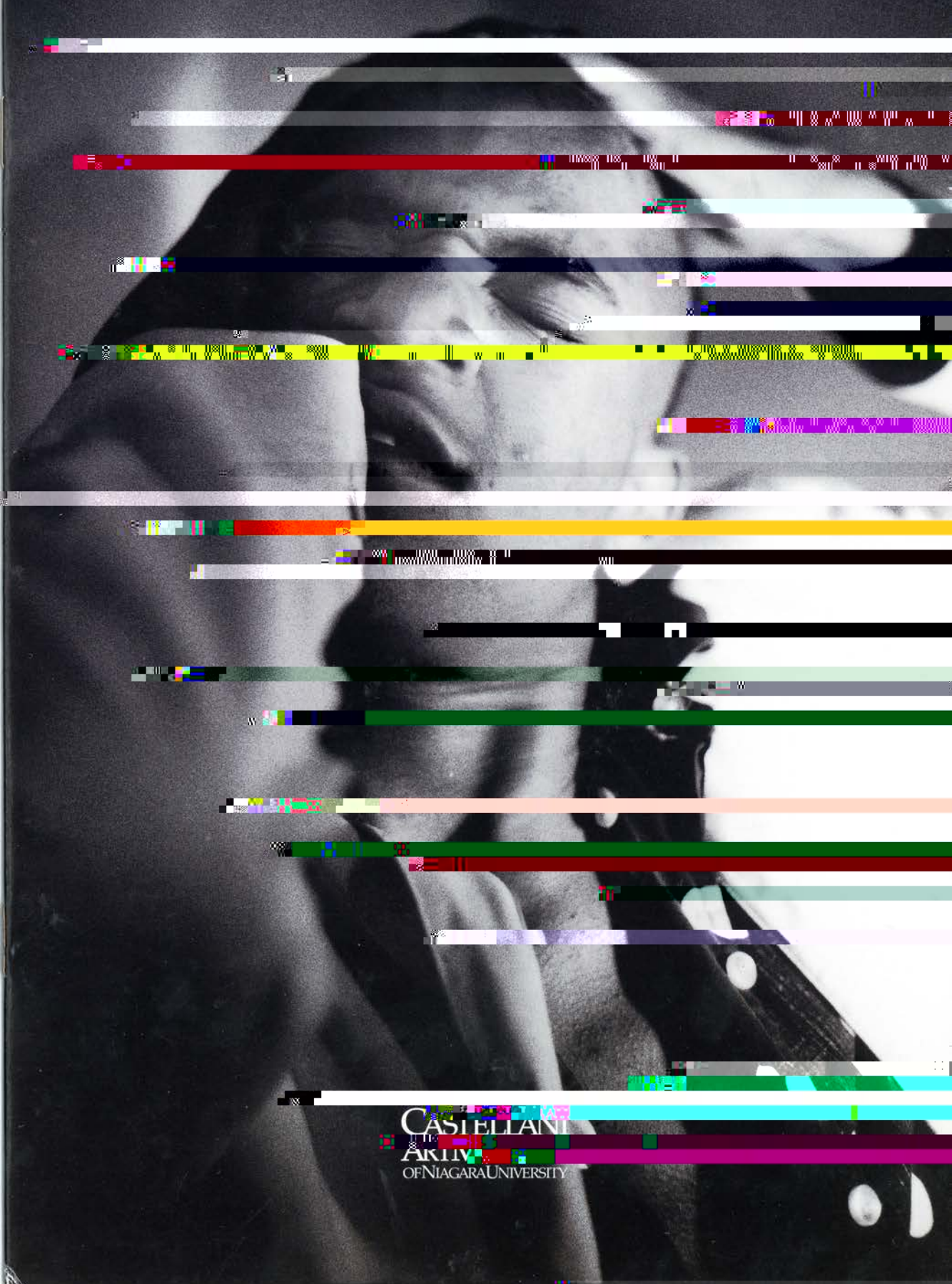


Jean-Michel Basquiat
An Intimate Portrait



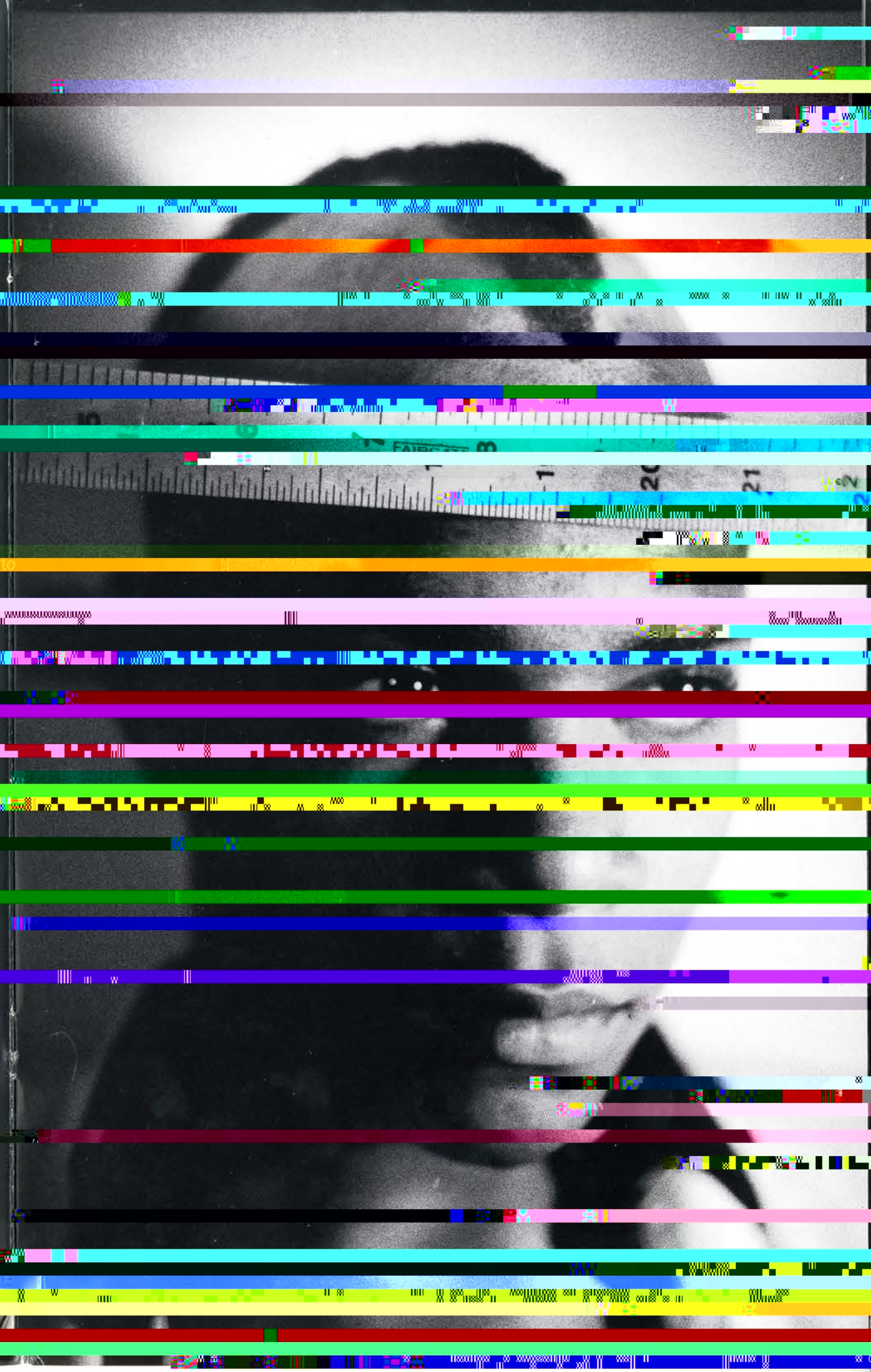
