

**Margot
Samel**

HYPEBEAST

Leroy Johnson Redefines Architectural Forms with Mixed-Media Houses

As part of Margot Samel Gallery's 'Leroy Johnson' exhibition.



In an upcoming exhibition at the Margot Samel Gallery, a body of mixed media houses by the late Leroy Johnson will be displayed at the start of 2025. Johnson's works embodied Philadelphia's spirit through evocative mixed-media sculptures crafted from collaged and painted found materials, photography and ceramics.

The houses in Johnson's work transcend their architectural forms, serving as profound symbols of family, culture and resilience. His creations document Philadelphia's transformation, addressing pressing issues such as racism, poverty and gentrification. As described by the gallery, Johnson brought "a documentarian's eye but a poet's gaze" to his art, weaving intricate narratives of shared memory and collective experience through photographs, depictions of gatherings and graffiti-inspired imagery.

Johnson's multifaceted life as a social worker, teacher and community advocate deeply shaped his understanding of Philadelphia's neighborhoods. His assemblages are alive with texture and symbolism, celebrating the resilience of communities while offering a poignant perspective as an African American artist who lived through the civil rights movement. His work stands as a powerful testament to the beauty and strength of marginalized communities, making his sculptures both deeply personal and universally resonant.