



Fritz Bultman: *Untitled*, 1939. Gouache on paper, 11" high.

designs become less traditional – more offhand – with a delightful, almost whimsical approach. Rules and conventions barely peek out from beneath the surface.

FRITZ BULTMAN
“Fritz Bultman: 100 Years”
Octavia Art Gallery

“FRITZ BULTMAN: 100 YEARS” is both a celebration and an important retrospective, with examples of sculptures and his later works utilizing paper collage. The exhibition offered a glimpse of how Bultman’s style and technique developed rapidly and evolved faithfully with the times. As a member of the New York School, with friends and contemporaries such as Robert Motherwell, Willem de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, and Clifford Still, he was quite an important and influential figure in modern American art, in a number of ways, while somehow managing to

remain “behind the scenes.” Even Tennessee Williams was a family friend, and set one of his famous plays at the family’s Garden District home in New Orleans.

One is compelled to look at Bultman’s paintings until there is no time left to do so. The piece included from his *Wave* series — with its large, broad, flowing strokes of cobalt blue over a leathery chocolate background — is a favorite. Cool. Timeless, and unforgettable.

Earlier works on paper and canvas favor heavier sketch-like geometries but make way for ones of more flowing, nuanced forms; his lines, over time, will later transcend, and become a part of the subject themselves. A few of his rare sculptures were also on display, with Rorschach-like effect — raw, powerful, personal explorations. Overall, his enduring palette is bold and rich; with warmly contrasting backgrounds effortlessly giving rise to undulating and overlapping — sensuous — shapes. His latest period using painted paper collage would bring qualities of his earlier and middle periods together with poetry — and grace.