

TEACHER RESOURCE GUIDE
FOR GRADES 3–6

LEARN ABOUT

**FORM AND
STRUCTURE**

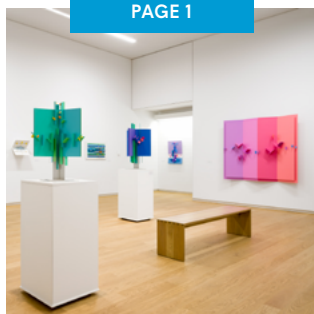
through the art of

ELI BORNSTEIN

ART CANADA INSTITUTE | INSTITUT DE L'ART CANADIEN

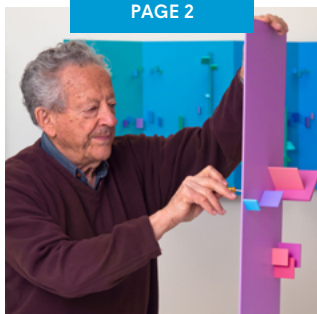
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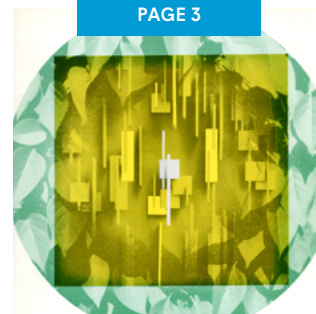
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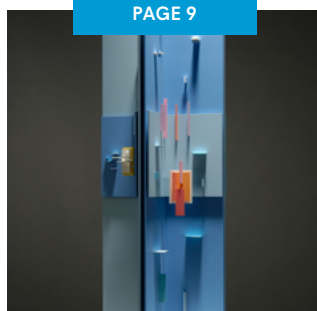
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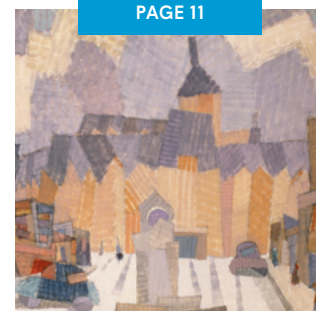
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**ADDITIONAL
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READ ONLINE



**ELI BORNSTEIN: LIFE
& WORK BY ROALD
NASGAARD**

DOWNLOAD



**ELI BORNSTEIN
IMAGE FILE**

RESOURCE OVERVIEW

This teacher resource guide is designed to complement the Art Canada Institute online art book [Eli Bornstein: Life & Work](#) by Roald Nasgaard. The artworks within this guide and images required for the learning activities and culminating task can be found in the [Eli Bornstein Image File](#) provided.

Saskatoon-based artist Eli Bornstein (b.1922) changed the Canadian art world when he invented the [Structurist Relief](#), a form of modern art that combines elements of sculpture and painting. With his innovative approach, Bornstein took two-dimensional [abstract](#) painting and advanced it into the three-dimensional space of sculpture, creating something entirely new that captured the experience of nature. Taking some of Bornstein's most celebrated works as a starting point, this resource guide encourages students in their understanding of form by experimenting with materials and analyzing the elements that make a stable structure. The learning culminates with students constructing their own artworks inspired by Bornstein's reliefs.

Curriculum Connections

- Grades 3–6 Science
- Grades 3–6 Visual Arts

Themes

- Form and Function
- Shape
- Stability
- Strength and Stability
- Structures



Fig 1. Installation view of *Artist in Focus: Eli Bornstein* at Remai Modern, Saskatoon, 2019.

Teaching Exercises

The activities found in this guide allow students to explore the theme of “Form and Structure,” as represented in artworks by Eli Bornstein.

- Learning Activity #1: Experimenting with Structures ([page 4](#))
- Learning Activity #2: Cantilevers & Stability ([page 6](#))
- Culminating Task: The Beauty of Strength ([page 9](#))

A Note on Using This Guide

Throughout this guide, students are tasked with using construction materials that are available in their classrooms. It is the responsibility of teachers to choose appropriate tools and materials for their learners, familiarize themselves with the safe use of these materials, educate students on the proper and safe use of all tools, and actively observe students to ensure they are working carefully.

WHO IS ELI BORNSTEIN?

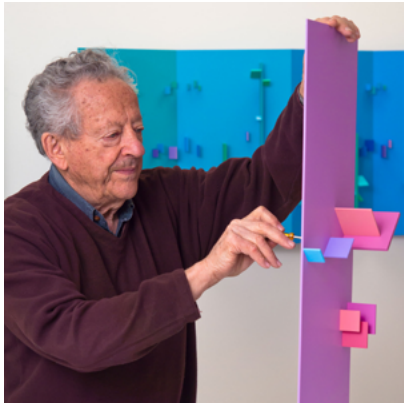


Fig 2. Eli Bornstein installing his work for *Artist in Focus: Eli Bornstein* at Remai Modern, Saskatoon, 2019.

Eli Bornstein was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on December 28, 1922. Bornstein's parents had arrived separately in the United States from Lithuania in 1904, and they eventually met and married in Milwaukee. While both his parents grew up in Orthodox Jewish homes, they decided to raise their four children without the influence of religion. The Bornstein household often operated with a tight budget, but the family still managed to enrich their lives with music and art. Bornstein's mother, especially, encouraged her son's creativity.

Bornstein enrolled at Milwaukee State Teachers College in 1941, and it was here that he first entrenched himself within the world of [modernism](#). The art scene in Wisconsin was still rather conservative at this time, but with the influence of important teachers such as German-born artist Robert von Neumann (1888–1976) and American painter Howard Thomas (1899–1971), Bornstein explored many of the most important artistic

movements of the twentieth century, including Post-Impressionism and [Constructivism](#). He was also introduced to the innovative curriculum of the [Bauhaus](#).

