

Storm King's Sculptured Green

BY JESSIE KEITH
PHOTOS BY JERRY L. THOMPSON

Powerful, expressive staging of modern sculpture in a naturalistic landscape setting—that is what the Storm King Art Center does best. The expansive Hudson River Valley sculpture park and museum was founded 50 years ago by H. Peter Stern and the late Ralph E. Ogden, co-owners of Star Expansion Company, a manufacturing firm based in rural Mountainville, N.Y. Today

Storm King is a leading sculpture park that unites magnificent art with beautiful landscapes. Visitors to this year's were treated to a spectacular exhibit representing the sculpture park, created by MODA Botanica in partnership with Storm King staff. At Storm King, placement and presentation are as important as the more than 100 sculptural works of art displayed throughout

the 500-acre park. Figurative, abstract, and naturalistic pieces by some of the most influential contemporary sculptors of our time, including Alexander Calder, Mark di Suvero, and Isamu Noguchi, are framed with vision—making the landscape as essential to the park as the art itself. Sometimes the landscape is the art, as in the examples of a meandering stone

fencing by Andy Goldsworthy and an earth and grass sculpture by Maya Lin. According to Storm King's director and curator, David R. Collens, the park's formation and design was largely based on the vision of its founders and landscape architect, William Rutherford, Sr. "Bill

had great vision," stressed Collens. "His goal was to enhance the naturalistic landscape, shape vistas, and create plantings that never appear staged but frame the art. Bill continued to contribute to the Storm King landscape until he

passed away in 2006." The attention to detail is apparent in the seemingly effortless way the sculptures are framed within the park. "Careful consideration is given to the incorporation and presentation of each piece," Collens says. "When we

acquire permanent sculptures, a lot of work goes into their placement. Take Alexander Calder's *The Arch*. Before adding it, we subtly raised an open farm field as a platform and created a walking path towards it through the field. Then we incorporated plantings of native grasses. The land-

scape changes are subtle but effective." Not only do the skillfully sculpted landscapes gracefully support the sculpture, but the plants themselves are carefully chosen. At Storm King, look for non-invasive native plants that enhance the park's features. Corridors of native trees, including an allée

of 200 pin oaks (*Quercus palustris*) and another of sugar maples (*Acer saccharum*), add clean lines where needed. Large sweeps of native grasses, such as purpletop (*Tridens flavus*), big bluestem (*Andropogon gerardii*), little bluestem

Maya Lin (b. 1959)
Storm King Wavefield, 2007-2008
Earth and grass
240,000 square feet (11 acre site)

(*Schizachyrium scoparium*), and Indian grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*), are planted in harmony with emphasis on complimentary colors, textures, and bloom times.

Storm King Art Center was one of the participating museum partners in the 2014 PHS Philadelphia Flower Show, “ARTiculture.” The partnership continues with a special offer for PHS members. From its season opening on April 2 through August 31, 2014, Storm King is offering PHS Household members and above two free adult admissions (a \$30 value) upon presentation of their PHS membership card at Storm King’s admission booth. For more information about Storm King Art Center, including directions and hours, please visit stormking.org.

More recently, subtle plantings of native wildflowers—including butterflyweed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), showy goldenrod (*Solidago speciosa*), and many aster species—have been added to grasslands to enhance color and habitat value.

What led to the creation of such an expansive and impressive sculpture park? Originally, the founders sought to focus on artists of the Hudson River School, but the landscape and the times afforded the opportunity to create something more. David Collens elaborates: “The extraordinary landscape is what sparked the idea for a sculpture park, and with New York City and its art base so close, it seemed like a good marriage. When the park was founded, artists were just at the point of taking small models to foundries and having them realized. And foundries, like North Haven’s Lippincott Foundry, were close by. The timing was good.”