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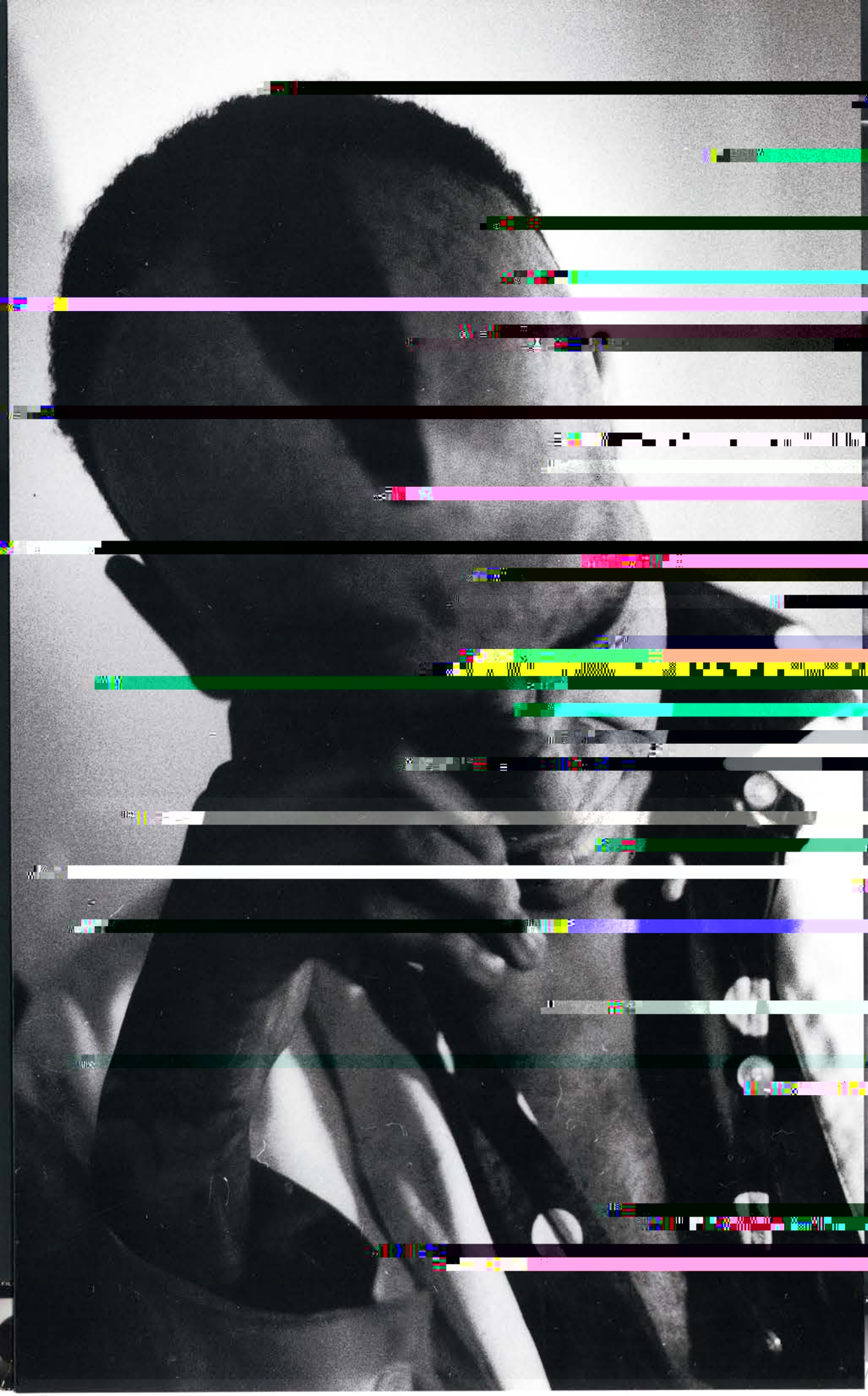
I first saw Jean Michel Basquiat's work in a very large group
curated by Diego Cortez, at P.S. 1 in Queens, New York, in 1981.

