

## PRESS RELEASE

University of Maine Museum of Art

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High resolution digital images available upon request

## UMAINE MUSEUM OF ART ANNOUNCES FALL EXHIBITION

### ABE AJAY: CONSTRUCTIONS

October 14 - December 30, 2011

Throughout his prolific career, Abe Ajay (1919-1998) created a stunning assortment of wall-oriented relief sculptures. A self-proclaimed "unrepentant object maker," Ajay often combined found objects, polyester resin, wood, canvas and wire into his mixed media constructions. The artist's work often drew associations to Louise Nevelson's sculptures. The New York Times commented that Ajay's work is "no less idiosyncratic than Nevelson's" and that his sculpture is "as masculine and puritanical as hers is feminine and baroque."

There is great precision and order in these constructions. Art historian Irving Sandler suggested that the works possess a "thoughtfully conceived structure and the fine workmanship of Russian Constructivism." The artist employed earth tone colors ranging from rust-orange to green and would apply a hard-edged linear overlay in bold cerulean blue and yellow. With their meticulous structure, contrasting textures, and repeated elements, Ajay's compositions reveal an abstract and imagined architecture influenced by Spanish and Middle Eastern culture.

Abe Ajay's works are represented in many prestigious collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in NYC, the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in Philadelphia, the Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art in Ridgefield, CT and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in Washington, DC.

Admission to the Museum is FREE in 2011 thanks to Machias Savings Bank in honor of Ted Leonard.

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ABE AJAY (American, 1919-1998)  
*Construction #689*, 1989  
Mixed media

Gift of John & Robin Noyes and Heidi Dickinson



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