

Artist Resources – Claes Oldenburg (Swedish-American, 1929-2022)

[Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen artist website](#)

[Oldenburg at the Guggenheim](#)

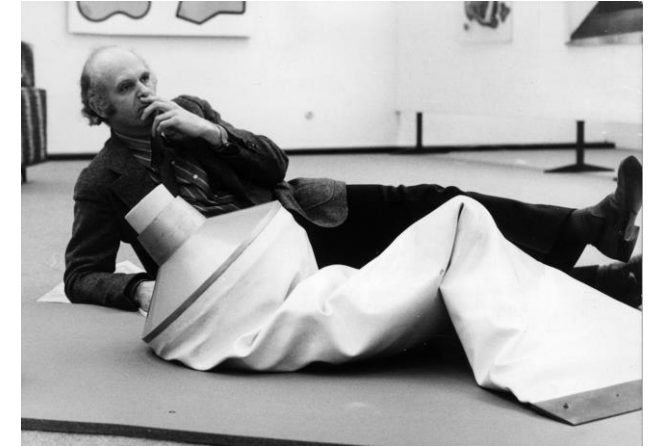
[Oldenburg at the Tate](#)

“I am for an art that is political-erotic-mystical, that does something other than sit on its ass in a museum. I am for an art that grows up not knowing it is art at all, an art given the chance of having a starting point of zero. I am for an art that embroils itself with the everyday crap & still comes out on top...” Read Oldenburg’s [1961 manifesto](#), “I Am For an Art...”

Watch the [1992 documentary](#), *Large Scale Projects: Claes Oldenburg/Coosje van Bruggen* by Lana Jockel and Nicholas Doob.

A 2009 exhibition at the Whitney, [Claes Oldenburg: Early Sculpture, Drawings, and Happenings Films](#) was accompanied by Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen’s (1942-2009) *The Music Room*. [Watch a video](#) about the Whitney’s conservation of Oldenburg’s *Ice Bag- Scale C, 1971*.

The Museum Moderner Kunst and MoMA’s 2009 [exhibition](#) *The Street and The Store/Mouse Museum and Ray Gun Wing* revisited [Oldenburg’s famous works](#) produced in 1960s New York City. Valery Oisteanu wrote about the exhibition for the [Brooklyn Rail](#).



Oldenburg with *Giant Toothpaste Tube* (1964), 1970
Photograph: Keystone/Hulton Archive/Getty Images



Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen
(1942-2009) in their studio with *Standing
Collar with Bow Tie* (1992), 1992
Photograph: Jesse Frohman

Claes Oldenburg: The Sixties brought together 300 pieces of Oldenburg’s early Pop Art works at the [Walker Art Center](#). Watch Oldenburg’s [Opening-Day Talk](#) from 2013.

Watch “[Claes Oldenburg: Spirit of the Monument](#),” a lecture given by the artist at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden in 2014.

Read Randy Kennedy’s 2017 [New York Times article](#), “Claes Oldenburg Is (Still) Changing What Art Looks Like” as the artist approached his 90th birthday.

Oldenburg collaborated with his wife, curator and writer Coosje van Bruggen, for much of his career. Read The Vail Daily’s [three-part series](#) on Claes and Coosje, “Extremely Public Art in Vail.”

Read about the donation of [Oldenburg and van Bruggen’s entire archive](#) to the Getty Research Institute in 2019.

Pace Gallery installed [Claes & Coosje: A Duet](#) in 2021. [Watch a video](#) about the artists’ three decades of work together and [read an article](#) in Ocula Magazine about their shared history.

Listen to [The Lonely Palette’s](#) podcast episode on Oldenburg’s [Giant Toothpaste Tube \(1964\)](#).

Claes Oldenburg (Swedish-American, 1929-2022) and Coosje van Bruggen (Dutch-American, 1942-2009)

Plantoir, Red (Mid-scale), 2001-2021

Painted aluminum, stainless steel, fiber reinforced polymer

Private Collection; L2025:30.1

Claes Oldenburg was a prominent figure in the Pop Art movement when he met Coosje van Bruggen, who was working as a curator at Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum. The two married in 1977, and their partnership soon extended to large-scale sculptural collaborations of familiar, everyday objects. **Plantoir, Red (Mid-scale)** augments a simple gardening tool to monumental scale, planted into its soil as if it fell from the sky. A trowel was the first sculpture the two artists collaborated on in the 1970s, and it remained a favorite subject throughout their careers.

On view April 7 – July 11, 2025





Claes Oldenburg (Swedish-American, 1929-2022) and Coosje van Bruggen (Dutch-American, 1942-2009)

Leaning Clarinet, 2006

Aluminum painted with acrylic polyurethane

Private Collection; L2024:33.1

Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen met in 1971, when van Bruggen was a curator at Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum and Oldenburg was a prominent figure in the Pop Art movement. The two married in 1977, and their partnership soon extended to large-scale sculptural collaborations. **Leaning Clarinet** is a whimsical depiction of the wind instrument in bright blue, with its keys flying up in musical motion. The sculpture was created for the artists' series *The Music Room* (1992-2006) that realized musical technique, scale, and melody in physical form.

On view October 30, 2024 – February 2, 2025

Claes Oldenburg (Swedish-American, 1929-2022) and Coosje van Bruggen (Dutch-American, 1942-2009)

Dropped Bouquet, 2021

Painted aluminum

Private Collection; L2021:101.1

Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen met in 1971, when van Bruggen was a curator at Amsterdam’s Stedelijk Museum and Oldenburg was a prominent figure in the Pop Art movement. The two married in 1977, and their partnership soon extended to large-scale sculptural collaborations of familiar, everyday objects. **Dropped Bouquet** is a realization of their final work together – it was initially conceived for the Indianapolis Museum of Art sculpture garden but never came to fruition there. The scattered bunch of bright aluminum flowers was finally produced in 2021 for an exhibition at New York’s Pace Gallery entitled *Claes & Coosje: A Duet*. In response, their daughter, Maartje, said: “It is personally meaningful to realize **Dropped Bouquet** today to bring Coosje into a present with growing awareness of and appreciation for the too often minimized contributions of women.”

On view August 11 – November 14, 2021

