

Reflection

You have seen works created over a span of more than 50 years, created from many different materials and approaches.

Which artwork is most memorable to you? Why?

John Chamberlain Choices

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Photo Credits

Dolores James, 1962
Painted and chromium-plated steel
184.2 x 257.8 x 117.5 cm
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York 70.1925
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New York
Photo: Kristopher McKay © Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum,
New York

Penthouse #50 1969
Watercolor and resin on paper
5 x 6 x 4 inches (12.7 x 16.5 x 11.4 cm)

Dia Art Foundation
Photo: David Heald © Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum,
New York

John Chamberlain
Penthouse #46, 1969
Watercolor and resin on paper
5 x 7 x 4 inches (13.5 x 17.8 x 11.5 cm)

Dia Art Foundation
Photo: David Heald © Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum,
New York

SPHINXGRIN TWO 1986 / 2010
Aluminum
16 feet x 13 feet 9 inches x 12 feet 1 inches (490 x 420 x 370 cm)
Private collection
Photo courtesy More Gallery, Giswil, Switzerland

Footnotes

1. Untitled, unpublished transcript of a conversation with John Chamberlain, n.d. [ca. 1964], courtesy of the Allan Stone Collection, unpaginated.
2. David J. Getsy, "John Chamberlain's Pliability: The New Monumental Aluminum Works," *Burlington Magazine* (London) 153, no. 1303 (Nov. 2011), p. 743.
3. Adrian Kohn, "A Look at John Chamberlain's Lacquer Paintings," in *It's All in the Fit: The Work of John Chamberlain* (Marfa, Tex: The Chinati Foundation, 2009), p. 107.
4. Dieter Schwarz, ed., *John Chamberlain, Papier Paradiso: Drawings, Collages, Reliefs, Paintings, exh. cat.* (Winterthur: Kunstmuseum Winterthur; Düsseldorf: Richter Verlag, 2005), p. 92.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN: CHOICES



family activity guide



Some seem to think that I work with found pieces, but I don't. They're chosen, you see. The idea is that there has been a lot of magic implied in the choice.¹

— John Chamberlain

Use this family activity guide to explore selected works by John Chamberlain with your family.



SPHINXGRIN TWO, 1986/2010

Take a moment to carefully walk around this work. Notice what the sculpture looks like from different angles.

When discussing his sculptures, Chamberlain said: *It just can't be a blob sitting there. It should be doing something.*²

In your opinion what does it look like this sculpture is doing? Is it running? Dancing? Jumping?

How do you imagine this sculpture would move if it came to life? Try to act it out.



Dolores James, 1962

Chamberlain said of his work: "I sort of advise anybody who takes one of my pieces [to] clean it at least once . . . Whoever does it is fortunate in one sense. They go slowly through everything so it's like they are actually going in and finding out little places and all of that, and they find out about how the sculpture is constructed."³

Since you can't clean the work yourself, explore the ways that the shapes connect and fit together through drawing.

Try to draw the outlines of what you see while keeping your eyes on the artwork. Don't look at your paper! Let your eyes follow the lines of the artwork while you draw them on your paper, and be sure not to lift your pencil.

What did you discover about this piece that you had not noticed before?



Penthouse #46, 1969

Penthouse #50, 1969

When Chamberlain was a child he liked to blow air into paper bags and then pop them. This memory from his childhood offered inspiration for the sculptures in this series.



What do these paper sculptures make you think of?

Activity

Use the tear-off section to make your own paper sculpture. Draw on the paper and then bend, fold, crumple, wad, rip, and roll it to create a unique artistic expression inspired by Chamberlain.

From the Artist

*"I think of my art materials not as junk but as—garbage. Manure, actually; it goes from being the waste material of one being to the life-source of another."*⁴