If I remember well, there were three
by Basquiat, with childish drawings depicting the theme of the streets
of New York. I was very personally
immediately of the originality and talent. I called the artist on the
phone and arranged to see his works.

This was very exciting, and, consequently, I asked him to
open a gallery. Since Jean Michel
produce very large paintings, I allowed
the gallery that was below
basement that had a high ceiling.
Jean Michel produced a number of masterpieces that brought
attention of the entire art world.

Annina Nosei, Annina Nosei Gallery
February 2004, New York, New York





The photographs in this exhibition reveal an intimate relationship between Nicholas Taylor and Jean-Michel Basquiat, a camaraderie that was born under the pulsating lights of New York's famed Mudd Club in lower Manhattan in January 1979. The Mudd Club was a beehive of creativity, where the likes of Fab Five (Iggy Pop, David Byrne, Talking Heads), Keith Haring, and Madonna frequented before they became famous. These high-contrast photographs, shot on just one roll of film, are being exhibited and traveled for the first time in their entirety. These images are portals into the life of an artist who was on the threshold of

Demise and triumph. This exhibition focuses on a period of his life that was not only important, a friend, Taylor's and Basquiat's friendship endured through the ups and downs of Basquiat's rise to notoriety in the art world until his untimely death.

These photographs show a 27-year-old Jean-Michel Basquiat, unspoiled by the artistic celebrity that was to reveal itself in just a short year.

