

# Landmarks Guide for Adolescents



**Tony Smith**  
American, 1912–1980

***Amaryllis***  
1965  
Painted steel

---

**Subject:** Geometric Abstraction

**Activity:** Making 3D shapes in 2D

**Materials:** Construction paper, glue or tape, scissors, and pencil

**Vocabulary:** 2D, 3D, geometric, Geometric Abstraction, Minimalism

## **i** Introduction

Tony Smith worked as an architect with Frank Lloyd Wright before becoming a sculptor in his forties. Working in the style of Geometric Abstraction and Minimalism, Smith believed that beauty could be found in simple geometric shapes. As you can see in this sculpture, using simple shapes, Smith made a form that is quite complex. As you walk around the sculpture, notice how different it looks from each side. Viewing the work from different angles makes some shapes prominent and others less apparent. Artists working in a Minimalist style strove to remove any evidence of the artist's hand from their work. One way they tried to achieve this is through the industrial manufacture of their works. Smith made small cardboard models of his works, and then had a factory fabricate them in steel. The works were then painted matte black.

## **?** Questions

How does the matte black color of this sculpture impact how we see all of its shapes? Does it help or hinder?

Do you find the shapes and form of this sculpture to be beautiful?

Amaryllis is a kind of lily. Do you think this sculpture is representative of a flower?



### Activity

On colored construction paper, draw a variety of geometric shapes in different sizes. When you have drawn fifteen or more, use scissors to cut out all of your shapes. On another sheet of white paper, experiment with arranging the shapes together. See if you can combine your 2D, flat shapes to make more complex forms that appear to be three-dimensional. Using tape or glue, arrange your 2D and 3D shapes to make a dynamic composition.



### Vocabulary

**2D** - Having two dimensions or sides (length and width)

**3D** - Having three dimensions or sides (length, width, and height)

**Geometric** - Using simple shapes and elements such as lines, circles, squares, and triangles

**Geometric Abstraction** - A style of art that uses geometric shapes to create a composition that is not representational or realistic

**Minimalism** - A style of art that strips down work to its most fundamental features, such as geometric shapes