As a result of his education in Wisconsin, Bornstein developed a fascination with building things. Working with materials such as brass and bronze, he completed his first constructed sculptures in the early 1950s, shortly after accepting a teaching position in the Department of Art at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. Until roughly the mid-1950s, Bornstein continued to create three-dimensional works, such as his monumental public commission *Aluminum Construction (Tree of Knowledge)*, 1956, alongside paintings that blurred the lines between representational and [abstract art](#), such as *The Island*, 1956.

In the late 1950s, Bornstein began to experiment with relief construction. Through meetings with relief artists in Europe and North America—including Wisconsin-based artist Charles Biederman (1906–2004)—Bornstein was inspired to invent an artistic medium that could better translate the experience of nature. He came up with what he refers to as the Structurist Relief: an art form that is not quite sculpture, not quite painting, but takes elements from both in order to create something entirely new.

Bornstein has spent much of his career championing the Structurist Relief, which has gone through many stylistic developments over the course of almost seventy years. But Bornstein's trips to Ellesmere Island during the summers of 1986 and 1987 profoundly affected his work. Back in his Saskatoon studio, he produced a series of Structurist Reliefs using Plexiglas coloured with brittle hues of blue and green enamel paint to evoke elements of the Arctic landscape.

Bornstein continues to live and work in Saskatoon. He retired from his position at the University of Saskatchewan in 1990. In 2008, he received the Saskatchewan Order of Merit, and in 2019, he was appointed a Member of the Order of Canada in recognition of his innovative artistic career.



Fig 3. Installation view of *Structurist Relief No. 6*, 1999–2000, *Structurist Relief No. 7*, 2000–2001, and *Structurist Relief No. 8*, 2000–2002, by Eli Bornstein.

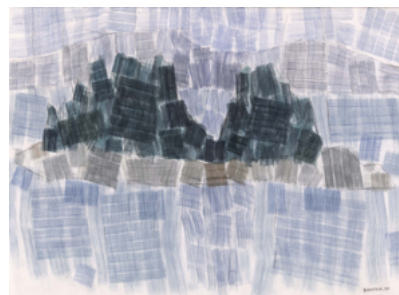


Fig 4. Eli Bornstein, *The Island*, 1956. This was the last representational painting Bornstein made before turning entirely to the construction of reliefs.



Fig 5. Eli Bornstein, *Growth Motif No. 4*, 1956. Bornstein's early sculptures demonstrate his method of assembling, rather than carving, his three-dimensional works.

NATIONAL & WORLD EVENTS



Fig 6. The Bauhaus, located in Dessau, Germany, n.d. The Bauhaus became known for its curriculum integrating the fine arts with design and craft.



Fig 7. Vladimir Tatlin and an assistant in front of the model for his *Monument to the Third International*, 1920.

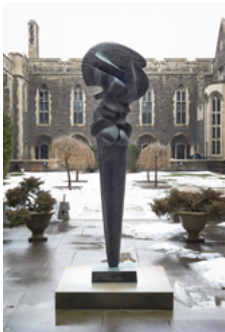


Fig 8. Sorel Etrog, *Complexes of a Young Lady*, 1962. Etrog was known for using organic shapes in his sculptural works.

Tens of thousands of Lithuanian Jews emigrate to the United States to escape anti-Jewish pogroms in the Russian Empire.

1880
–1910

Saskatchewan and Alberta join Confederation and receive official provincial status.

1905

Constructivism, a branch of abstract art created to reflect the modern industrial world, is founded by Russian artists Vladimir Tatlin (1885–1953) and Aleksandr Rodchenko (1891–1956).

1915

1919

1922

The Bauhaus is founded by architect Walter Gropius (1883–1969) in Weimar, Germany. The Bauhaus remains in operation until 1933.

1939
–45

More than one million Canadians serve in the Second World War, a global conflict that results in an estimated 70 to 85 million fatalities.

1941
–45

1950

The Mendel Art Gallery opens its doors in Saskatoon. The gallery remains in operation until 2015, when its permanent collection is transferred to the new Remai Modern art gallery.

1956

1960

1964

Sculptor Sorel Etrog (1933–2014) is chosen to represent Canada at the Venice Biennale.

1966

The Order of Canada is established.

1967

1982

2019

ELI BORNSTEIN'S LIFE



Fig 9. Eli Bornstein on the occasion of his graduation from the Milwaukee State Teachers College, 1945.

Eli Bornstein is born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Bornstein attends Milwaukee State Teachers College and receives a bachelor of science degree in art.

Bornstein is hired to teach art at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon.

Bornstein completes his controversial first public commission, *Aluminum Construction (Tree of Knowledge)*, for the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Building in Saskatoon.

Bornstein launches *The Structurist*. With Bornstein as editor-in-chief, the journal is published by the University of Saskatchewan until 2000 (with anniversary issues published in 2010 and 2020).

The Mendel Art Gallery organizes the first retrospective of Bornstein's career, *Eli Bornstein: Selected Works, 1957–1982*.

Bornstein is appointed a Member of the Order of Canada.

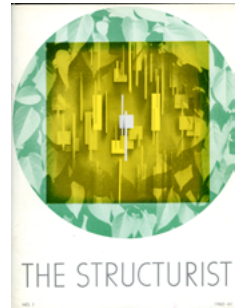


Fig 10. Cover of *The Structurist*, no. 1, "Structurist Origins/Developments," 1960, edited by Eli Bornstein.



Fig 11. Eli Bornstein with one of his *Structurist* reliefs in *An Art at the Mercy of Light: Recent Works by Eli Bornstein* at the Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, 2013.

LEARNING ACTIVITY #1

EXPERIMENTING WITH STRUCTURES

In the late 1950s, Eli Bornstein began experimenting with relief construction. He became adept at observation, and he embraced the use of materials that could translate the experience of the natural world through simplified forms. Examining Bornstein's works from this period, students will discuss how forms and structures are created in the world around them, how they appear in nature, and what kinds of structures are strong and stable. After their formal analysis, students will use paper and tape to create sculptural pieces.

