

THE BRANT FOUNDATION
ART STUDY CENTER

THIRD DIMENSION: FOUND OBJECTS IN ART
TEACHER GUIDE

Grades: 6-12

This guide is designed to be used in conjunction with a visit to The Brant Foundation Art Study Center or in the classroom alongside the images provided. The suggested projects can be catered to all age groups.



MISSION

The Brant Foundation Art Study Center, located in Greenwich and New York, has a mission to promote education and appreciation of contemporary art and design, by making works available to institutions and individuals for scholarly study and examination. The Brant Foundation Art Study Center presents long-term exhibitions and extensive public programming for individuals of all ages.

The Brant Foundation strives to uphold its objective of art education advocacy by developing programs tailored to specific grade levels. These programs allow students to learn and work in a contemporary art institution through lessons designed to excite and inspire. More explicitly, because our K-12 programs are particular to individual classrooms, each group's current in-school curriculum is integrated into the docent-led tour and subsequent art project – making for a highly personalized, unique educational experience. Through immersive learning, the Foundation's activities encourage the exploration and exchange of ideas in order to develop deeper understandings of contemporary art and to help navigate today's highly visual society.



ARTISTS TO EXPLORE

Carl Andre

Andy Warhol

Karen Kilimnik

John Chamberlain

Dan Flavin

INTRODUCTION

[THIRD DIMENSION: Works from The Brant Foundation](#) features twenty-five artists and over fifty artworks, all of which incorporate three-dimensional elements, allowing students to explore different styles in medium, process, and technique. This guide focuses on artists in the exhibition who transform everyday objects into art.

OBJECTIVES

- Introduce students to the artists and works in the exhibition
- Explore how artists take different approaches to using everyday objects in their practice
- Develop tools to respond to challenging works of art and consider their own definitions of what art is
- Students discuss the difference between *readymades* and the transformation of an everyday object into a work of art

KEY TERMS

medium, Minimalism, readymade object, Pop Art, Abstract Expressionism, critic, appropriation, Installation Art, scatter art

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

1. What materials or **mediums** can a work of art be made of?
2. What characteristics does a work of art have?
3. How do you feel knowing anything you see in everyday life can be art?
4. What is the purpose of using pre-made items in art?



ABOUT THE ARTISTS

CARL ANDRE is an American Conceptual artist known for his Minimalist sculptures and installations. His experience working blue collar jobs and the aesthetics of industrial design have had a deep impact on his art, and along with Sol Lewitt and Donald Judd, Andre helped define the early Minimalist movement. His straightforward arrangements of factory-cut wood, bricks, and other raw materials changed the framework of how sculpture is seen and made today. “Art is the exclusion of the unnecessary,” he once declared. Born on September 16, 1935 in Quincy, MA, he went on to study at the Phillips Academy in Andover, MA where he met and befriended the artist Frank Stella¹.

ANDY WARHOL remains one of the most influential figures in contemporary art and culture. Warhol’s life and work inspires creative thinkers worldwide thanks to his enduring imagery, his artfully cultivated celebrity, and the ongoing research of dedicated scholars. His impact as an artist is far deeper and greater than his one prescient observation that “everyone will be world famous for fifteen minutes.” His omnivorous curiosity resulted in an enormous body of work that spanned every available medium and most importantly contributed to the collapse of boundaries between high and low culture².

KAREN KILIMNIK Drawing correspondences between romantic tradition and consumer culture, Karen Kilimnik’s work brings a haunting and contrary sense of beauty to contemporary art. The world of the ballet and childhood, romantic painting and pop music, icons of film and fashion, signs of witchcraft, time-travel, and murder comprise an imagery that has been culled from the fairytale and recent past into an unsettling present. In a world where the forces of nature, youth, and terror have taken awesome hold, Kilimnik’s art rematerializes a quest for the romantic sublime.³

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN (American, 1927–2011) is considered one of the most important American Post-War sculptors, known for his intuitive compilations of interlocking metals and use of industrial media. The artist grew up in Chicago, IL, before serving in the United States navy from 1943 to 1946. After serving, he attended the Art Institute of Chicago between 1951 and 1952, where he began making welded sculptures, drawing influence from sculptor David Smith. Following his stay in Chicago, he enrolled in Black Mountain College in 1955, where he studied and taught for two years. Chamberlain moved to New York immediately afterward. At that time, he began including car parts into his work, crushing and welding pieces together to create abstract clusters⁴.

