

STORM KING ART CENTER

DENNIS OPPENHEIM: TERRESTRIAL STUDIO
CLOSES NOVEMBER 13, 2016

Exhibition Traces the Artist's Lifelong Engagement with Outdoor Space
Through Such Major Installations as *Dead Furrow* and *Entrance to a Garden*



Entrance to a Garden, 2002. Painted steel angle, perforated stainless steel, bolts, landscaping material. 6 x 10 x 8' (4.9 x 3 x 2.4 m). ©Dennis Oppenheim. Courtesy Dennis Oppenheim Estate. Photo: Jeffrey Sturges.

Mountainville, NY, November 7, 2016—*Dennis Oppenheim: Terrestrial Studio* is currently on view at Storm King Art Center, closing November 13, 2016. The major exhibition features outdoor and indoor sculpture, installation, sound, film, and photography as well as two major earthworks conceived by the artist, but never fully realized in his lifetime. *Terrestrial Studio* is organized in close collaboration with the Dennis Oppenheim Estate and includes works on loan and in Storm King's collection. The exhibition is installed in several locations across Storm King's landscape including the South Fields, Meadows, and Museum Hill, as well as inside the Museum Building. It is organized by Storm King Director and Chief Curator, David R. Collens; Curator Nora Lawrence, and Assistant Curator Theresa Choi. Also on view is the fourth installment of Storm King's *Outlooks* series, featuring site-specific outdoor installations by Josephine Halvorson.

Dennis Oppenheim: Terrestrial Studio includes work by Dennis Oppenheim (1938-2011) from different points in his diverse and substantial career. First rising to prominence for earthworks in the late 1960s, Oppenheim ventured outdoors not only to transcend the physical confines of the exhibition space, but also to work beyond the limitations of the gallery setting. A fiercely creative artist, he produced work that cannot be encompassed within

the boundaries of any single movement or style. The exhibition at Storm King is focused on works that are in a continuous dialogue with the natural world and artificial or built environment. The title, *Terrestrial Studio*, is a term Oppenheim used to describe his artistic relationship with outdoor space. As this exhibition demonstrates, he introduced into his work earth materials, his body, memory, sound, film, and performance.

Storm King President John Stern says, “We are proud to host the first monographic museum exhibition of Dennis Oppenheim’s work in the United States since 2007. Oppenheim was a brilliant and prolific artist who enjoyed making works in outdoor spaces, and he continues to inspire a younger generation.”

The work *Entrance to a Garden* (2004) is installed on top of Museum Hill. It comprises both a perforated metal sculpture that takes the form of a large, blue, men’s dress shirt and tie with an arched entryway, and a hedge-rimmed garden in the shape of the dress shirt—an imagined shadow of the sculpture. Although Oppenheim conceived the garden and had displayed the shirt, the work has never before been executed with its full shadow configuration. Visitors pass through the arched entryway, and find benches in the form of buttons and cuffs.

In Storm King’s South Fields is *Dead Furrow*, a large earthwork that Oppenheim designed in 1967 in both indoor and outdoor versions, but showed only as the indoor, gallery-sized version. *Dead Furrow* was conceived as a “structure for viewing land.” The Storm King execution of the piece follows the artist’s proposed enlargement for outdoors, which allows visitors to enter a central “viewing platform” of the work—becoming part of the artwork as they experience Storm King’s landscape. The installation is the first full-scale, outdoor realization of *Dead Furrow*. Parallel lengths of colored industrial pipe, simulating double furrows in an endless field, surround the geometric, concrete structure.

Wishing the Mountains Madness (1977) contrasts the expansive field and the infinite sky. In this work, star units are randomly distributed across four acres of land, bringing constellations to the earth while inverting the sky and ground. Photographs shown in the Museum Building invite visitors to experience the work in a two-dimensional form.