Big Idea

Experimentation

Learning Goals

1. I can use my critical thinking and creative skills to analyze a piece of artwork and make specific observations.
2. I can use proper terminology when discussing the art I see.
3. I can use artwork to build understanding of and inspire questions about the world around me.
4. I can build a stable structure using paper, scissors, and tape.

Materials

- Eli Bornstein [biographical information sheet](#)
- [Eli Bornstein Image File](#)
- [Eli Bornstein: Life & Work](#)
- Camera/smartphone
- Flashlights or desk lamps (optional)
- Masking tape
- Paper (simple printer paper, enough for each student)
- Scissors
- Whiteboard/chart paper and markers

Process

1. Show students a variety of natural structures to inspire them, such as tree branches and wings, as well as several of Bornstein's pieces, including *Structurist Relief No. 1*, 1965; *Structurist Relief No. 3 (Sea Series)*, 1966–67; *Structurist Relief No. 3-1 (Canoe Lake Series)*, 1964; *Structurist Relief No. 2*, 1966; *Growth Motif Construction No. 3*, 1956; and *Aluminum Construction (Tree of Knowledge)*, 1956. Engage in a class discussion using the following guiding questions:

- What kinds of shapes do you see?
- How do you think these works of art are made?
- What materials do you think they are made of?
- Are they hard or soft, stiff or bendy, strong or weak?
- How do they stand up?
- What makes the work interesting?
- What do you wonder about how the work was made?
- What similarities do you see between the natural structures and the artwork?



Fig 12. Eli Bornstein, *Growth Motif Construction No. 3*, 1956. This work exemplifies Bornstein's transition to openwork metallic constructing.

Learning Activity #1 continued

2. Introduce students to Eli Bornstein using the biographical information sheet. Highlight the important development of his Structurist Reliefs and the ways in which natural structures inspired his work.
3. Give each student a single sheet of plain printer paper, scissors, and a length of masking tape (roughly 20 cm).
4. Tell students that their task is to make an interesting structure inspired by Eli Bornstein using just the tape and paper on their desk or table. Encourage students to cut or rip their paper as needed. The structure can be anything they like, but it must stand up on their table so others can see it.
5. Walk around the room with all the students to look at each completed structure. Ask students what makes each one interesting to look at. What shapes or structures were easy to stand up? What shapes or structures were tricky to stand up? What techniques did students use to keep their structures upright? What strategies did they use when they were feeling stuck?
6. Document and photograph the structures made by the students. Students can use desk lamps or flashlights to light their structures in an interesting way or to highlight key features.
7. Review as a class the kinds of techniques, shapes, and connections used to make strong, stable structures. Make notes of the most important ideas discussed by the students and post them in a visible place in the classroom.

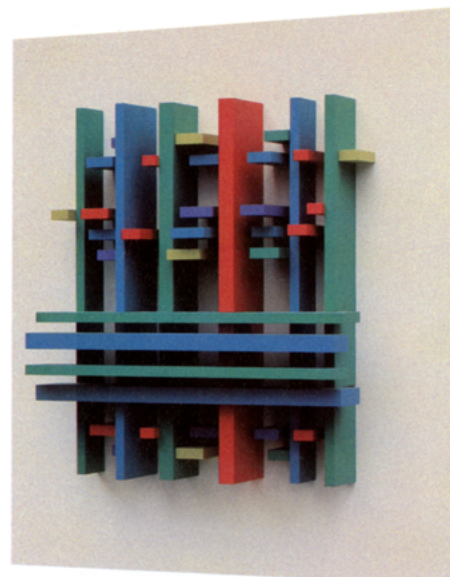


Fig 13. Eli Bornstein, *Structurist Relief No. 3-1* (Canoe Lake Series), 1964. This work was produced during a summer trip to Algonquin Park in Ontario.



Fig 14. Eli Bornstein, *Structurist Relief No. 2*, 1966. The Structurist Relief is meant to be viewed from multiple angles.

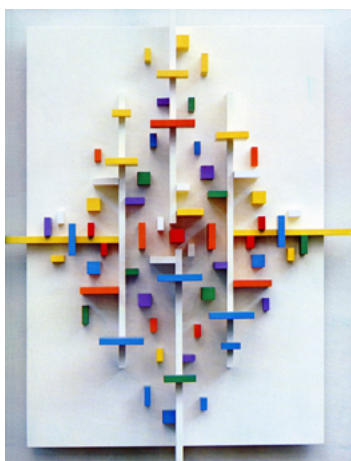


Fig 15. Eli Bornstein, *Structurist Relief No. 1*, 1965. In the mid-1960s, Bornstein began making reliefs with thinner and more differentiated elements.

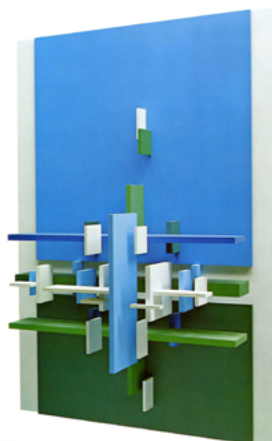


Fig 16. Eli Bornstein, *Structurist Relief No. 3* (Sea Series), 1966–67. Bornstein's Sea Series was produced during a year-long stay near Big Sur, California.



Fig 17. Eli Bornstein, *Aluminum Construction (Tree of Knowledge)*, 1956. This sculpture received criticism when it was unveiled as the first abstract work of public art in Saskatoon.

LEARNING ACTIVITY #2

CANTILEVERS & STABILITY

To create his Structurist Reliefs, Bornstein produces three-dimensional forms that protrude from a stable base. Many of his works include clever examples of cantilevers—structural elements that extend horizontally toward an unsupported end. This basic form of construction became an important method of achieving the natural balance that Bornstein aims to represent in his work. This activity guides students in their understanding of cantilever structures by helping them identify how cantilevers appear in the world around them. By examining a selection of Bornstein's later works, students will further experiment with materials, shapes, and orientations to learn how these elements of form and structure impact stability.