DAN FLAVIN (1933-1996) produced a singularly consistent and prodigious body of work that utilized commercially available fluorescent lamps to create installations (or “situations,” as he preferred to call them) of light and color. Through these light constructions, Flavin was able to establish and redefine space⁵.

¹ <http://www.artnet.com/artists/carl-andre/>

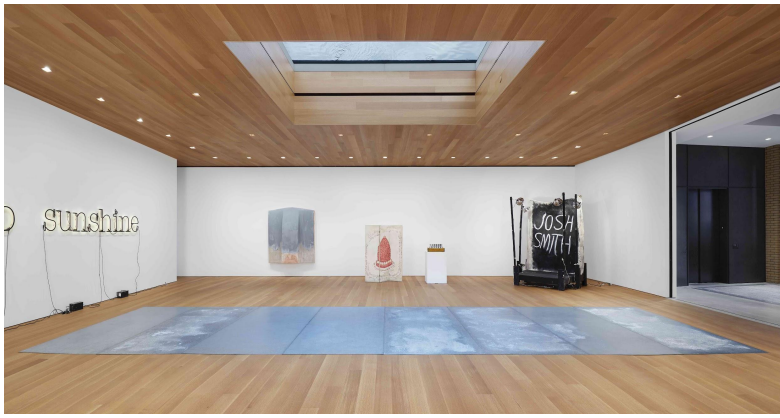
² <https://warholfoundation.org/legacy/biography.html>

³ <https://www.303gallery.com/artists/karen-kilimnik/biography>

⁴ <http://www.artnet.com/artists/john-chamberlain/biography>

⁵ <https://www.davidzwirner.com/artists/dan-flavin/biography>





CARL ANDRE, *8 Shoeing Smith*, Australia (1973)

Galvanized steel sheet; 8 units

Each: 48 x 96 in., Overall: 96 x 384 in.

Carl Andre is a pioneering sculptor in the **Minimalism** art movement. He has famously quoted “art is the exclusion of the unnecessary,” and this statement rings true throughout his artistic career. Andre ignored traditional means of sculpture, such as carving or modeling. Instead, Andre was interested in sorting and placing his materials. Andre had experience in working at the Pennsylvania Railroad between 1960 and 1964, which exposed Andre to industrial design and inspired him to make works that used pre-made metals such as steel, copper, zinc and lead. Therefore, Andre is making a connection between his own life experiences and the materials he uses. These materials would be considered found/premade, also known as a **readymade object**.

From 1966 to present times, Andre considered his horizontal ground works as a manifestation of “place” or “sculpture as place,” allowing the mediums he used to speak about material, structure, and site. Building upon this idea, the format of Andre’s sculptures can be changed in any way once they are purchased and re-displayed in a different environment. This piece consists of eight sheets of galvanized steel with no fixatives in place. Andre’s work invites viewers to walk upon his sculptures because it is an environment as well as an artwork. This level of sensory engagement makes the viewer question the relationship with sculpture and their traditional notion of interacting with a work of art.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What is **Minimalism**?
- How does the color, shape, materials, and composition of the work relate to **Minimalism**?
- Why would the artist want to make a work of art like this?
- What feelings does this artwork convey?
- Do you like this artwork? Why or why not?





ANDY WARHOL, *Del Monte Peach Halves, Heinz Tomato Ketchup Box, Brillo Soap Pads Box, Campbell's Tomato Juice Box, Kellogg's Cornflakes Box* (1964)

ASK: Does anyone know what Pop art is?

In the mid-1960's, Warhol created some of his most canonical and recognizable artworks that carried his consumer-product imagery into sculpture and helped mark the era of **Pop Art**. Mimicking the industrial modes of an assembly line, Warhol employed carpenters to create these boxes from plywood in the identical sizes as their supermarket counterparts. Once constructed, Warhol and his assistants hand painted and silkscreened the product logos in the exact way they are presented and sold. The likeness of Warhol's boxes to the supermarket versions were so precise that it was difficult to differentiate between the artwork and the commercial packaging of the actual product.

It has often been said art mirrors life and Warhol takes this saying quite literally by taking mundane objects from everyday life and elevating their status to something that can be appreciated. By creating these works, Warhol is challenging the viewer by making them question, what is art? When these works debuted, **critics** were confused and outraged, dubbing his work as classless. During this time **Abstract Expressionism** dominated the art scene, paintings created through bold colors, gestural brushstrokes and raw emotion. Pop art was extremely different with its slick **appropriation** of advertisements and consumer culture. Through appropriating these supermarket items, Warhol is conjuring the idealized feeling of home and family in America, while also downplaying originality in art.⁶

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What is **appropriation**?
- What is a **critic**?
- How do we judge artwork to be good or bad?
- If you were a critic, what would you say about this work? Why?
- Warhol said that "everyone is an artist." Do you agree or disagree? Why?⁷

⁶ David Joselit, *American Art Since 1945* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2003).

