culture through the expressive performance of reading, writing, listening, speaking, and through the study of several visual artists associated with hip hop life style. The outcome of the lessons would include the creation of a series of moderate sized paintings in the visual style of Jean-Michel Basquiat, Keith Haring and other artists who began as graffiti writers and who graduated to one man shows held at international galleries. The focus of the unit background is Jean-Michel Basquiat, an African-American painter who was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1960. Basquiat’s contributions to the art world occurred during a brief time (1980-88) but had a major impact on the way that the art world responded to ‘untrained’ artists who did not choose the traditional road to recognition.