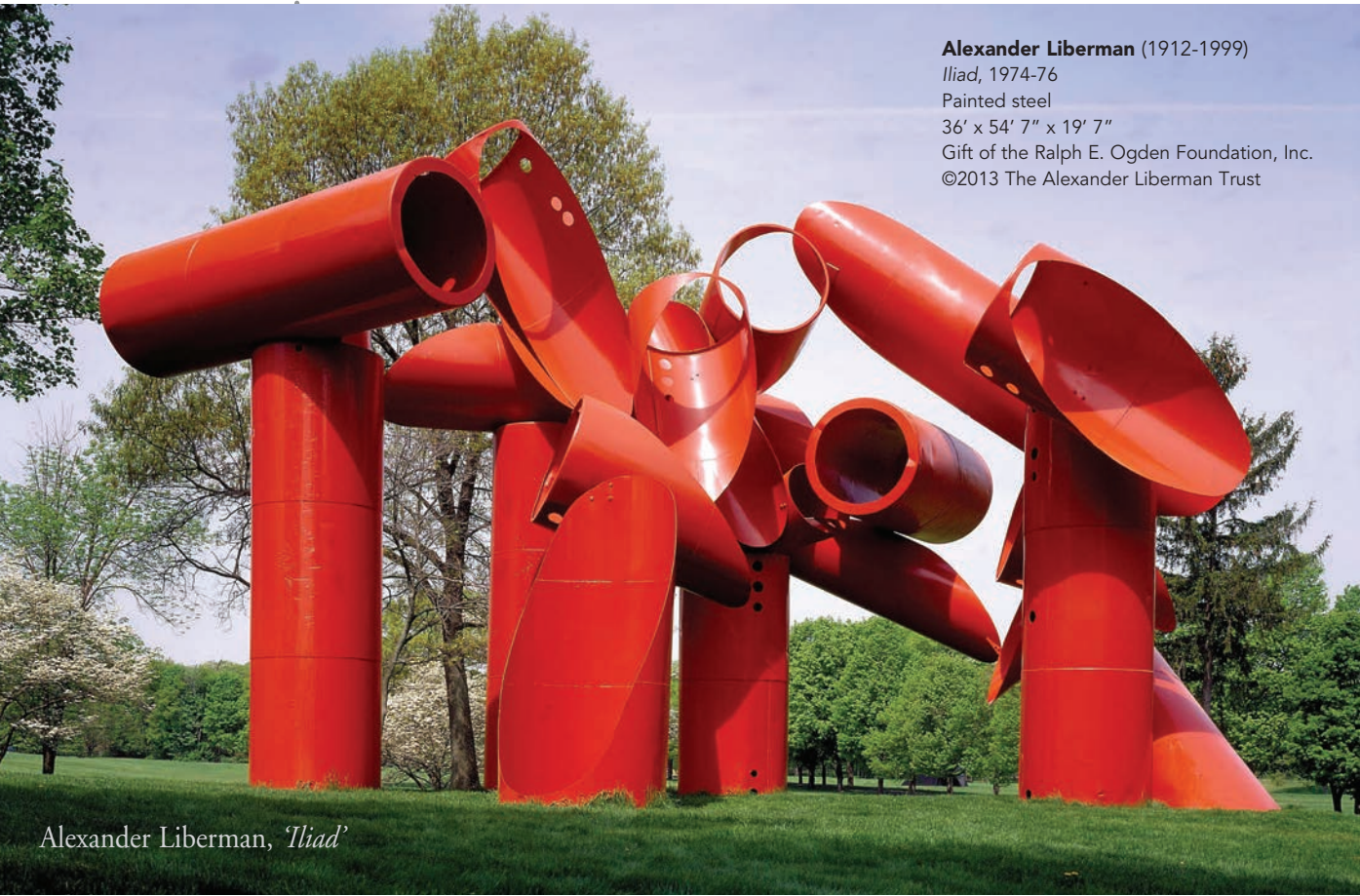
Now Storm King’s many visitors reap the rewards of that great vision and good timing. Last year alone, more than 106,000 visi-

tors from all over the world visited the park, an all-time high. In addition to the park, an indoor museum houses smaller sculptures in the permanent collection and annual exhibitions that typically include larger-scale works outdoors.

This season’s highlights include the major exhibitions *Zhang Huan: Evoking Tradition and Outlooks: Virginia Overton*, a site-specific project that responds to Storm King’s landscape, which opens on Saturday, May 3. A Summer Solstice Party featuring a menu by chefs Peter Hoffman and Shelley Boris, will be held on Saturday, June 14.

Visitors interested in recreation can also rent bikes or hike along an extensive network of trails that extend deep within the larger property, which maintains beautiful vistas of the nearby Schunemunk Mountain and Moodna Creek.

Storm King is truly a worthwhile destination for lovers of art, gardening, and nature. It leaves the visitor satisfied on all counts and invites repeat visits for further exploration.



Alexander Liberman (1912-1999)
Iliad, 1974-76
Painted steel
36' x 54' 7" x 19' 7"
Gift of the Ralph E. Ogden Foundation, Inc.
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Alexander Liberman, *Iliad*



Mark di Suvero, *Frog Legs*, *Mozart's Birthday*, *Neruda's Gate*(??)

Mark di Suvero (1933-)
Left to right:
Frog Legs, 2002, Steel, 26' 8" x 11' radius.
Lent by the artist and Spacetime C.C., New York.
Mozart's Birthday, 1989, Steel, 23' x 40' x 40'.
Gift of Maurice Cohen and Margo Cohen.
Neruda's Gate, 2005, Steel, 26' 9" x 25' x 8',
Lent by the artist and Spacetime C.C., New York.



Menashe Kadishman (1932-)
Suspended, 1977
Weathering Steel
23' x 33' x 48'
Gift of Muriel and Philip I. Berman



Mark di Suvero (1933-)
Left to right:
Pyramidian, 1987/1998. Steel, 65' x 46' x 46'.
Gift of the Ralph E. Ogden Foundation, Inc.
Beethoven's Quartet, 2003. Steel, stainless steel, 24' 7" x 30' x 23' 3".
Lent by the artist and Spacetime C.C., New York.