

Claes Oldenburg

Quotes

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Drawing, Pops, Real, School, Abstract, Ice Cream, Shapes, Kids, Remember,
Children*

Everything I do is completely original-I made it up when I was a kid.

~Claes Oldenburg

I'm in favor of an art that does something other than just sit on its ass in a museum.

~Claes Oldenburg

I am for an art that takes its form from the lines of life itself, that twists and extends and accumulates and spits and drips, and is heavy and coarse and blunt and sweet and stupid as life itself.

~Claes Oldenburg

I am for an art that grows up not knowing it is art at all.

~Claes Oldenburg

My rule was not to paint things as they were. I wasn't copying; I was remaking them as my own.

~Claes Oldenburg

The main reason for the colossal objects is the obvious one, to expand and intensify the presence of the vessel - the object.

~Claes Oldenburg

Art is a technique of communication. The image is the most complete technique of all communication.

~Claes Oldenburg

For a thorough use of ice cream cones, buy two; eat one and drop the other.

~Claes Oldenburg

I am for an art that tells you the time of day, or where such and such a street is. I am for an art that helps old ladies across the street.

~Claes Oldenburg

If I didn't think what I was doing had something to do with enlarging the boundaries of art, I wouldn't go on doing it.

~Claes Oldenburg

I am for the art of underwear and the art of taxicabs. I am for the art of ice cream cones dropped on concrete.

~Claes Oldenburg

Mine was not pop art. I maybe started with a subject, but I changed the subject.

~Claes Oldenburg

Chicago has a strange metaphysical elegance of death about it.

~Claes Oldenburg

I don't do abstract art because I don't find it as interesting as I do subjects and depictions.

~Claes Oldenburg

When you're working with an object, you can put in almost anything you want, you can make it abstract.

~Claes Oldenburg

I am for an art of things lost or thrown away. . . I am for an art that one smokes like a cigarette. . . I am for an art that flutters like a flag.

~Claes Oldenburg

The right angle is one of the world's basic shapes.

~Claes Oldenburg

Painting, especially much better than words, allows oneself to express the various stages of thought, including the deeper levels, the underground stages of the mental process.

~Claes Oldenburg

Of course, the '60s was a study in decadence. Everything just got worse and worse, and at the end of the '60s, everything was so horrible that people were killing each other.

~Claes Oldenburg

Actually, New York is great for playing around. I made a lot of studies for New York-a big vacuum cleaner lying on the Battery in Manhattan.

~Claes Oldenburg

The sexual is part of everything, and it's highly formalized. I hadn't done figure for a long time. And I thought to myself, "Why not the erotic figure?"

~Claes Oldenburg

Judson Church was a very important place because they believed in art. They also took care of drug addicts. Without the Judson, nothing could have happened.

~Claes Oldenburg

All the fun is locking horns with impossibilities.

~Claes Oldenburg

The art world was very small and the people got together at parties. There was less commercialism.

~Claes Oldenburg

I think the Freudian impulse is in everything, so I just accept it. I don't always believe what Freud is saying but it sounds like fun.

~Claes Oldenburg

My work doesn't have the same rules as, say, Andy [Warhol]'s work. But it's gathered together for the simple reason that we all worked with the images and objects around us.

~Claes Oldenburg

I had no idea what art was. There was one art class in high school, but it didn't make a big impression on me. Then I went to college and thought I'd become a writer.

~Claes Oldenburg

I was very happy to be living in New York at that time, more than in the present time. Now it's all commerce.

~Claes Oldenburg

Duchamp is known for calling a thing art, rather than making it. A lot of that is picked up in pop art, too.

~Claes Oldenburg

My mother warned me to avoid things colored red.

~Claes Oldenburg

I always knew America was all about guns. You go to the movies as a kid, everybody's got a gun.

~Claes Oldenburg

The thing about the ray gun is, you pick up anything you see on the street that's the shape of a gun.

~Claes Oldenburg

I started to draw buildings. I called them Proposed Colossal Monuments - they weren't for real, not for actual building. It was more a critique of architecture.

~Claes Oldenburg

There's always been a potential erotic possibility with objects.

~Claes Oldenburg

I had, over the years, collected things, small things, as people do, and I had put them all together and showed them in what became a building

in the form of the Geometric Mouse.

~Claes Oldenburg

I went back to the Art Institute, then spent the summer at the Ox-Bow School in Saugatuck, Michigan. That's what really awakened me. I made a lot of oil paintings and my first performance.

~Claes Oldenburg

You can take an object and simply put anything you want in that object, and I accessed that partly through Freudian ideas.

~Claes Oldenburg

I'm always careful to say that I changed everything I found.

~Claes Oldenburg

In 1958 I finally found a large enough apartment on the Lower East Side, where I reverted to figure painting. I drew and painted quite a lot of figures and nudes. People would come and pose for me.

~Claes Oldenburg

Ox-Bow was a very free place, very open. You could do whatever you wanted to do.

~Claes Oldenburg

I just started to do my own thing for about a year and a half, and I worked in the evening selling phonograph records. Then I said to myself, "I'm afraid I have to go to New York after all."

~Claes Oldenburg

I knew I wasn't that good a writer, and all I could remember was that I could draw. I'm better at drawing than I am at writing.

~Claes Oldenburg

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