These images also serve to contextualize the historical significance of Basquiat in the early 1980s. Taylor's personal relationship

with Basquiat, his actions and poses, captured by Taylor, appear as a series of casual opportunities. These are

most importantly, inclusion into the very closed social circles of the early 1980s.

Basquiat's self-control, nor did he seek out any realm of moderation. In retrospect, his paintings are aggressive and fragmented, radiating with raw energy and emotion.

Basquiat's work is a direct experience of the white bourgeois class identification with commercial art. His work is a sense of excitement, a sense of being in the center of his work. He directly experienced the white bourgeois class identification with commercial art.

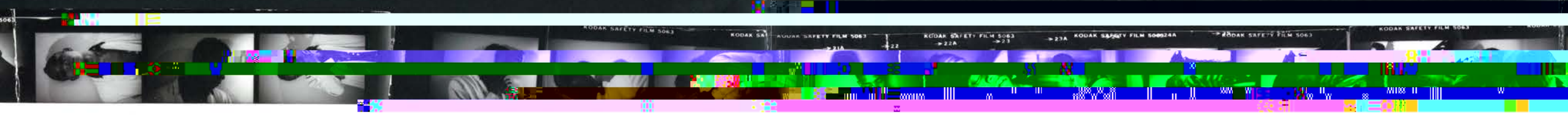
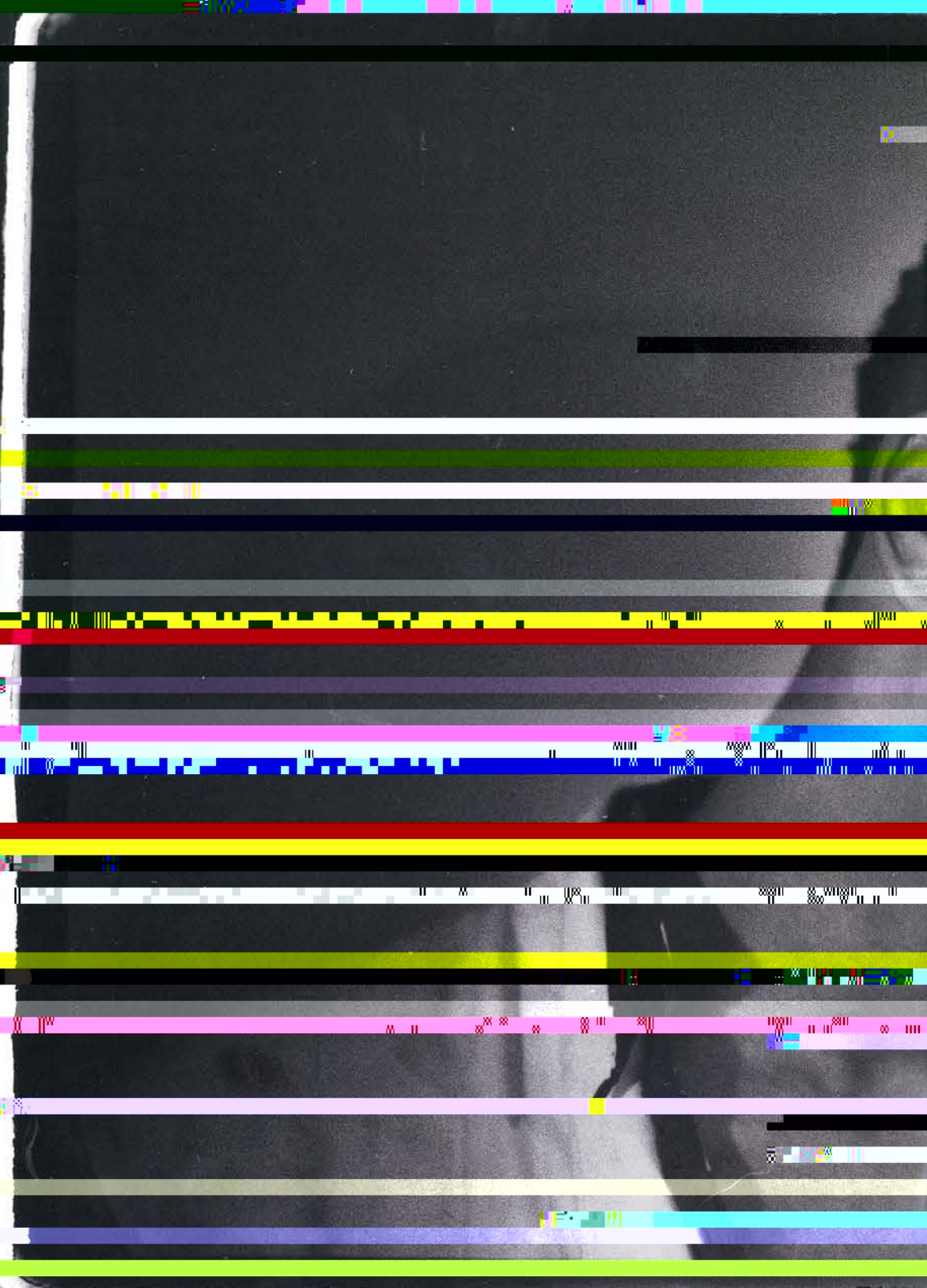
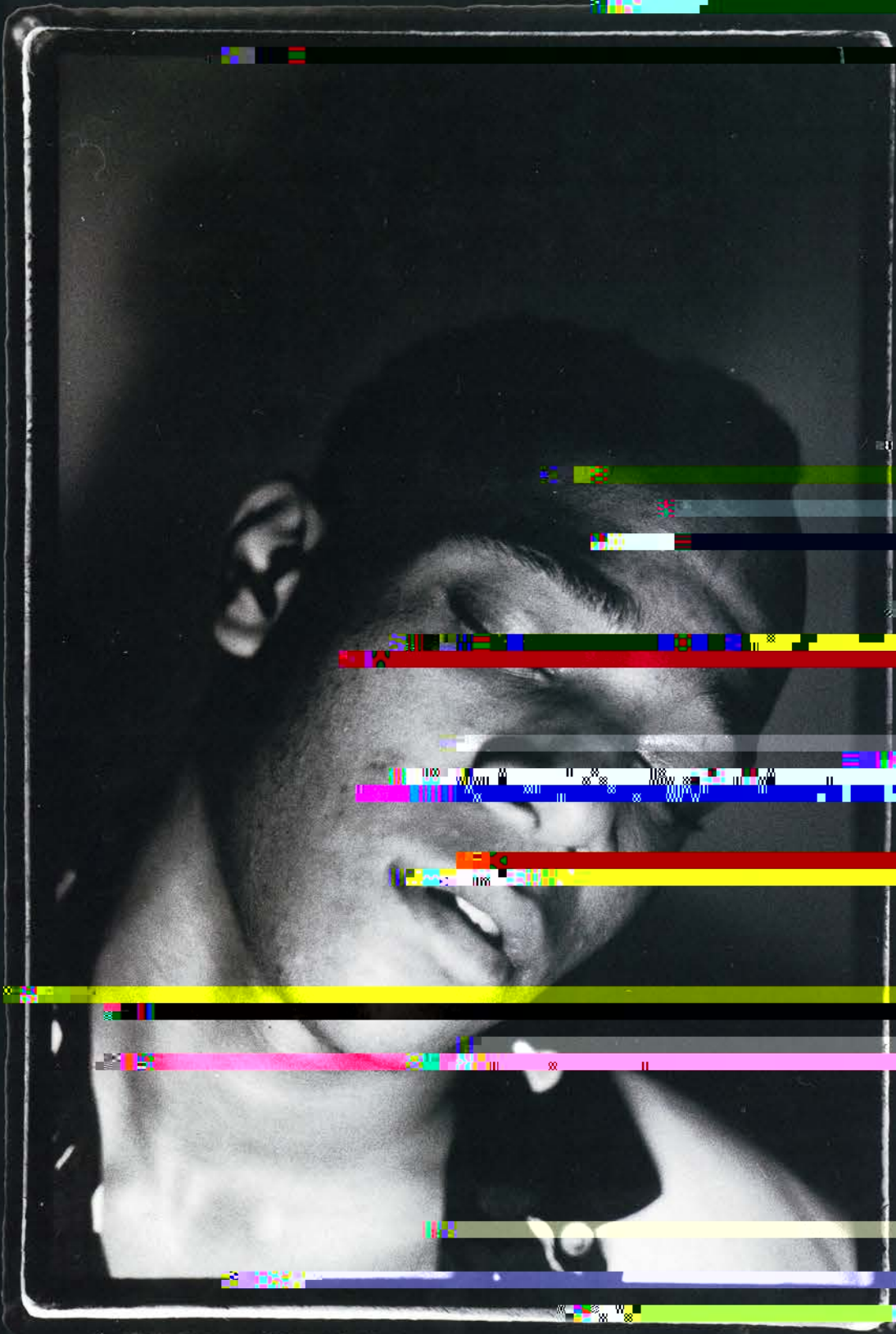
His volatile relationship with the commercial art world was symbiotic; each required the other to survive. Although there is much documentation on the overtly aggressive nature of the commercial art world, Basquiat's eccentric behavior, coupled only with

