



Claes Oldenburg *Proposal for Colossal Structure in the Form of a Sink Faucet for Lake Union, Seattle, Washington 1972*

**City
Gallery
Wellington**
Te Whare Toi

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Demented Architecture

About the Exhibition

Demented Architecture brings together work by contemporary artists that explores the role of architecture and the mythology of the architect from a contemporary art perspective. The exhibition includes video, drawings, prints and sculpture from around the world. Represented in the show are Olafur Eliasson, Edgar Roy Brewster, Brodsky and Utkin, Jasmina Cibic, Henry Coombes, Zbigniew Libera, Kirsty Lillico and Claes Oldenburg.

Selected works



Olafur Eliasson *The Cubic Structural Evolution Project* 2004

The Cubic Structural Evolution Project consists of thousands of pieces of white Lego laid out on a large table. The audience is invited to 'become' an architect and participate in the work's construction, modification, destruction and re-construction. Over time, structures emerge from the rubble and fall back into it, suggesting a city in constant renewal and transformation. More than a simple invitation to play, Eliasson explores the power of architecture to determine experience and maintain social order.

Olafur Eliasson (b. 1967) is a Danish/Icelandic artist who lives in Copenhagen and Berlin, where he oversees Studio Olafur Eliasson—a 90-strong team that includes architects, engineers, art historians and assistants. Since the mid-1990s, Eliasson has realised numerous major exhibitions and projects around the world, including *The Weather Project* at Tate Modern's Turbine Hall, and *The Blind Pavilion* at the 50th Venice Biennale, both 2003.

Find out more about Eliasson's work by visiting his website <http://www.olafureliasson.net/>

Read an article in which Olafur Eliasson discusses how urban design impacts our psyche. <http://www.fastcodesign.com/3048184/slicker-city/artist-olafur-eliasson-on-how-urban-design-impacts-our-psyche>



Kirsty Lillico *Machine for Living* 2013

Kirsty Lillico makes soft sculptures that parody the utopian visions of modernist architects. Floor plans of brutalist buildings are cut into pieces of carpet salvaged from skip-bins and hung limply from the Gallery wall. The artist uses the materials and forms of building and construction to upset the ways architecture conventionally works. She alters relationships between floor and wall, interior and exterior, structure and decoration, form and function.

Read an article in which Kirsty Lillico discusses her exhibition

This Used to be the Future <http://www.blindside.org.au/portfolio-item/11-28-mar-2015-this-used-to-be-the-future-kirsty-lillico/>.

Further Information

Visit the City Gallery website for more information about the exhibition <http://citygallery.org.nz/exhibitions/demented-architecture>

Read the exhibition catalogue *Demented Architecture* available from the City Gallery bookshop.

Pre/Post visit suggestions

1. Colossal structures

Think about the relationship between art and architecture using the work of Claes Oldenburg as a starting point:



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A pop artist, Claes Oldenburg made sculptural versions of everyday objects, often ludicrously enlarged. These eventually became proposals for 'colossal monuments'. This lithograph depicts a proposal for an unrealised Civic Cathedral in Seattle in the shape of a tap fed by a hand crank that both extracts and shoots water back into Lake Union.

Look and discuss

- What can you see?
- Describe every part of the picture – what you notice about the colours, shapes, style, mood etc?
- What does it remind you of?
- Read the title of this artwork. What does the word 'colossal' mean?
- If you were to add some people into the picture how big would they be?
- Imagine 'pressing play' to bring this picture to life. What would you see? What would you hear?
- This building was designed by artist Claes Oldenburg. What is the difference between an artist and an architect?
- Imagine if all buildings were designed by artists not architects. How might our built environments look and function differently? Would you like to live a city built by artists? Why or why not?

Explore

Research the work of Claes Oldenburg online. Find examples of his sculptures of oversized everyday objects. Look at the binocular shaped building made in collaboration with Coosje van Bruggen and architect Frank Gehry.

Create

Redesign your school as a colossal structure. What enormous everyday object would you like to work and play inside? How might the structure look and function on the inside? How would this affect your learning? Create models of your proposed structures and have a class exhibition.

2. Slot Shelters

During your gallery visit students will experiment with slotted cards to create modular constructions.

Find out more about *House of Cards* - the construction cards designed by Ray and Charles Eames.

Extend your learning by using the lesson plans and resources of the *Seeking Shelter Design Challenge*, in which students creatively re-imagine bus stop shelters to serve broader community and environmental needs. <http://www.slotshelters.com/>

<http://www.slotshelters.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/Lesson-Plan-for-Building-Models-with-Slotted-Cards.pdf>

3. Te Ao Maori

Consider the relationship between art and architecture from both Western and Maori perspectives.

Learn about the structure of a whare tipuna, and the role of this in Te Ao Maori as the body of an ancestor.

Learn the names of the parts of the whareniui.

Visit the whareniui at Te Papa, *Te Hono ki Hawaiki*, which was designed by master carver Cliff Whiting and features a stained glass door, made by Robert Jahnke, representing Ranginui, the sky father. The tiled flooring, designed by Kura Te Waru Rewiri, depicts Papatūānuku, the Earth mother. It also features tukutuku panels made by students from Toi Haukura, the Māori School of Design at the Tairāwhiti Polytechnic in Gisborne.