



SAY IT WITH A SIGN!

FOR AGES: 12-18

MATERIALS: Paper, scissors, pencil, and markers, crayons, or colored pencils.



"One sign in Barnsdall Park," 1934, Los Angeles Herald Examiner Collection/Los Angeles Public Library; Ansel Adams, "Civilized Voices" detail, c. 1940. Ansel Adams Horizon Magazine Collection/Los Angeles Public Library

Aline Barnsdall, the original owner of Hollyhock House, was a political activist and used billboards on her Olive Hill property to communicate her viewpoints to passersby on the busy streets of Hollywood and Sunset Boulevards. She embraced the use of this outdoor advertising platform to get her messages across long before contemporary artists like Barbara Kruger did so. Both Barnsdall and Kruger have shown that words are powerful. Kruger's bold, text-based installations—such as [Untitled \(Questions\)](#), 1990-2018, currently on view at MOCA's Geffen Contemporary in downtown Los Angeles—raise important political and social issues today, just as Barnsdall's billboards had in the 1920s and 1930s.

Aline Barnsdall hired Lloyd Wright, son of Hollyhock House architect Frank Lloyd Wright, to create dynamic billboard displays. Look at the photographs of Barnsdall's billboards. What was innovative about Lloyd Wright's design? What message is Barnsdall sharing in her "Barnsdall Park" billboard? In your opinion, how successful is her chosen form of communication? How do you think it could be improved?

Create an original billboard design by cutting out an original shape from a piece of paper. Then, write an attention-grabbing message about a cause you feel strongly about.