

Claes Oldenburg - Clip 7

“To have things manufactured” The possibilities of making art

With the Minimalists came a different aesthetic which was to have things manufactured. The idea was that you could call up a factory and they would do exactly what you gave them a plan of, and it could still be art because you determined it and you said that's what you wanted. Even if you didn't sign it, it was still art. Now, I didn't go quite to that position but I absorbed that point of view because it seemed to open up many possibilities. Nevertheless, the person who built the first Bedroom Ensemble was a craftsman, he was a very good carpenter. His name was Ninehus (?), he was a Dutchman I found in California. It was build very carefully – I just didn't call him up, you know. I built a cardboard model, a careful cardboard model, in advance which was then translated into plans. The plans were gone over and corrected many times until it became exactly what I wanted and then the carpenter executed it under my supervision so that in all aspects I was with the fabricators. It was just for me a way of expanding my involvement with reality and also the possibilities of making art. All those things – there were things that were sewn, there were things that were carpentered, there were rugs involved and venitian blinds, and all this stuff – that just was a way of expanding the idea of art involved with reality.