Big Idea

Structures need support

Learning Goals

1. I can use my critical thinking and creative skills to analyze a piece of artwork and make specific observations.
2. I can use proper terminology when discussing the art I see.
3. I can follow all safety rules and instructions when using tools such as hot-glue guns.
4. I can define the form and function of a cantilever.
5. I can build a cantilever using a variety of materials.
6. I can describe how a cantilever can be made strong and stable.
7. I can discuss how Eli Bornstein uses cantilevers in his relief artworks.

Materials

- Eli Bornstein [biographical information sheet](#)
- [Eli Bornstein Image File](#)
- [Eli Bornstein: Life & Work](#)
- Cardboard
- Cardstock
- Chart paper and markers
- Construction paper
- Hot glue and hot-glue guns
- Plywood or similar large, flat surface
- Scissors
- Scrap wood or blocks
- Tape

Process

1. Describe a cantilever, a structure that is secured at only one end. Have students offer examples from their own lives, both constructed objects (e.g., floating bookshelves, balconies, offset shade umbrellas, basketball hoops) and natural structures (e.g., tree branches, palm fronds, leaves, wings, limbs, antennae).



Fig 18. Eli Bornstein, *Double Plane Structurist Relief No. 3*, 1967–69. Here, Bornstein experimented by folding the work's ground plane in half at a 90-degree angle.

Learning Activity #2 continued

2. Introduce students to Eli Borstein using the biographical information sheet and show examples of cantilever blocks in *Double Plane Structurist Relief No. 3*, 1967–69; *Hexaplane Structurist Relief No. 2* (Arctic Series), 1995–98; *Quadriplane Structurist Relief No. 1* (River-Screen Series), 1989–96; *Quadriplane Structurist Relief No. 2* (River-Screen Series), 1989–96; and *Quadriplane Structurist Relief No. 3* (River-Screen Series), 1989–96. Project images from the provided image file or print copies and post them around the classroom. Discuss how cantilever structures are used in Borstein’s work.

3. Discuss why cantilevers are difficult to support (small area for attaching, bending forces, gravity) while examining Borstein’s work.

4. Have a student hold a heavy object close to their body and then at arm’s length. How does it feel when holding the object close to the body? How does it feel when the object is farther away? Discuss how the same weight is harder to support with distance/ bending forces.

5. Task students with trying to create cantilevers by hot-gluing objects onto a vertical surface (e.g., cardstock or plywood). Students should experiment with different weights, shapes, densities, and orientations of their cantilevers. Have students try folded versus flat, long versus short, thick versus thin, horizontal versus vertical, singular versus braced by another piece. Stress that not all experiments should work and that having a material, shape, or orientation that breaks or bends is not a bad thing. Remind students that they can learn from both successes and failures.

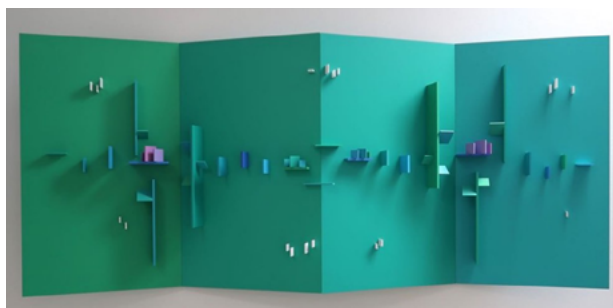


Fig 19. Eli Bornstein, *Quadriplane Structurist Relief No. 1* (River-Screen Series), 1989–96. Bornstein often uses vibrant colours to evoke phenomena seen in nature.

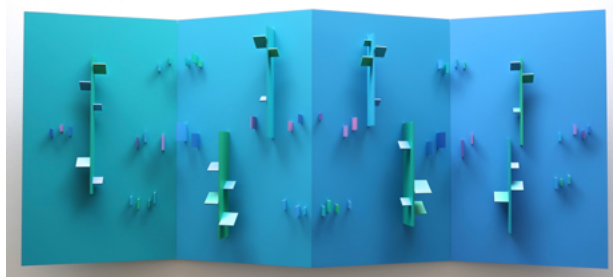


Fig 20. Eli Bornstein, *Quadriplane Structurist Relief No. 2* (River-Screen Series), 1989–96. This series brilliantly captures the cycle from day to night using hues of blue and green.

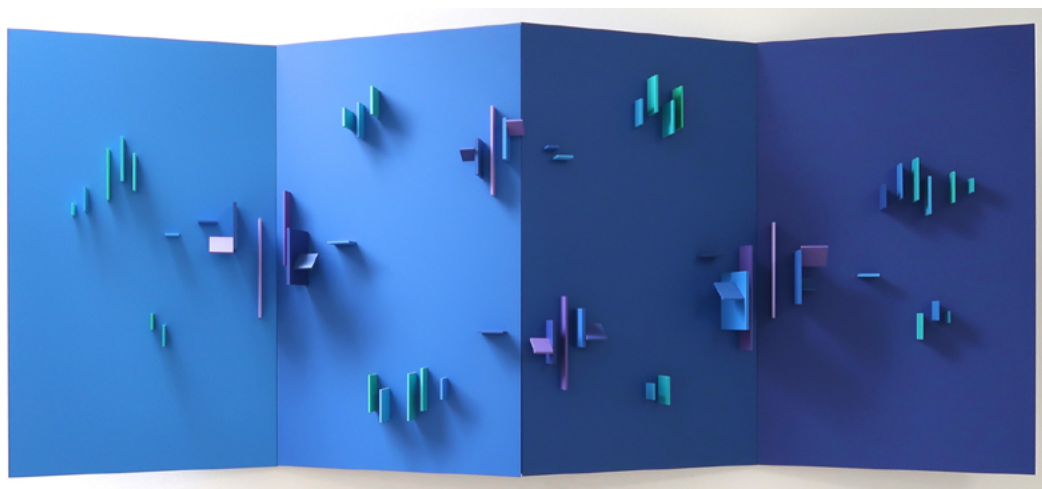


Fig 21. Eli Bornstein, *Quadriplane Structurist Relief No. 3* (River-Screen Series), 1989–96. Bornstein takes great care to light his works in specific ways, seeing lighting as part of the experience.