In the North Woods, Storm King’s own *Architectural Cactus #6* (2009) is joined by *Architectural Cactus #1* through *Architectural Cactus #5* to create the colorful and whimsical *Cactus Grove*. Also in the North Woods is Oppenheim’s *Alternative Landscape Components* (2006), which are welded steel and acrylic rocks, steel bushes, and trees with foliage assembled using industrial materials. The full vocabulary of elements, including flowerbeds, hedges, plants, and more, are on view in the Museum Building in drawings demonstrating their potentially infinite unique configurations.

A piece at the entrance to the Museum Building bridges indoor and outdoor works: the artist’s footsteps, recorded as *A Sound Enclosed Land Area* (1969), are audible there. Upstairs, the sounds of bees swarming can be heard in the work *Beehive Volcano* (1979). Films documenting performance work are on view, including *Star Exchange* (1970) and *Toward Becoming a Scarecrow* (1971), which explore how, for this artist, the natural world can contain marks of relationships and personal histories.

One gallery is devoted to words inscribed on landscape, including projects that Oppenheim documented in photography, and others that he proposed in altered photographs. *Narrow Mind* (1974) spells out its title with light from flares placed between train tracks in New Jersey, while Oppenheim proposed that a series of salutations,

including *Sincerely* (2006), would be dug, in flowing, watery script, as an extension of the Sacramento River.

The exhibition is accompanied by a dedicated [website](#) and a fully illustrated publication which includes an interview from 2006 between Dennis Oppenheim and Willoughby Sharp and an essay by Storm King Curator Nora Lawrence.

About Dennis Oppenheim

Originally from the Bay Area in California, Dennis Oppenheim moved to Brooklyn, New York, in 1967. In 1968, he established a permanent live-work studio south of Canal Street in lower Manhattan. An early practitioner of earthworks, body art, and Conceptual art, he later became known for his ambitious public installations and sculptures. In a series of works produced between 1970 and 1974, Oppenheim used his own body as his medium, challenging the concept of the self to explore the boundaries of personal risk, transformation, and communication. In 1981, his work moved in a new direction with complex, mechanized constructions that functioned as metaphors for the artistic process. By the mid-1980s, Oppenheim made sculpture based on the transformation of everyday objects. From the mid-1990s until his death in 2011, he focused on the production of large-scale permanent structures that combined sculpture and architecture. Oppenheim received a BFA from the California College of Arts and Crafts, Oakland, in 1965, and an MFA from Stanford University in 1966. He received a Guggenheim Foundation Fellowship in 1969, National Endowment for the Arts Fellowships in 1974 and 1982, and a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Vancouver Sculpture Biennale in 2007. His works have been included in major group exhibitions at the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Centre George Pompidou, Paris; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and several editions of the Venice Biennale and Documenta, Kassel. Solo exhibitions have been presented by the Tate Gallery, London; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. Major retrospective exhibitions have been presented by the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam; Musée d'Art Contemporain, Montreal; and P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York. Public collections holding works by Oppenheim include the Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Art, Washington DC; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Tel Aviv Museum; Tate Gallery, London; and Samsung Foundation of Art and Culture, Seoul.

About Storm King Art Center

Storm King Art Center is one of the world's leading sculpture parks. Located in New York's Hudson Valley about an hour north of New York City, Storm King encompasses over 500 acres of rolling hills, woodlands, and fields of native grasses and wildflowers. This landscape provides a dramatic backdrop for a collection of more than 100 large-scale sculptures by some of the most acclaimed artists of our time, including Alice Aycock, Louise Bourgeois, Alexander Calder, Mark di Suvero, Andy Goldsworthy, Sol Lewitt, Maya Lin, Louise Nevelson, Claes Oldenburg, Nam June Paik, Richard Serra, David Smith, and Ursula von Rydingsvard, among others.

Storm King is located at 1 Museum Road in New Windsor, New York. For information about hours and admission, membership, public transportation and directions, Zipcar discounts, special events, family activities, bike rentals, and the cafe, visit www.stormking.org, or call 845-534-3115.

Join the conversation on social media by mentioning **Storm King Art Center** and using the hashtags #StormKing and #DennisOppenheim when posting.

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