

Whitney Oldenburg: *hardening the braces*

April 17 – May 30, 2026

Opening reception: Friday, April 17, 6–8pm

CHART is pleased to present *hardening the braces*, Whitney Oldenburg's second solo exhibition with the gallery. Featuring new sculptures and drawings, it opens Friday, April 17, with a reception from 6–8pm, and continues through May 30, 2026. Oldenburg is currently the subject of a mid-career survey at the Museum of Contemporary Art Jacksonville, on view through April 19, 2026.

Whitney Oldenburg's work considers how material accumulation reflects psychological, economic, and environmental conditions.

In this new body of work, she reframes materiality through the lens of survival, considering the footprint of progress. She examines how cycles of consumption, disposal, and obsolescence soothe present anxieties even as they participate in the gradual unraveling of the future they are meant to stabilize.

The sculptures are constructed from cut and reassembled boat hulls, horse collars, water storage containers, and seed bags, materials that carry associations with leisure, transport, and self-sufficiency. In their reconfiguration, Oldenburg reflects on a growing preoccupation with survival, as well as the human tendency to accumulate objects as a response to uncertainty, shaped in part by the commercial production of preparedness goods.

Large, upright and anthropomorphic, the forms suggest monuments, though their surfaces are punctured with openings that disrupt any sense of permanence or solidity. What appears stable can also be seen through, held together through reassembly rather than fixed construction. In these works, water is held in attached storage containers, an element that may leak or evaporate over time—a reminder that we are never inseparable from the natural world.

Oldenburg's colored charcoal drawings develop alongside the sculptures, presenting forms that recall fossils, skeletal systems, and organic growth. Together, the works reflect on life cycles and the instinct to 'hold on to'. Preservation becomes an attempt at stability, even as the uncertainty that drives it persists. ♦

For more information, please email info@chart-gallery.com or call 646 799 6319.

Image: *past lives*, 2026, charcoal on paper, 52 x 42 in



Whitney Oldenburg (b. Jacksonville, Florida) lives and works in New York.

Oldenburg's work explores the complex relationship between humans and objects in contemporary culture. Her sculptures incorporate personal belongings and examine the emotional and psychological responses tied to material possessions. Oldenburg challenges viewers to question our attachments to objects and consider the ways they shape our lives and relationships. Through her sculptures, she invites reflection on the complex interplay between material possessions, social dynamics, and our shared humanity.

Oldenburg obtained her bachelor's degree from Cornell University and graduated with her MFA from Rhode Island School of Design. She is the first recipient of the Artists Now Award from the Eden Arts Foundation (2025). Her work is the subject of a mid-career survey at the Museum of Contemporary Art Jacksonville (November 20, 2025 – April 19, 2026). Oldenburg is also 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. Oldenburg has also attended the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and the Atlantic Center for the Arts with Michelle Grabner, and she is currently part of The Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts Studio Program. Her work has been written about in *Hyperallergic*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *New American Paintings*.



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