Learning Activity #2 continued

6. Ask students to hot-glue each material to a large piece of cardstock, plywood, or similar flat surface. Have them make predictions about which of the creations will stand up and which will bend or break. When the glue has cooled, the backing material can be held vertically to see which materials, shapes, and orientations hold firmly and which bend or break.
7. Have students group their experiments into those that stood up (strong, stable) and those that failed (bent, flopped over, broke off). What qualities did the strong and stable structures have in common? Review and discuss which materials, shapes, and orientations worked best to make cantilever structures.
8. Return to Eli Bornstein's work and identify how he uses the same strategies students found through their experimentations (vertical orientations, supporting vertical braces, short wide pieces, bent/corrugated shapes) to make his artwork strong and stable. Create a list on chart paper and post it in the classroom.

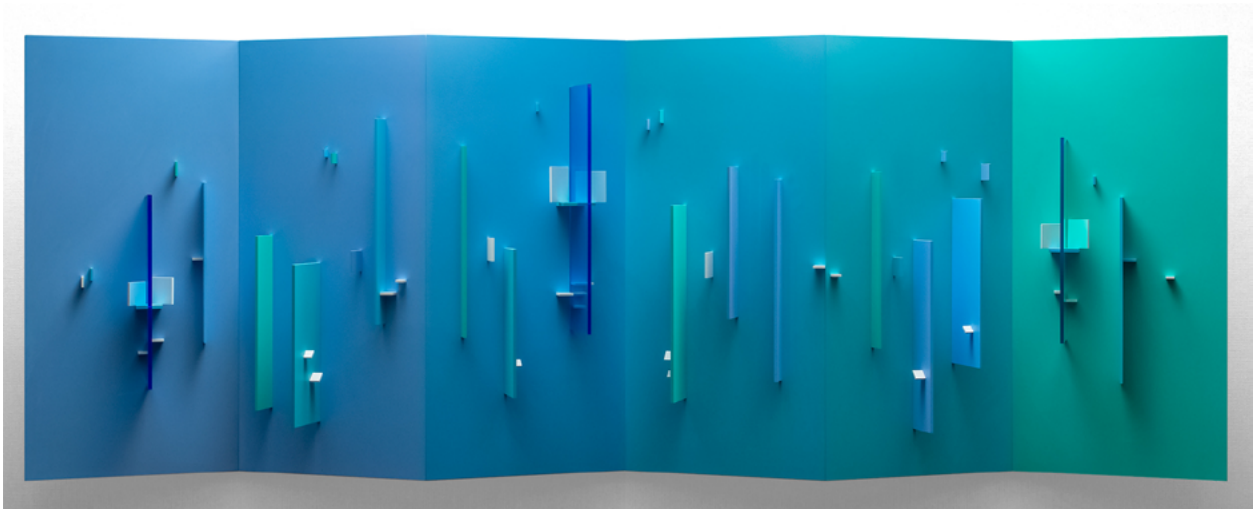


Fig 22. Eli Bornstein, *Hexaplane Structurist Relief No. 2 (Arctic Series)*, 1995–98. The reliefs in Bornstein's Arctic Series are some of the most sublime in his oeuvre.

CULMINATING TASK

THE BEAUTY OF STRENGTH

Throughout his career, Bornstein has used innovative techniques and materials to create his Structurist Reliefs—an entirely unique means of creative expression. His works combine strong, stable structures with minimalist form to capture the complexity of nature. Using their understanding of Bornstein’s work and their exploration of form and structure, students will create their own relief or three-dimensional artworks inspired by Bornstein and his innovative career.

Big Idea

Planning for stability

Learning Goals

1. I can use my critical thinking and creative skills to analyze a piece of artwork.
2. I can use my understanding of strong, stable structures to create a sculpture.
3. I can use proper terminology when discussing sculpture and structures.
4. I can talk about my work and the work of my peers using proper visual arts and science terminology.

Success Criteria

To be added to, reduced, or changed in collaboration with students.

1. Written work and conversations show an understanding of how to create a strong, stable structure.
2. Artwork is created with care. You work slowly and submit your best work.
3. Artwork is carefully planned, with clear reference to learning about strong, stable structures.
4. Artist statements and other documentation show specific decisions made and how they relate to learning about structures.

Materials

- [Eli Bornstein Image File](#)
- [Eli Bornstein: Life & Work](#)
- Camera
- Cardboard in a variety of thicknesses
- Cardstock in a variety of colours
- Construction paper in a variety of colours
- Glue sticks
- Hot glue and hot-glue guns
- Lamps/flashlights
- Scissors
- Sketchbooks
- Tape



Fig 23. Eli Bornstein, *Tripart Hexaplane Construction No. 2*, 2002–6. In the early 2000s, Bornstein evolved his wall-mounted reliefs into a series of free-standing works.

Culminating Task continued

Process

1. Review a selection of Bornstein's Structurist Reliefs and refresh students' memories on the structures, materials, and arrangements he uses in his sculptural works. Discuss how Bornstein uses colour, line, shape, and space. Also examine how light and shadow are shown in his relief works.
2. Examine closely *Tripart Hexaplane Construction No. 2*, 2002–6; *Tripart Hexaplane Construction No. 2* (model), 2002–6; *Four Part Vertical Double Plane Structurist Relief* (Winter Sky Series), 1980–83; View A of *Four Part Vertical Double Plane Structurist Relief Nos. 14–17* (Winter Sky Series), 1980–83; and View B of *Four Part Vertical Double Plane Structurist Relief Nos. 14–17* (Winter Sky Series), 1980–83.
3. Tell students that they will be creating their own pieces inspired by Bornstein's work. Their completed three-dimensional artwork should demonstrate an understanding of how to make interesting structures that are strong and stable. The scale of the works can be tailored to available resources and display space.
4. Review with students the materials provided and the learning they have done about strong and stable structures. Review the key strategies from the chart paper from Learning Activity #2.
5. Have students plan their proposed sculpture in their sketchbooks. They should include the colours they will use and indicate how they intend to apply their learning to make the structure strong and stable. These details could be included as short notes or annotations on their drawing or described in a conversation with the class.
6. Provide students with time to experiment and begin creating their proposed artwork with the materials provided. Circulate and observe students as they work. Take notes on how students are problem-solving. Provide feedback and prompt them to think about their learning by engaging them in conversation about the strategies they are using to make their work strong and stable.
7. Document and photograph the structures made by the students. Students can use desk lamps or flashlights to light their structures in an interesting way or to highlight key features.
8. Have students create a statement to display with their final work. The statement should identify two strategies they used to make their sculpture strong and stable.
9. Display the students' works and their statements in a public space for the community to view, if possible.