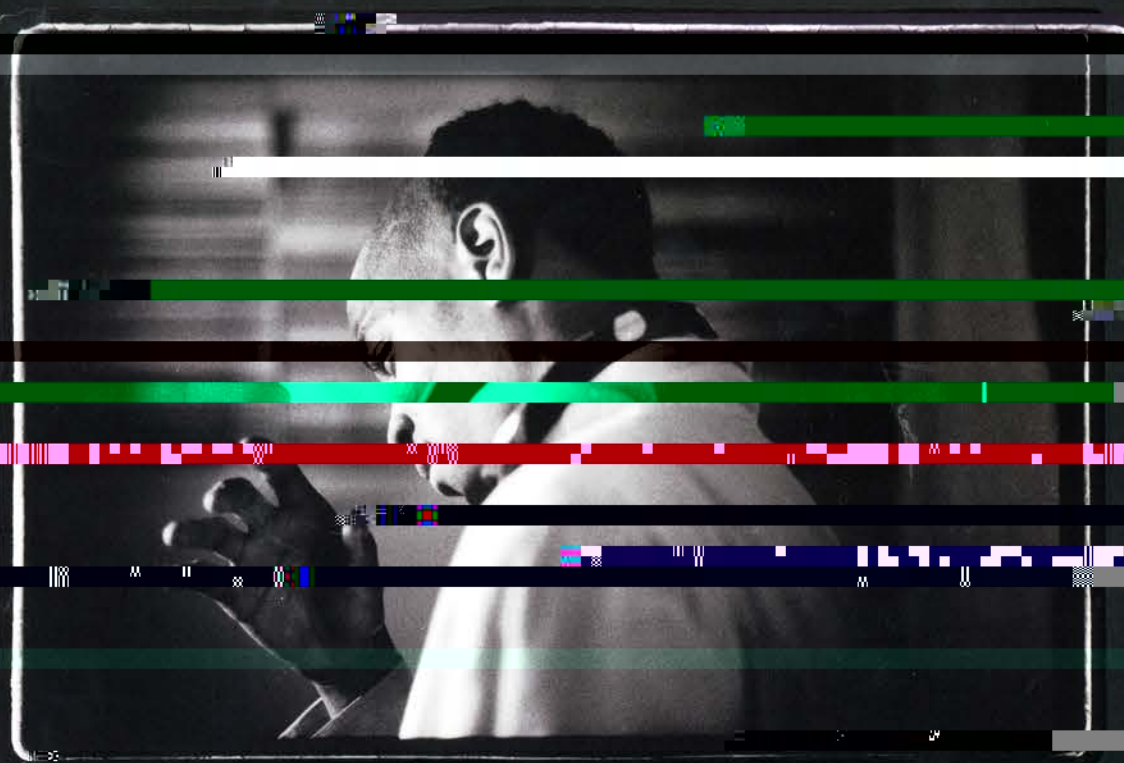
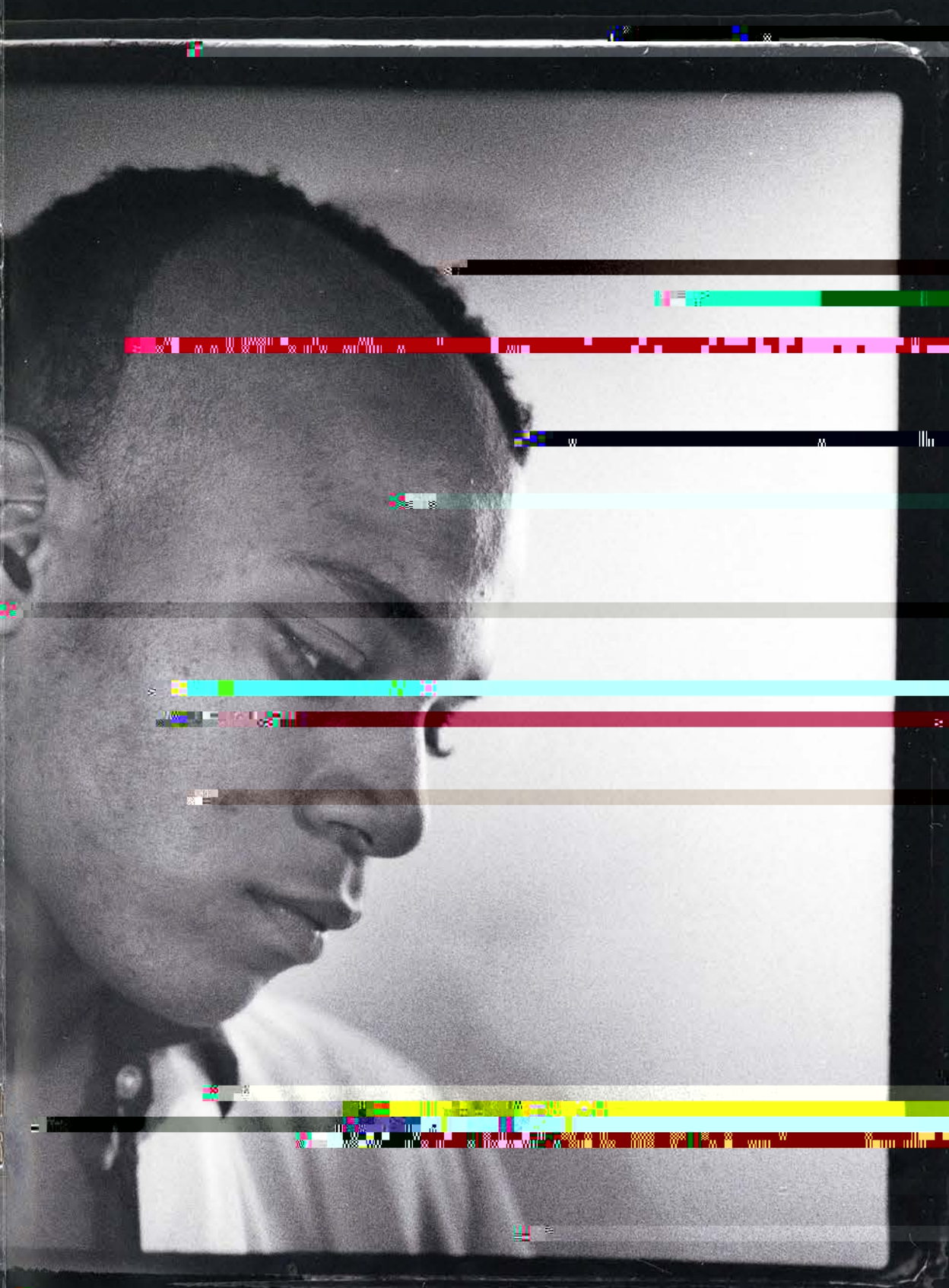
Ultimately, this exhibition is an exploration of Jean-Michel Basquiat as a person who became one of the most significant artists of our century.

