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Frederick Weston

When this Black, queer, H.I.V.-positive artist arrived in New York from Detroit, in 1973, he wanted to become a fashion designer. But the city's culture scene at the time was overwhelmingly white, and Weston—who died in October, at the age of seventy-three—retreated into a world that he could control. Subsisting on very little, and living in S.R.O.s, the artist made intelligent, wry, and wounded collages that expressed what he saw and felt: the ongoing marginalization of men like himself in the larger gay world, where standards of beauty were just as rigid as they were in any heteronormative realm. An important exhibition of Weston's work—by turns poetic and evocative, witty and weary—is on view at Ortuzar Projects. Conceived in collaboration with the artist, it does much to remind us that society's best visual critics often fall through the cracks, and to question why it still takes us so long to recognize them.—*Hilton Als* (ortuzarprojects.com)