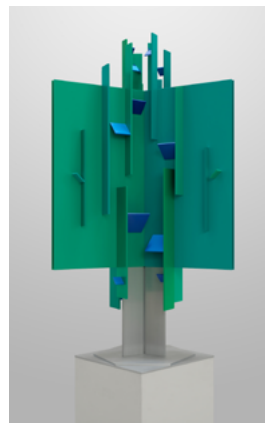


Fig 24. Eli Bornstein, *Tripart Hexaplane Construction No. 2* (model), 2002–6. Throughout his career, Bornstein has used models to plan out his larger works.



Fig 25. Eli Bornstein, *Four Part Vertical Double Plane Structurist Relief* (Winter Sky Series), 1980–83. This is the largest work Bornstein has produced to date.



Fig 26. View A of Eli Bornstein, *Four Part Vertical Double Plane Structurist Relief Nos. 14–17* (Winter Sky Series), 1980–83. As the title suggests, this work is an homage to winters on the Canadian Prairies.

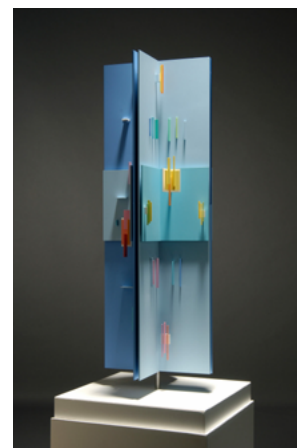


Fig 27. View B of Eli Bornstein, *Four Part Vertical Double Plane Structurist Relief Nos. 14–17* (Winter Sky Series), 1980–83. Bornstein personally mixes many of the colours he uses to paint his reliefs.

HOW ELI BORNSTEIN MAKES ART: STYLE & TECHNIQUE

Here are a few of the important artistic concepts that characterize the art of Eli Bornstein. For more information, see the [Style & Technique](#) chapter of *Eli Bornstein: Life & Work* by Roald Nasgaard.

THE STRUCTURIST RELIEF

Eli Bornstein's most significant contribution to contemporary art in Canada is the Structurist Relief, an art form that combines elements of painting and sculpture to create something entirely new. The Structurist Relief is a form of abstract art that takes its cues from nature. But, importantly, it does not replicate the natural world. Instead, the Structurist Relief is meant to evoke a person's experience of nature. According to author Roald Nasgaard, Bornstein's reliefs "are built using colour blocks and planes that are activated by ambient light and meticulously choreographed by the artist into a dynamic organic unity."

PAINTING INTO RELIEF

During his early career, Bornstein worked in a variety of traditional media, including painting, printmaking, and sculpture. A keen student of modernism, Bornstein incorporated into his early representational paintings, such as *Saskatoon*, 1954, lessons he had learned from studying some of the most important artistic movements of the twentieth century, including Post-Impressionism and Cubism. In the late 1950s, Bornstein began to move away from static media and embrace relief construction as his mode of making. Reliefs are sculptural objects with constructed elements that rise from a base that is mounted to a wall. Bornstein adapts elements of this form for his Structurist Reliefs, which he sees as a continuation of the tradition of landscape painting.

SCULPTURAL CONSTRUCTION

In his earliest sculptures, Bornstein worked with natural materials such as wood and stone, carving small constructions such as *Shelomo*, 1949–56, with a nod to the work of Romanian sculptor Constantin Brâncuși (1876–1957). Later, Bornstein turned from carving to assembling, creating three-dimensional works such as *Growth Motif Construction No. 3*, 1956, out of manufactured materials—namely, brass and aluminum. This shift in method was an important development on the way to conceptualizing his Structurist Reliefs, which are similarly assembled from different parts.

WORKING WITH INDUSTRIAL MATERIALS

Bornstein's Structurist Reliefs are often mistakenly regarded as a nod to industry because they are composed of manmade materials and created with the use of drill presses, air compressors, and computerized milling machines. Author Roald Nasgaard insists that Bornstein "harnesses technology to finesse his expressive means." He avoids the use of manufactured materials to enhance the intangible elements of his work that are seen in nature—namely, light and colour.



Fig 28. Eli Bornstein, *Saskatoon*, 1954. This semi-representational painting depicts the Bessborough, a grand hotel located in downtown Saskatoon.



Fig 29. Eli Bornstein, *Shelomo*, 1949–56. When creating some of his earliest sculptures, Bornstein took inspiration from the work of Constantin Brâncuși.

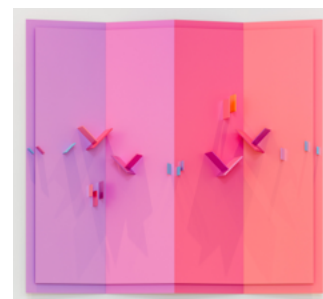


Fig 30. Eli Bornstein, *Quadriplane Structurist Relief No. 15-II*, 2016–17. The vibrant pinks and oranges used in this relief are reminiscent of a sunset.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Supplementary Materials Provided by the Art Canada Institute

- The online art book *Eli Bornstein: Life & Work* by Roald Nasgaard: <https://www.aci-iac.ca/art-books/eli-bornstein>
- [Eli Bornstein Image File](#) with artworks and images related to this lesson
- “Who is Eli Bornstein?” biographical information sheet ([page 2](#))
- Timelines of national and world events and Eli Bornstein’s life ([page 3](#))
- “How Eli Bornstein Makes Art: Style & Technique” information sheet ([page 11](#))

GLOSSARY

Here is a list of terms that appear in this resource guide and are relevant to the learning activities and culminating task. For a comprehensive list of art-related terms, visit the Art Canada Institute’s ever-growing [Glossary of Canadian Art History](#).