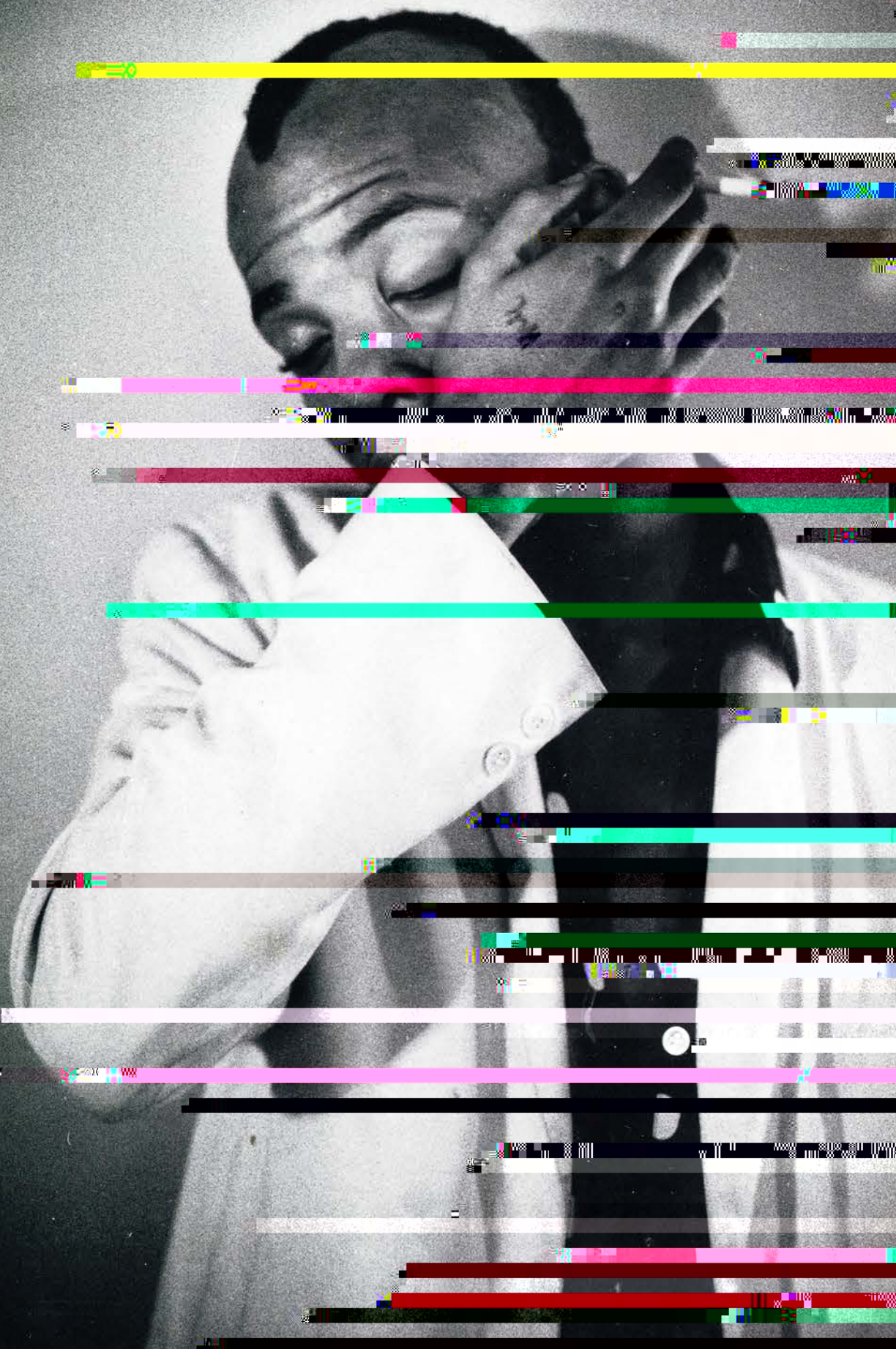
Michael J. Beam

Michael J. Beam, Curator of Exhibitions, Castellani Art Museum









About the Photographer

He also met and befriended another artist, and would eventually work with the well-known photographer and filmmaker who was famed Mudd Club in lower Manhattan. The two quickly became close friends and together with Michael Holman, Wayne Clifford, and Vincent Gallo, writer and director of *Salvo 66*, formed the musical art band Gray. Gray's sound was experimental, an energizing mix of ambient sounds and instrumental exploration. Gray had a cool, moody sound that was not only unique but also incredibly versatile. It was possibly the best band on the planet. Gray played at a myriad of locations throughout New York City, including a birthday party for pop art guru Leo Stelfi. After the band broke up in 1981, Basquiat

program. Taylor has toured (with Bamatta), open

York City Breakers.

From the film *Basquiat*, at writer and director Julian Schnabel's request, Taylor worked with Keith Burroughs and Jeffery Wright (who played Basquiat) to recreate the *Basquiat* Records *Basquiat* soundtrack and in the Miramax motion picture *Basquiat*. Taylor had cameo appearances in the movie; and it was he on whom Benicio del Toro's character "Rehve" was loosely based.

Today, Taylor has released several tracks: *ANTI-NEW YORK*, *Downtown '87*, and *NYC*. He also worked with artist Ashley Bickerton on the album *We Love New York*, which includes tracks by Brian Eno, Boy George, and Gilbert & George. In the fall of 2003,

Taylor performed at the Knitting Factory opening for Old Dirty Bastard (baby leave of Nicholas Taylor is director and host of *Outside My Window* art television show that airs

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Edition Sales—Limited Edition single prints and complete portfolios of this historical exhibition are available through Lawrence Brose at CEPA Photography Gallery, 716.856.2717, or Lawrence@cepagallery.com.

All photographs: © 2008 Nicholas Taylor

Acknowledgments

Thanks to the introduction of artist Annina Nosei for her valuable contribution to the catalogue essay, and Nicholas Taylor for his faith and assistance. Gian Lorenzo Beam, with her editorial expertise, melded the exhibition text panels into a cohesive vision. Lawrence Brose and CEPA Gallery, thankfully participated with us in the historic exhibition.