⁷ Andy Warhol, quoted in *Pop Art* (London: Taschen, 2003).





ANDY WARHOL, *You're In* (1967)
 Spray paint on twenty-four Coca-Cola bottles in painted crate
 8 ½ x 18 x 11 in.

Pop artists looked for inspiration in the world around them. In the beginning of Warhol's career, popular mass-produced food items represented most of his artwork's subject matter, but they were also an important focal point in American society through the rise of advertisements, marketing, and mass media. Warhol started to make paintings of Coke bottles in the early 1960's and in 1967, the artist began to use actual soda bottles, which he spray painted silver and filled with perfume.

The utilization of Coca-Cola as his subject matter was different from what he did with the Brillo Boxes because it is not like every other commodity, the Coke brand possesses the representation of national identity, an icon of America.⁸

"What's great about this country is that America started the tradition where the richest consumers buy essentially the same things as the poorest. You can be watching TV and see Coca-Cola, and you can know that the President drinks Coke, Liz Taylor drinks Coke, and just think, you can drink Coke, too."

-Andy Warhol

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What does the color silver make you think of?
- Why did Warhol spray paint the bottles this color?
- How did Warhol make these ordinary bottles art?
- Is this work of art a **readymade** object? Why or why not?
- Pop Art is said to collapse 'high' art into 'low' art. How does Warhol do this?
- Why do you think Warhol looks at Coke as a symbol of national identity?

⁸ *Ibid.*





KAREN KILIMNIK, *Switzerland, the Pink Panther & Peter Sellars & Boris & Natasha & Gelsey Kirkland in Siberia* (1991)

LET'S LOOK: Take a few minutes to view this work and the materials used.

ASK: Does anyone know what **installation art** is?

Karen Kilimnik's **installation art** employs a mixture of imagery, objects, and nostalgia and belongs to the **scatter art** movement. In her installations, the artist presents items from pop culture with a whimsical, fairy tale twist that fuels the imagination of the viewer, allowing them to create their own narrative based on the connections they make with the objects she uses. This piece is made from several **readymade objects**. The contents are organized thematically, but are meant to display the interplay between art, popular culture, and the romanticism of century old art.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What characteristics of art do you see within this work, if any?
- What **readymade objects** do you see?
- Which of these are a part of popular culture?
- Where might this scene take place-season, location? What clues tell you so?
- Why do you think the artist placed all these objects and materials together?
- If you were to create a narrative behind this work, what would it be?
- In what ways is this work different from Carl Andre's and Andy Warhol's? How is it similar?





JOHN CHAMBERLAIN, *Fuccimanooli* (1990)
Painted and stainless steel
147 x 92 ½ x 72 ½ in.

John Chamberlain is best known for his sculptures created from various parts of old automobiles that have been crushed and welded together. Chamberlain only uses certain car parts; fenders, bumpers, or the chassis—the load bearing framework of car. His artworks are categorized as Abstract Expressionist sculptures due to their bold colors, strong energy, and balance of elegance with fierceness. Chamberlain keeps the original paint from the cars he finds and adds stencils, drips, splattered paint, and brushstrokes of his own. The combined palettes used in *Fuccimanooli* decreases the sense of weight and amplifies the feeling of movement, which is further emphasized by the bands of metal that twist, cascade, and ribbon down from the top. When discussing his sculptures, Chamberlain said, “It can’t just be a blob sitting there. It should be doing something.”⁹ Chamberlain has often compared his work to the dancing of Fred Astaire and has referenced his art as having a certain stance, which all connect to the idea of movement.¹⁰

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- What words would you use to describe this work?
- Does this sculpture contain any **readymade objects**? If so, what are they?
- What movement or action does the sculpture seem to have?
- What does this sculpture make you think of?
- How does the **medium** of this sculpture relate to Andy Warhol’s medium from *You’re In*?
- What do you think is the meaning of the work’s title, *Fuccimanooli*?

⁹ David J. Getsy, *John Chamberlain’s Pliability: The New Monumental Aluminum Works* (London: Burlington Magazine, 2011), page 743.