Abstract art

Also called “nonfigurative” or “nonrepresentational art”, abstract art uses form, colour, line, and gestural marks in compositions that do not attempt to represent images of real things. It may interpret reality in an altered form or depart from it entirely.

Bauhaus

Open from 1919 to 1933 in Germany, the Bauhaus revolutionized twentieth-century visual arts education by integrating the fine arts, crafts, industrial design, and architecture. Teachers included Josef Albers, Walter Gropius, Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, and László Moholy-Nagy.

Constructivism

Emerging in Russia in the early 1920s, Constructivism was an artistic trend that championed a materialist, non-emotional, utilitarian approach to art and linked art to design, industry, and social usefulness. The term continues to be used generally to describe abstract art that employs lines, planes, and other visual elements in composing abstract geometric images of a precise and impersonal nature.

Modernism

A movement extending from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century across artistic disciplines, modernism rejected academic traditions in favour of innovative styles developed in response to contemporary industrialized society. Modernist movements in the visual arts have included Gustave Courbet’s Realism and, later, Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Fauvism, Cubism, and on to abstraction.

Structurist

An art form that refers to nature-based geometric abstraction, developed by leading practitioner Charles Biederman. Key progenitors in the lineage of Structurist art include Édouard Manet, Paul Cézanne, and Piet Mondrian. Artist Eli Bornstein has contributed to the recognition of the genre through the international art journal *The Structurist*, which he established in 1960.



Fig 31. Eli Bornstein with the cover proof of the 1997–98 issue of *The Structurist*, the journal he founded in 1960.

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

The following external resources can be used to augment the learning activities and materials provided by the Art Canada Institute. They are to be used at the teacher's own discretion.

1/ "Cantilever" — Encyclopaedia Britannica

<https://www.britannica.com/technology/cantilever>

2/ "Strong and Stable Structures" — Queen's University Library

<https://guides.library.queensu.ca/pj-science/grade-3/structures>

3/ "Natural Structures" — Ontario Science Centre

<https://www.ontariosciencecentre.ca/teachers-plus-students/teacher-resources/curriculum-resources/natural-structures>

4/ "Grade 3 Science at Home" — Science North

<https://www.sciencenorth.ca/grade-3>

5/ "Structures" — Science World British Columbia

https://www.scienceworld.ca/wp-content/uploads/attachments/5_TWOS_BSLH2_Structures.pdf

6/ "Strong Structures Teacher Resource Package" — Scientists in School

<https://scientistsinschool.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Strong-Structures-Teacher-Resource-Package.pdf>



Fig 32. Installation view of *An Art at the Mercy of Light: Recent Works* by Eli Bornstein at the Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, 2013.

FIGURE LIST

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Cover Image: Eli Bornstein, *Quadriplane Structurist Relief No. 15-II*, 2016–17, acrylic enamel on aluminum, 122 x 137 x 15.3 cm. The Mendel Art Gallery Collection at Remai Modern, Saskatoon, Gift of the artist, 2017 (2017.12). Courtesy of Remai Modern. Photo credit: Blaine Campbell.

Fig 1. Installation view of *Artist in Focus: Eli Bornstein* at Remai Modern, Saskatoon, 2019. Courtesy of Remai Modern. Photo credit: Blaine Campbell.

Fig 2. Eli Bornstein installing his work for *Artist in Focus: Eli Bornstein* at Remai Modern, Saskatoon, 2019. Courtesy of Remai Modern. Photo credit: Troy Mamer.

Fig 3. Installation view of *Structurist Relief No. 6*, 1999–2000, *Structurist Relief No. 7*, 2000–2001, and *Structurist Relief No. 8*, 2000–2002, by Eli Bornstein at the Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, 2013. Courtesy of Remai Modern. Photo credit: Troy Mamer.

Fig 4. Eli Bornstein, *The Island*, 1956, watercolour on paper, 53.5 x 74 cm. Collection of the artist. Courtesy of Eli Bornstein.

Fig 5. Eli Bornstein, *Growth Motif No. 4*, 1956, welded, silver-brazed, and tinned bronze and brass on limestone base, 22.9 cm (h). Collection of the artist. Courtesy of Eli Bornstein.

Fig 6. The Bauhaus, located in Dessau, Germany, n.d. Photograph © Nate Robert via Flickr / CC BY-SA 2.0.

Fig 7. Vladimir Tatlin and an assistant in front of the model for his *Monument to the Third International*, 1920. Photographer unknown. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

Fig 8. Sorel Etrog, *Complexes of a Young Lady*, 1962, bronze, edition of 2, 270 x 75 x 52 cm. Hart House Collection, University of Toronto, gift of Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Zacks, 1970 (HH1970.003). © The Estate of Sorel Etrog (2020). Photo credit: Craig Boyko.

Fig 9. Eli Bornstein on the occasion of his graduation from the Milwaukee State Teachers College, 1945. Photographer unknown. Courtesy of Eli Bornstein.

Fig 10. Cover of *The Structurist*, no. 1, "Structurist Origins/Developments," edited by Eli Bornstein (Saskatoon: University of Saskatchewan, 1960). Courtesy of the University of Saskatchewan, University Archives and Special Collections.

Fig 11. Eli Bornstein with one of his Structurist reliefs in *An Art at the Mercy of Light: Recent Works by Eli Bornstein* at the Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, 2013. Courtesy of *Saskatoon StarPhoenix*, a division of Postmedia Network Inc. © Postmedia Network Inc. Photo credit: Michelle Berg.

