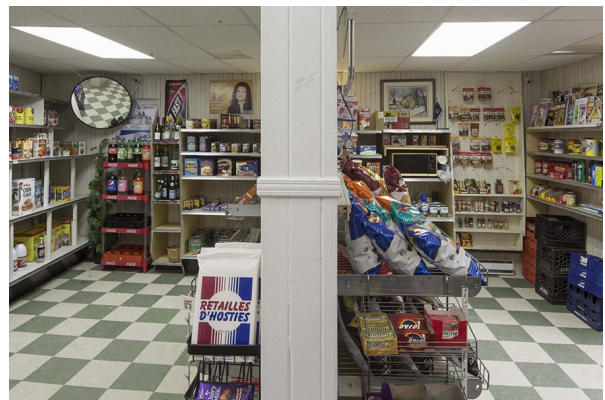


Study Guide:

“Canadassimo (Dépanneur) ”, 2015, BGL

About the artwork: “*Canadassimo (Dépanneur)*” was made by the Quebec City art collective BGL in 2015. It was exhibited at the Venice Biennale, a contemporary art festival, where BGL represented Canada. “*Canadassimo (Dépanneur)*” is a multi-room exhibition. Inside the Canadian pavilion, BGL constructed a full-scale convenience store Quebecers call a “dépanneur”. Viewers enter through an “ordinary-looking” corner store. They filled the exhibit with some known globally, some mainly popular in Canada and some specific to Quebec. It was designed to reflect an independent, family-owned business rather than a corporate chain. The whole store was assembled first in Quebec city and shipped to Venice in segments. Some pieces were repurposed for the build. Some items were emptied, resealed & shipped. BGL also manipulated some of the product labels by scanning the packages, modifying their image, then printing and reapplying the label. Some are blurry, like a cinematic “glitch”. BGL also introduced audio elements. All of Canadassimo filled three 40-foot shipping containers.



About the artists: BGL is an art collective that began in 1996 at Laval University. The moniker comes from their surnames: Jasmin **B**ilodeau, Sébastien **G**iguère and Nicolas **L**averdière. The trio follows in the of Canadian artist collectives such as; General Idea, Fastwurms, and Isuma. The group works primarily in performance and installation. The collective is known for their giant-sized immersive installations that play with the experience of the viewer. Their art is humour, but it addresses serious issues like consumerism and the environment. Recycling and repurposing are key to the way they make art.

Please preview the short film and then share it with your students. Select one or two guiding questions that reflect your curriculum and can guide student research and inquiry connected to the artwork, artists, and the socio-cultural context in which it was created.

Guiding Questions:

- How has BGL created contrast with the familiar and the extraordinary?
- What story does this artwork tell about a national Canadian identity and relationships between Francophones and Anglophones?

- How do their choices of materials reflect a larger concept of environmentalism?
- How does tension exist in the artwork?
- What role does space play in this artwork?
- In what ways is Canadian identity tied to our relationships with commodities?
- How does BGL uphold or push the role of artist?
- Explore how BGL, and other artists, create specific experiences of place.
- How does art reflect reality? How does reality reflect art? What exists in between?
- What commentary do you think this artwork offers on consumerism?
- What point of view is communicated by this artwork on environmentalism?
- This is an installation: it is site specific. How does place & location influence artistic choices & the viewers' understanding?
- This artwork was exhibited in Venice, Italy. How does location impact the viewers' interpretation of the work? Would the audience respond differently if the installation was in a different place?
- What connections to the Dadaist & Pop Art movements are evident?
- What traditional dramatic or theater practices are employed by BGL in creating his artwork?
- Using found or repurposed objects, create an original artwork to communicate your point of view on a social issue.
- Consider a personal, cultural or national symbol that would be well recognized or classified as "ordinary". Through visual arts, media arts, dance, drama, music or creative writing, make the ordinary extraordinary.

Supporting Links:

- Explore the [BGL website](#)
- [Biennale Arte 2015](#) - Canada (*en français with English subtitles*)
- [Tour the Highlights of the 2021 Venice Architecture Biennale](#)
- [BGL – Canadissimo](#) Art Review Article

Ontario Secondary Curriculum Connections

The Arts- Visual Arts

B1. The Critical Analysis Process: demonstrate an understanding of the critical analysis process by examining, interpreting, evaluating, and reflecting on various art works;

B2. Art, Society, and Values: demonstrate an understanding of how art works reflect the society in which they were created, and of how they can affect personal values;

C1. Terminology: demonstrate an understanding of, and use correct terminology when referring to, elements, principles, and other components related to visual arts;

C2. Conventions and Techniques: demonstrate an understanding of conventions and techniques used in the creation of visual art works;

The Arts - Media Arts

B1. The Critical Analysis Process: demonstrate an understanding of the critical analysis process by using it to monitor the creative process, and by examining, interpreting, assessing, and reflecting on media artworks;

B2. Identity and Values: demonstrate an understanding of how media art works reflect personal and cultural identity, and affect personal, cultural, and community values and their awareness of those values;

C2. Contexts and Influences: demonstrate an understanding of the sociocultural and historical contexts of media arts;

French: (Core & Immersion)

A3. Intercultural Understanding: demonstrate an understanding of information in oral French texts about aspects of culture in diverse French-speaking communities and other communities around the world, and of French sociolinguistic conventions used in a variety of situations and communities.

B3. Intercultural Understanding: in their spoken communications, demonstrate an awareness of aspects of culture in diverse French-speaking communities and other communities around the world, and of the appropriate use of French sociolinguistic conventions in a variety of situations.

D3. Intercultural Understanding: in their written work, demonstrate an awareness of aspects of culture in diverse French-speaking communities and other communities around the world, and of the appropriate use of French sociolinguistic conventions in a variety of situations.

History:

A1. Historical Inquiry: use the historical inquiry process and the concepts of historical thinking when investigating aspects of Canadian history, with a focus on the development of identity and culture (CHI4U)

B2. Significant Interactions: analyse the impact of significant interactions, including interactions with the environment, on the selected ethnic group's country or region of origin

B3. Culture and Identity: analyse ways in which various factors contributed to the development of culture and identity in the selected ethnic group in its country or region of origin

Geography:

A1. Geographic Inquiry: use the geographic inquiry process and the concepts of geographic thinking when investigating issues relating to Canadian geography

B1. The Physical Environment and Human Activities: analyse various interactions between physical processes, phenomena, and events and human activities in Canada

English:

Writing: use a variety of organizational structures and patterns to produce coherent and effective written work;

Writer's Craft:

- produce writing for a range of purposes and audiences with an emphasis on well-developed content and the effective use of appropriate forms, techniques, diction, voice, and style;