

TITLE: *New Oxy*
from *One Cent Life*



ARTIST: James Rosenquist

DATE: 1963

SIZE: 16" x 22"

MEDIUM: Color Lithograph

ACQUISITION # : 63.10

Additional Works in the Collection by the Artist? No X

"I still don't know what art is. People think it's decoration. I don't think so. It could be decorative, but it's not decoration." -James Rosenquist

ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY

James Rosenquist (born November 29, 1933) is an American artist identified with the Pop Art movement. Rosenquist incorporates fragmented images of everyday American life onto his huge canvases. Like other Pop artists, Rosenquist adapted the visual language of advertisement and pop culture to create fine art. Rosenquist achieved national attention in 1965 with the room-sized painting *F-111*. In 1976, Rosenquist built a house and studio in Aripeka, Florida and has lived there since.

ONE CENT LIFE

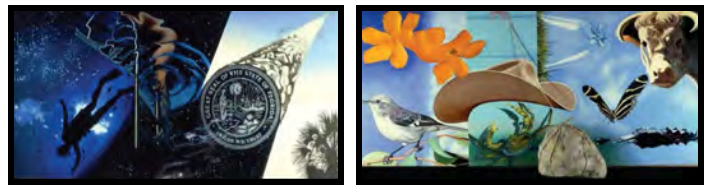
New Oxy is a work featured in the famous *One Cent Life* portfolio, published in 1964. *One Cent Life* was a revolutionary Pop Art project organized by Walasse Ting and Sam Francis. *One Cent Life* was named after a series of poems written by Ting. The *One Cent Life* portfolio includes 62 original lithographs by various artists, inclusive of James Rosenquist, Roy Lichtenstein, Robert Rauschenberg, Andy Warhol, Tom Wesselmann, and many more. *One Cent Life* was the proclamation of the new Pop Art generation, and has since become a well-used reference in the history of modern art.

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

In *New Oxy*, Rosenquist presents a vividly colored lithograph. For multi-colored lithographs, a different drawing on another stone is used for each color. *New Oxy* would have required Rosenquist to use over twelve different stones while creating this piece. The inclusion of text is a motif used throughout *One Cent Life*. The text gives all the images a sense of cohesion. A poem placed in the upper left corner is written by Walasse Ting, the organizer of the *One Cent Life* portfolio. The poem consists of four lines; however, the final three words have been marked through making them difficult to decipher (see lesson plan for poem). The entire image is covered in hard to read pencil markings. The words, "Yellow cup – image in yellow – or total image," may be found in the upper right corner. These jottings give viewers a sense of chaos and messiness, ironic since the most legible pop product in the image is a box of Oxydol, a detergent touted for making clothes clean and neat. An artist's signature and date is seen in the bottom right corner. The rest of the text on the image seems to be random, and is sometimes illegible. Words like fruit, rabbit, tile, mother, and daughter are also found. *New Oxy* is energetic and sporadic. *New Oxy* combines the elements of Pop Art with poetry, creating an enticing work of art.



James Rosenquist, *F-111*, 1964-65, oil on canvas with aluminum, twenty-three sections, 10' x 86', The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY.



James Rosenquist, *Tallahassee Murals*, 1976-78, oil on canvas with rope and painted fiberglass, 9' x 18', State Capitol, Tallahassee, FL.

RELATED TERMINOLOGY

Pop Art — Art in which commonplace objects are used as subject matter and are often physically incorporated in the work.

F-111 — Painted during the Vietnam War, *F-111* draws disturbing connections between militarism and the consumerist structure of the American economy.

Tallahassee Murals

In 1976, the state of Florida commissioned James Rosenquist to paint two murals for the state capitol. These murals present collage-like scenes of Florida. The collage-like technique makes reference to Pop Art work. These murals embrace the natural landscape and beauty the state of Florida offers both visitors and residents.

Rosenquist also introduces the importance of the agricultural and environmental aspects that support Florida's economy. These works contain images of scuba divers, cows, orange peels, an alligator, the mockingbird, which is Florida's state bird, palm trees, and a rock made from painted fiber glass which protrudes from the surface.

