Bearden’s small-scale collages owed a lot of its aesthetic and expressive power to the visual language and formal structures of jazz music. In particular, Bearden was drawn to the complex rhythms and syncopations of New Orleans jazz, which he considered to be a form of visual expression and a source of inspiration for his own work.

The rhythms and syncopations of jazz music influenced Bearden’s approach to collage, with the addition of spray paint, Bearden often altered the surfaces of his collages, creating a sense of movement and fluidity. He used spray paint to create new textures and patterns, and to integrate his collages with the surrounding space.

The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington. The program is sponsored in part by Chevy Chase Bank.

For more information, please visit www.nga.gov/programs/film or call 202-789-4995. The gallery is open Monday–Saturday 10:00–5:00, Sunday 11:00–6:00. Hours: Monday–Saturday 10:00–5:00, Sunday 11:00–6:00. Hours: Monday–Saturday 10:00–5:00, Sunday 11:00–6:00.

The exhibition is made possible with generous support from AT&T.
In 1960, Bearden had met Nanette Henderson, and the two later married. In 1963, they moved to an apartment downtown on Canal Street where they lived for the rest of their lives. Harlem scenes remained an important motif in his later works, as evidenced in The Street (Composition for Richard Wright) (fig. 4), one of his earliest collages, for the children's story Li’l Dan, The Drummer Boy: A Civil War Story (fig. 9), was a central motif. He depicted the Harlequin (fig. 10), a traditional figure with a mask and a baton, as part of his palette of papers.

In 1960, Bearden had met Nanette Henderson, and the two later married. In 1963, they moved to an apartment downtown on Canal Street where they lived for the rest of their lives. Harlem scenes remained an important motif in his later works, as evidenced in The Street (Composition for Richard Wright) (fig. 4), one of his earliest collages, for the children's story Li’l Dan, The Drummer Boy: A Civil War Story (fig. 9), was a central motif. He depicted the Harlequin (fig. 10), a traditional figure with a mask and a baton, as part of his palette of papers.

In 1960, Bearden had met Nanette Henderson, and the two later married. In 1963, they moved to an apartment downtown on Canal Street where they lived for the rest of their lives. Harlem scenes remained an important motif in his later works, as evidenced in The Street (Composition for Richard Wright) (fig. 4), one of his earliest collages, for the children's story Li’l Dan, The Drummer Boy: A Civil War Story (fig. 9), was a central motif. He depicted the Harlequin (fig. 10), a traditional figure with a mask and a baton, as part of his palette of papers.