

# chart

## Whitney Oldenburg *Ticket to Paradise*

November 3, 2023 – January 6, 2024



Whitney Oldenburg, *Feeding Frenzy*, 2022, tickets, rock, wood, aluminum, resin, string, staples, helmets, ear plugs, cloth, zipper pulls, red yeast rice, glue mixture, 72 x 96 x 18 inches.

CHART is pleased to present *Ticket to Paradise*, a solo exhibition by Whitney Oldenburg. Featuring new sculptural works and drawings, this is Oldenburg's first solo show in New York. The exhibition will open with a reception on Friday, November 3, from 6–8pm, and remain on view through January 6, 2024.

In 1987, Barbara Kruger used the graphic phrase “I shop therefore I am” to implicate the consumer. While Whitney Oldenburg's sculptures are less explicit, they embody the phrase “I *consume* therefore I am.” Whether it's through breathing the air, taking medication, devouring entertainment, or being attached to a smartphone, Oldenburg speaks to the rampant consumption in contemporary society on a physiological, emotional, and psychological level.

Irresistibly unusual at first blush, Oldenburg's works are often crafted from familiar ephemera, inspired by one's relationship to everyday objects and the many hands that went into their making. Critical of capitalism's spurious suggestion that a newly purchased item will serve as a salve for psychological strife, to say nothing of the immense waste generated in the process, Oldenburg transforms redundant objects into sculptural protests that embody the existential environmental and economic crises that pervade our present moment. *Feeding Frenzy*, created from thousands of token red tickets enmeshed in resin and assembled into writhing, churning tendrils, speaks to a gnawing psychological component of escapist consumption; even diversionary entertainment in the form of tourism, Hollywood, or screen time, comes with its own implicational consequences of exploitation, wastefulness, and distraction.

chart

74 FRANKLIN ST  
NEW YORK NY 10013  
646 799 9319

CHART-GALLERY.COM

# chart

Below is an excerpt from the essay “Whitney Oldenburg: Perpetually Adaptive” by Michelle Grabner:

It may be too self-evident but not inappropriate to ground Oldenburg’s work in New Materialism and affect theory; art that is sensory, emotional, and embodied. Yet her work does indeed achieve specific intensities and moods, and it manifestly elicits a broad range of affective responses in her viewers. The work also emphasizes change, becoming, and interconnectivity as fundamental aspects of existence, redefining our understanding of reality as a dynamic process. And it is here, in a studio practice seeped in the condition of allostasis—meaning variable and standing, stability through change—that Oldenburg’s work flourishes.

Building dimensional shapes that are often symmetrical but never mathematically precise, Oldenburg arrives at sculptural wholes. These strange wholes are excessively ornamented with surface articulations, textures and color that suggest complex but unknown organisms.



Whitney Oldenburg, *I see you*, 2023, charcoal on paper, 30 x 22.5 inches.



Whitney Oldenburg, *treasures*, 2023, charcoal on paper, 26 x 19.5 inches.



Whitney Oldenburg, *A restless soul*, 2023, charcoal on paper, 30 x 22.5 inches.

Oldenburg’s drawings are quick and contrast the elaborately built and carefully garnished sculptures. If one is looking to attribute references, they could be described as observational drawings depicting the organic material growing in the warm confines of a petri dish or as quicker versions of early Ellsworth Kelly drawings. But most simply look like material studies, investigations into basic abstract patterns and motifs that also resemble coral polyps. And, of course, the drawings, humming with invention, are also inspirations for Oldenburg’s sculptures.

Within environments of stuff, Oldenburg’s neuroplasticity is sparked. She is ecstatic with change and always arrives at someplace fantastical and abstract. Adaptive variation is always at work in Oldenburg’s studio. Pattern of freezing, unfreezing, and refreezing is how organizational science refers to successful cycles of change. For Oldenburg, the desired condition of too much stuff simply represents the chaotic “unfreezing” period of this cycle. Yet unlike many of us, this state does not overwhelm her. Instead, it leads to extraordinary sculptures, stable in form but perpetually adaptive and perennially imaginative.

