

HYPERALLERGIC

Al Loving's Rag Paper Collages from the 1980s Go on View

Spiral Play: Loving in the '80s opens this Saturday at Art + Practice and features 12 of Al Loving's three-dimensional collages.

by Matt Stromberg March 15, 2015



Humbird (1989), mixed media on board, 72 x 100 inches (image courtesy the Estate of Al Loving and Garth Greenan Gallery, New York)

After beginning his career with gestural paintings in the vein of Abstract Expressionism, Al Loving switched gears with his 1969 solo show at the Whitney Museum — the museum's first solo show by an African American artist — showcasing the hard-edged, geometric minimalism he would become well known for. In the decades that followed, Loving explored new directions, creating more organic abstractions from torn and sewn pieces of canvas, trading in a restrained formalism for an unbounded, exuberant aesthetic. *Spiral Play: Loving in the '80s* at Art + Practice features 12 three-dimensional collages created from rag paper, some quite large, that draw on diverse influences, from free jazz to the African American quilting tradition. (Loving's mother and grandmother were both quilters, and he would sit at their feet as a child while they worked.)

This exhibition also marks the first of four curatorial collaborations between Art + Practice and the Baltimore Museum of Art, where the show will travel in October, with the goal of making art accessible to communities historically underserved by museums.