

PAULA COOPER GALLERY

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CLAES OLDENBURG & COOSJE VAN BRUGGEN

THINGS AROUND THE HOUSE

534 W 21st Street

November 7 – December 19, 2015

Opening reception: November 12, 6 – 8 pm

NEW YORK—*Things Around the House*, an exhibition of works by Claes Oldenburg and Coosje van Bruggen, will be on view at Paula Cooper Gallery from November 7 through December 12. The exhibition includes nearly 100 works from the house and studio where Oldenburg has lived since 1971 and which he shared with his wife and partner Coosje van Bruggen from 1976 until her passing in 2009. By offering an intimate look at works that stayed on with the artists, the exhibition presents a unique view into a creative practice whose end Oldenburg has described as “developing a language of both exterior and interior life, in one expression.”

Embracing what he calls “the poetry of everywhere,” Claes Oldenburg reimagines commonplace objects in distorted scale, materiality and hue. His exaggerated forms breathe vitality and tactile lyricism into ubiquitous or overlooked articles. The works on view in *Things Around the House* render fantastic or unfamiliar subjects that are usually prosaic and mundane.

The exhibition also illuminates the artist’s cumulative approach to art making. His engagement with objects through sketches, writings, models and drawings is a constant process over decade-long periods of coexistence. The artist asserts: “Process is what keeps a thing alive, one thing leads to another. One has to do more to it – intensify color, play with material and scale, subject the form to gravity, make it collide with another object, turn it upside down or bury it halfway into the ground - so that it opens up multiple associations.”

Claes Oldenburg was born in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1929. He attended Yale University (1946-1950) as well as The Art Institute of Chicago before moving to New York City in 1956. The artist had his first one-person exhibition at the Judson Gallery, New York, in 1959 followed by shows at the Moderna Museet, Stockholm (1966) and the Museum of Modern Art, New York (1969). *Claes Oldenburg: An Anthology* opened at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. in 1995 and traveled to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Kunst-und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn; and the Hayward Gallery, London. In 2002 the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York held a major exhibit of Oldenburg’s drawings; the same year, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York featured a selection of Oldenburg and van Bruggen’s sculptures on the roof of the museum. *Claes Oldenburg: The Sixties* opened at the Museum moderner Kunst Stiftung Ludwig Wien in 2012 and traveled to the Museum Ludwig, Cologne; the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. Oldenburg has been honored with numerous awards including the Wolf Prize in Arts (1989) and the National Medal of Arts (2000). He lives and works in New York City.

Coosje van Bruggen was born in Groningen, the Netherlands in 1942. She received a master’s degree in art history from the University of Groningen. From 1967 to 1971 she worked in the curatorial department of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam and was co-editor of the Sonsbeek 71 catalogue. Van Bruggen was a member of the selection committee for Documenta 7 in Kassel, Germany (1982), a contributor to Artforum (1983–88) and Senior Critic in the Department of Sculpture at Yale University School of Art (1996–97). She has also authored books on Claes Oldenburg’s early work as well as on John Baldessari, Hanne Darboven, Bruce Nauman and the architect Frank O. Gehry. Van Bruggen’s first collaboration with Claes Oldenburg was in 1976 on

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Trowel / located in the sculpture garden of the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo, the Netherlands. In 1978 van Bruggen moved to New York, where she continued to work with Oldenburg, creating large-scale, site-specific works in urban settings. Their collaboration has extended to include smaller-scale park and garden sculptures as well as indoor installations. Van Bruggen passed away in Los Angeles in 2009.

There will be a reception for the artist on November 12, 6pm-8pm.