—Michelle Grabner

chart

74 FRANKLIN ST  
NEW YORK NY 10013  
646 799 9319

CHART-GALLERY.COM

# chart

Whitney Oldenburg obtained her bachelor's degree from Cornell University and graduated with her MFA from Rhode Island School of Design. Whitney is the recipient of Cornell University's Charles Baskerville Scholarship, the Virginia Commonwealth University Fountainhead Fellowship, the Toby Devan Lewis Award, and the Maharam Steam Fellowship. She is a practicing artist and has exhibited her work in New York City, Chicago, Richmond, Houston, and Ottawa. Whitney has also attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture, The Atlantic Center for the Arts with Michelle Grabner, and is currently part of The Elizabeth Foundation Studio Program. Her work has been written about in Hyperallergic, Wall Street Journal, and New American Paintings.

---

The full text of Michelle Grabner's essay can be found at [www.chart-gallery.com](http://www.chart-gallery.com).

For more information, please contact us at [info@chart-gallery.com](mailto:info@chart-gallery.com) or at @\_\_chart\_\_ on Instagram.

chart

74 FRANKLIN ST  
NEW YORK NY 10013  
646 799 9319

CHART-GALLERY.COM

Whitney Oldenburg: *Ticket to Paradise*



**Whitney Oldenburg**

*Feeding Frenzy*, 2022

tickets, rock, wood, aluminum, resin, string, staples, helmets, ear plugs, cloth, zipper pulls, red yeast rice, glue mixture

72 x 96 x 18 in

182.9 x 243.8 x 45.7 cm

(CH1263)



**Whitney Oldenburg**

*High Tide*, 2023

molds of *Feeding Frenzy*, metal, clay, lollipop sticks, tiki wall, generic acetaminophen, leather, linen, resin

60 x 51 x 28 in

152.4 x 129.5 x 71.1 cm

(CH1262)



**Whitney Oldenburg**

*Hopes and Dreams*, 2023

molds of air filters, clay, steel, string, resin, credit cards

73 x 48 1/2 x 7 in

185.4 x 123.2 x 17.8 cm

(CH1261)



**Whitney Oldenburg**

*Fade*, 2023

remote controls, clay, cloth, paper, slide projector, resin

34 x 27 x 14 in

86.4 x 68.6 x 35.6 cm

(CH1265)

chart

74 FRANKLIN ST  
NEW YORK NY 10013

646 799 9319

CHART-GALLERY.COM



**Whitney Oldenburg**

*Apex Predator*, 2023

wood, clay, resin, juggling pins, cell phone cases,  
suede, necklaces, rock, resin

35 x 33 x 15 in

88.9 x 83.8 x 38.1 cm

(CH1260)



**Whitney Oldenburg**

*A restless soul*, 2023

charcoal on paper

30 x 22 1/2 in

76.2 x 57.1 cm

(CH1171)



**Whitney Oldenburg**

*what could have been*, 2023

charcoal on paper

26 x 19 1/2 in

66 x 49.5 cm

(CH1156)



**Whitney Oldenburg**

*growing*, 2023

charcoal on paper

30 x 22 in

76.2 x 55.9 cm

(CH1177)



**Whitney Oldenburg**

*The pennies on 8th Ave*, 2023

charcoal on paper

30 x 22 1/4 in

76.2 x 56.5 cm

(CH1180)

# chart

74 FRANKLIN ST  
NEW YORK NY 10013

646 799 9319

CHART-GALLERY.COM



**Whitney Oldenburg**  
*what I hold*, 2023  
charcoal on paper  
30 x 22 in  
76.2 x 55.9 cm  
(CH1166)



**Whitney Oldenburg**  
*something new*, 2023  
charcoal on paper  
30 x 22 1/4 in  
76.2 x 56.5 cm  
(CH1176)



**Whitney Oldenburg**  
*I see you*, 2023  
charcoal on paper  
30 x 22 1/2 in  
76.2 x 57.1 cm  
(CH1173)



**Whitney Oldenburg**  
*where did I go wrong*, 2023  
charcoal on paper  
30 x 22 in  
76.2 x 55.9 cm  
(CH1162)



**Whitney Oldenburg**  
*treasures*, 2023  
charcoal on paper  
26 x 19 1/2 in  
66 x 49.5 cm  
(CH1151)

chart

74 FRANKLIN ST  
NEW YORK NY 10013

646 799 9319

CHART-GALLERY.COM



**Whitney Oldenburg**  
*Finding the future, 2023*  
charcoal on paper  
30 x 22 1/4 in  
76.2 x 56.5 cm  
(CH1181)



**Whitney Oldenburg**  
*Blue Bennu, 2023*  
metal, string, wood, resin, clay, rock, matches  
30 x 24 x 12 in  
76.2 x 61 x 30.5 cm  
(CH1259)