



## A Time Before Crack

*Jamel Shabazz, Claude Grunitsky, James Koe Rodriguez, Charlie Ahearn, Terrence Jennings*

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“Deeply unpretentious and undistracted by the trendy new aesthetics or technologies, Mr. Shabazz is the best kind of photojournalist: one driven simply by curiosity about other human beings.”

—Ken Johnson, *The New York Times*

Once upon a time before crack, inner city communities were blighted by poverty and unemployment—but not by the drug wars that tore families apart, destroying lives with needless violence and mindless addiction. Once upon a time before crack, pride and style were as inseparable as a beatbox and mixtape, or as a pair of shoes and matching purse. Once upon a time before crack, Jamel Shabazz was on the scene, working the streets of New York City, capturing the faces and places of an era that have long since disappeared.

Best known as Hip Hop’s finest fashion photographer for his blockbuster best-selling monograph, *Back in the Days* (powerHouse Books, 2001), Shabazz revisited his archive and unearthed an extraordinary collection of never-before-published documentary photographs collected for his third powerHouse Books release, *A Time Before Crack*, a visual diary of the streets of New York City from the mid-seventies to the mid-eighties, Shabazz’s distinctive photographs reveal the families, the poses, and the players who made this age extraordinary.

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