Pop Art Revisited Grades K—12

Session Activity: James Rosenquist is known for his two dimensional works which comment on Pop culture topics of his era, for example consumerism or American involvement in Vietnam. Students will make three dimensional works as social commentary on American Pop culture in the 21st century.

Objectives:

- Students will gain an understanding of the intentions of the Pop Art movement of the past.
- Students will use the issues within contemporary 21st century culture as a basis for works of art.
- Students will complete group sculptures, which comment on contemporary American Pop culture.

Materials: recycled materials such as: egg cartons, boxes, jugs, cardboard, which will serve as bases for the sculpture, newspaper, masking tape, glue, paint, brushes, magazines, found materials.

Procedure:

With students discuss the Pop Art movement with which Rosenquist was involved. Discuss other artists, like Andy Warhol, and ask students ways they feel Rosenquist and Warhol addressed the culture of their times. Ask students ways the Pop Art movement would be different if it existed in present times. Students will then list topics on which their sculptures will comment. Suggest topics to get started if necessary, like globalization, the rapid rise of technology, etc. Break up students into groups of 3-4 to do research and create a three dimensional Pop Art work. Students will then research Rosenquist and other Pop artists of their choice. Ask them to research sculptural Pop artists to gain inspiration. Examples include artists like Claes Oldenburg, Marisol Escobar, or Red Grooms. Students will then gather materials. Allow students 2-3 class periods to complete their sculptural projects. Once the work is completed, students will be asked to provide group artists' statements to present with the work to the class. The artists' statements should address the topics presented, the rationale behind the work, and the process required. Classmates are encouraged to comment on the sculptures.



Marisol Escobar, *Women and Dog*, 1964, assemblage, life size, Museum of Modern Art, New York City, New York.



Red Grooms, *Sun, Sea, and Tide*, 1989, assemblage, 3' x 4', The Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City, Missouri.

Vocabulary:

Globalization — growth to a global or worldwide scale.

Consumerism — the theory that an increasing consumption of goods is economically beneficial.

Visual Arts Sunshine State Standards: K– 5

Strand B: Creation and Communication

Standard: The student creates and communicates a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas using knowledge of structures and functions in visual arts.

Language Arts Sunshine State Standards: 6—12

Strand D: Literary Analysis

Standard: The student identifies, analyzes, and applies knowledge of the elements of a variety of fiction and literary texts to develop a thoughtful response to a literary selection.

Poetry Driven Pop Art Collages Grades: 6-12

Objectives:

- Students will gain an understanding of the relationship between poetry and art.
- Students will gain an understanding of the intentions of the Pop Art movement.
- Students will create Pop Art collages that are inspired by poems of choice.

Materials: Magazines, newspaper, white paper, glue sticks, markers, paint, colored pencils, and black pens.

Procedure: With students, discuss Rosenquist's work and discuss the use of text. The upper left corner of *New Oxy* contains a poem written by Walasse Ting. Read the poem to the students and ask ways they feel the poem relates to the work or does not relate to the work. Are the poem and art work meant to be humorous, ridiculous, or serious? Or all three? Ask students to explain.



James Rosenquist, *Collage for the President Elect*, 1960-61, mixed media collage, 4' x 7', Centre Georges Pompidu, Paris.

“Happily and long into the night we drink
Till all are drunk
There is no retiring
How can a man bite his navel?”

After discussion, ask students to research and find short poems by other authors. Students might use stanzas from historical works like *Jabberwocky* by Lewis Carroll or poetry by ee cummings. Walasse Ting's "Pop" poetry can be found on the internet and appropriate stanzas could be selected by the teacher for use. Tell students just as Rosenquist created a work to go with an already written poem they will be creating works of art centered on poems of choice. Once students have found their poems, they will begin to create their *New Oxy* inspired collages. Students will then inscribe the poems on their works in the positions/orientations they wish. Students will gather images to create the collages. Remind students to choose images that relate to the everyday world, like Rosenquist often did in his collaged work. Allow students 2-3 class periods to finish. Students will then present their Pop Art inspired collages to classmates. Encourage classmates to comment on the works. Ask students to describe the relationships between the poems and the collages. How do these works reference the Pop Art movement? Would these pieces be considered revisited renditions of Pop Art?