¹⁰ Donna De Salvo, Susan Davidson, Dave Hickey, Helen Hsu, Adrian Kohn, Don Quaintance, Charles Ray. *John Chamberlain: Changes* (NYC: Guggenheim Publications, 2012)





DAN FLAVIN, *alternate diagonals of March 2, 1964 (to Don Judd)* (1964)
Daylight fluorescent light
12 ft. diagonal

In 1963, Flavin began to work with fluorescent tubes, his signature medium. Like many artists in this exhibition, Flavin used commercially made objects to explore the potential of banal material. The colors and lengths of all the fluorescent tubes Flavin used for his work were determined by what was available in stores at that time. Working with this prefabricated medium enabled Flavin to focus on color and light itself, and how it would transform or redefine the exhibition space. Flavin did not consider his works to be sculptures, because they consist not only of the fluorescent tube, but also of the space illuminated by the light. Instead, he referred to his work as 'situations.'¹¹

"One might not think of light as a matter of fact, but I do. And it is...as plain and open and direct an art as you will ever find."-Dan Flavin

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- Is this a **readymade object**? Why or why not?
- Do we think the artist has modified this object in any way or has he kept the tubes as is when he purchased them?
- How has the artist transformed this object into a work of art?
- What do you think the artist's intentions are in making this work?
- Would we consider this **installation art**? Why or why not?
- How does Flavin's work relate to Carl Andre's work?

¹¹ Rainer Fuchs, Karola Kraus, Stefan Neuner, Juliane Rebentisch, Roland Wäspe, *Dan Flavin* (Berlin: Hatje Cantz, 2013).



PROJECT

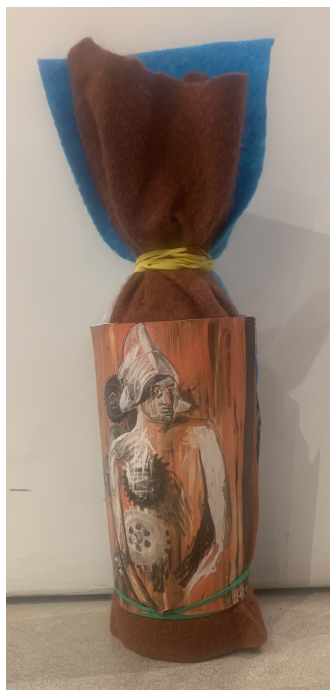
Just as these artists transform everyday objects into works of art, students will transform their own found objects into unique sculptures. Each student will modify their object(s) while maintaining its recognizable form.

MATERIALS

- Found objects (e.g. plastic bottles, toys, books, hangers, stuffed animals, shoes, plastic silverware, etc.)
- Various materials (e.g. magazines, pipe cleaners, cellophane, bandages, felt, rubber bands)
- Adhesives: glue and/or clear tape

ACTIVITY

1. Have students select an everyday object from home. It is recommended to use items larger than six inches.
2. Students will be instructed to wrap and/or cover their object with materials that create a dialogue with the object or conveys a message they would like to get across. The original object's form must remain evident.
3. When completed, students will talk about their found object artwork.



Example Artwork: made from a water bottle, felt, rubber bands, magazine clippings



QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What type of object did you use? Why?
2. How did you transform your object?
3. What is the message you are trying to convey? How did you use the art materials to do this?

EXHIBITION REFLECTION

1. What did you learn from the artworks you saw today?
2. What artworks intrigued you the most? Why?
3. Did any of the artworks change your ideas about what art is?

KEY TERMS

Medium: Refers to the materials used to create an artwork.

Minimalism: An art movement beginning in the 1960's that focused more on the meaning and experience of art through simple forms, uniformed elements, and repetition rather than the traditional aesthetics of painting and sculpture.

Readymade Object: A term used to describe an industrial or mass produced object exhibited as an artwork with a whole new context and meaning that differs from its original function.

Pop Art: An art movement that began in the 1950's and 1960's, where artists drew inspiration from sources of popular and commercial culture.

Abstract Expressionism: An art movement of the mid-20th-century that was primarily concerned with the spontaneous assertion of the individual through the act of painting. Generally, Abstract Expressionist art is without recognizable figures or images.

Critic: a person who expresses an opinion or judgement of something

Appropriation: Borrowing images or objects to make something new.

Installation Art: An art movement that emerged in the 1960's and is characterized by art works which are made for a specific space and only exist for the duration of its display.

Scatter Art: This style of art surfaced in the 1980's and is a variation of installation art, consisting of randomly collected materials that have aesthetic meaning only by virtue of their chance arrangement.

LEARNING STANDARDS

The project and lesson within this teacher guide adhere to the national and state learning standards for the arts.