Fig 12. Eli Bornstein, *Growth Motif Construction No. 3*, 1956, welded, brazed, and tinned bronze and brass on limestone and aluminum base, 55.9 x 20.3 x 20.3 cm. Location unknown. Courtesy of Eli Bornstein.

Fig 13. Eli Bornstein, *Structurist Relief No. 3-1* (Canoe Lake Series), 1964, oil on wood relief, 68.6 x 61 x 15.2 cm. Private collection.

Fig 14. Eli Bornstein, *Structurist Relief No. 2*, 1966, enamel on wood and Plexiglas, 86.4 x 61 x 15.6 cm. Private collection.

Fig 15. Eli Bornstein, *Structurist Relief No. 1*, 1965, oil, aluminum, and Plexiglas, 99.1 x 73.7 x 17.1 cm. Private collection.

Fig 16. Eli Bornstein, *Structurist Relief No. 3* (Sea Series), 1966–67, enamel on Plexiglas and aluminum, 86.5 x 61 x 15.6 cm. Collection of the artist. Courtesy of the University of Saskatchewan, University Archives and Special Collections.

Fig 17. Eli Bornstein, *Aluminum Construction (Tree of Knowledge)*, 1956, welded aluminum on stone base, 458 cm (h). Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Building, Saskatoon. Photo credit: Roald Nasgaard.

Fig 18. Eli Bornstein, *Double Plane Structurist Relief No. 3*, 1967–69, enamel on Plexiglas and aluminum, 66.7 x 66.7 x 34.3 cm. Collection of the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Purchased 1973 (1973.011.001). Courtesy of the University of Saskatchewan.

Fig 19. Eli Bornstein, *Quadriplane Structurist Relief No. 1* (River-Screen Series), 1989–96, acrylic enamel on aluminum and Plexiglas, 60.4 x 137.8 x 14.6 cm. Collection of the artist. Courtesy of Roald Nasgaard. Photo credit: Roald Nasgaard.

Fig 20. Eli Bornstein, *Quadriplane Structurist Relief No. 2* (River-Screen Series), 1989–96, acrylic enamel on aluminum and Plexiglas, 60.4 x 137.8 x 14.6 cm. Collection of the artist. Courtesy of Roald Nasgaard. Photo credit: Roald Nasgaard.

Fig 21. Eli Bornstein, *Quadriplane Structurist Relief No. 3* (River-Screen Series), 1989–96, acrylic enamel on aluminum and Plexiglas, 60.4 x 137.8 x 14.6 cm. Collection of the artist. Courtesy of Roald Nasgaard. Photo credit: Roald Nasgaard.

Fig 22. Eli Bornstein, *Hexaplane Structurist Relief No. 2* (Arctic Series), 1995–98, acrylic enamel on aluminum and Plexiglas, 67.2 x 182.2 x 15.9 cm. Collection of the University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Gift of Dorothea Adaskin, 2005 (2005.001.001). Courtesy of the University of Saskatchewan.

Fig 23. Eli Bornstein, *Tripart Hexaplane Construction No. 2*, 2002–6, acrylic enamel on anodized aluminum and concrete base, 205.25 x 107.8 x 107.8 cm. Collection of the University of Manitoba, Gift of Eli Bornstein, 2007. Courtesy of Liv Valmestad. Photo credit: Liv Valmestad.

Fig 24. Eli Bornstein, *Tripart Hexaplane Construction No. 2* (model), 2002–6, acrylic enamel on aluminum and anodized aluminum, 93.4 x 47.5 cm. Collection of the artist. Courtesy of Remai Modern. Photo credit: Troy Mamer.

Fig 25. Eli Bornstein, *Four Part Vertical Double Plane Structurist Relief* (Winter Sky Series), 1980–83, acrylic lacquer on aluminum and Plexiglas on welded steel, 640.1 x 342 cm (d). Wascana Centre Authority, Regina. Photo credit: Roald Nasgaard.

Fig 26. View A of Eli Bornstein, *Four Part Vertical Double Plane Structurist Relief Nos. 14–17* (Winter Sky Series), 1980–83, enamel on aluminum and Plexiglas on steel frame, 104.1 x 38.1 x 38.1 cm. Model of commission for Wascana Centre Authority. Collection of the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, Gift of Eli Bornstein (DR2008:0028). Courtesy of the Canadian Centre for Architecture.

FIGURE LIST

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Fig 27. View B of Eli Bornstein, *Four Part Vertical Double Plane Structurist Relief Nos. 14–17* (Winter Sky Series), 1980–83, enamel on aluminum and Plexiglas on steel frame, 104.1 x 38.1 x 38.1 cm. model of commission for Wascana Centre Authority. Collection of the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, Gift of Eli Bornstein (DR2008:0028). Courtesy of the Canadian Centre for Architecture.

Fig 28. Eli Bornstein, *Saskatoon*, 1954, gouache on gesso panel, 58.5 x 74 cm. Private collection. Courtesy of Eli Bornstein.

Fig 29. Eli Bornstein, *Shelomo*, 1949–56, granite on walnut base, 30 cm (h). Collection of the artist. Courtesy of Eli Bornstein.

Fig 30. Eli Bornstein, *Quadriplane Structurist Relief No. 15-II*, 2016–17, acrylic enamel on aluminum, 122 x 137 x 15.3 cm. The Mendel Art Gallery Collection at Remai Modern, Saskatoon, Gift of the artist, 2017 (2017.12). Courtesy of Remai Modern. Photo credit: Blaine Campbell.

Fig 31. Eli Bornstein with the cover proof of the 1997–98 issue of *The Structurist*, 1998. Photographer unknown. University of Saskatchewan Photograph Collection, University of Saskatchewan, University Archives and Special Collections (A-11126). Courtesy of the University of Saskatchewan, University Archives and Special Collections.

Fig 32. Installation view of *An Art at the Mercy of Light: Recent Works by Eli Bornstein* at the Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon, 2013. Courtesy of Remai Modern. Photo credit: Troy Mamer.