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

Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen artist website  Oldenburg at the Guggehneim  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.


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, b. 1954) 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*