New York State P-12 Common Core Learning Standards in the Arts

<http://www.nysed.gov/curriculum-instruction/arts>

New York City Department of Education's Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Arts

<https://www.weteachnyc.org/resources/resource/visual-arts-blueprint-for-teaching-and-learning-1/>



NATIONAL CORE ART STANDARDS (VISUAL ARTS)

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work

6TH VA:Cr1.1.6a Combine concepts collaboratively to generate innovative ideas for creating art.

6TH VA:Cr1.2.6a Formulate an artistic investigation of personally relevant content for creating art.

7TH VA:Cr1.1.7a Apply methods to overcome creative blocks.

7TH VA:Cr1.2.7a Develop criteria to guide making a work of art or design to meet an identified goal.

8TH VA:Cr1.1.8a Document early stages of the creative process visually and/or verbally in traditional or new media.

8TH VA:Cr1.2.8a Collaboratively shape an artistic investigation of an aspect of present day life using a contemporary practice of art and design.

HS Proficient VA:Cr1.1.1a Use multiple approaches to begin creative endeavors.

HS Proficient VA:Cr1.2.1a Shape an artistic investigation of an aspect of present day life using a contemporary practice of art or design.

HS Accomplished VA:Cr1.1.1a Individually or collaboratively formulate new creative problems based on student's existing artwork.

HS Accomplished VA:Cr1.2.1a Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan works of art and design.

HS Advanced VA:Cr1.1.1a Visualize and hypothesize to generate plans for ideas and directions for creating art and design that can affect social change.

HS Advanced VA:Cr1.2.1a Choose from a range of materials and methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices, following or breaking established conventions, to plan the making of multiple works of art and design based on a theme, idea, or concept.

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. (6TH-Advanced)

6TH VA:Cr2.1.6a Demonstrate openness in trying new ideas, materials, methods, and approaches in making works of art and design.

6TH VA:Cr2.3.6a Design or redesign objects, places, or systems that meet the identified needs of diverse users.

7TH VA:Cr2.1.7a Demonstrate persistence in developing skills with various materials, methods, and approaches in creating works of art or design.

7TH VA:Cr2.3.7a Apply visual organizational strategies to design and produce a work of art, design, or media that clearly communicates information or ideas.

8TH VA:Cr2.1.8a Demonstrate willingness to experiment, innovate, and take risks to pursue ideas, forms, and meanings that emerge in the process of artmaking or designing.

8TH VA:Cr2.3.8a Select, organize, and design images and words to make visually clear and compelling presentations.

HS Proficient VA:Cr2.1.1a Engage in making a work of art or design without having a preconceived plan.

HS Proficient VA:Cr2.3.1a Collaboratively develop a proposal for an installation, artwork, or space design that transforms the perception and experience of a particular place.

HS Accomplished VA:Cr2.1.1a Through experimentation, practice, and persistence, demonstrate acquisition of skills and knowledge in a chosen art form.

HS Accomplished VA:Cr2.3.1a Redesign an object, system, place, or design in response to contemporary issues.

HS Advanced VA:Cr2.1.1a Experiment, plan, and make multiple works of art and design that explore a personally meaningful theme, idea, or concept.

HS Advanced VA:Cr2.3.1a Demonstrate in works of art or design how visual and material culture defines, shapes, enhances, inhibits, and/or empowers people's lives.

Anchor Standard 3: Refine and complete artistic work.



6TH VA:Cr3.1.6a-HS Proficient VA:Cr3.1.Ia

Anchor Standard 4: Select, analyze, & interpret artistic work for presentation.

8TH VA:Pr4.1.8a-HS Advanced VA:Pr4.1.IIIa

Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

6TH VA:Pr5.1.6a-HS Proficient VA:Pr5.1.Ia Analyze and evaluate the reasons and ways an exhibition is presented.

Anchor Standard 6: Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.

6TH VA:Pr6.1.6a-HS Accomplished VA:Pr6.1.IIa

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

6TH VA:Re.7.1.6a-HS Advanced VA:Re.7.1.IIIa

Anchor Standard 8: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.

6TH VA:Re8.1.6a-HS Advanced VA:Re8.1.IIIa

Anchor Standard 9: Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.

6TH VA:Re9.1.6a-HS Advanced VA:Re9.1.IIIa

Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

6TH VA:Cn10.1.6a-HS Advanced VA:Cn10.1.IIIa

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

6TH VA:Cn11.1.6a-HS Advanced VA:Cn11.1.IIIa

COMMON CORE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1-CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.2-CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.2

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.3-CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.3

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.4-CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.5-CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.5

