

Art in America

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW

NEWS & OPINION

Weathering the Storm

by *kimberly chow*

To celebrate its fiftieth year, this weekend Storm King Art Center opens a pair of exhibitions that take a look forward and a look back. In the last century, Storm King has evolved from what was first envisioned as a regional museum of Hudson Valley painters to a 500-acre park known for large-scale sculptural works that interact with landscape. This dedication to sculpture began to



URSULA VON RYDINGSVARD, LUBA, 2009–2010.
COURTESY GALERIE LELONG,
PHOTO BY JERRY L THOMPSON

develop in the late 60s and early 70s, after Storm King founder Ralph E. Ogden (a manufacturer turned appreciator of more precious forms) saw David Smith's sculptures set in the fields around the artist's home in Bolton Landing, New York; the Art Center promptly bought 13 works from the artist's estate.

5+5: New Perspectives consists of large-scale sculptural work by five artists who are represented in and have helped define the Storm King collection (Alice Aycock, Chakaia Booker, Mark di Suvero, Andy Goldsworthy, Usula von Rydingsvard); and five artists who are new to the sculpture park (John Bisbee, Maria Elena Gonzalez, Darrell Petit, Alyson Shotz, Stephen Talasnik).

The new exhibition inside Storm King's granite Museum Building—originally the residence of New York lawyer Vermont Hatch in the 1930s—*The View From Here: Storm King at Fifty* examines different aspects of the sculpture park's history. Galleries document early years in Storm King's collection, and explain how the Art Center acquires, sites and maintains its works. Individual rooms have been devoted to

artists whose works have figured significantly in the Storm King collection: Alexander Calder, David Smith, Claes Oldenburg. The steps of the artists' work process are revealed here. In the Calder room, you can see a marked-up aluminum model of one of his works, and the section

devoted to Oldenburg features fabrication sketches and drawings for his 1979 installation *Wayside Drainpipe*.

In these fiftieth year exhibitions, even the new and recent works by artists appearing for the first time at Storm King acknowledge the history of the sculpture park and the sculptures that have come before them. Talasnik's *Stream* is a 15-foot-long, 12-foot-tall kidney-shaped structure of lashed-together bamboo, recalling his influences of rollercoasters, architecture and time spent in Asia. The site-specific *Stream* abuts a hill just below the Museum Building; it's a particular part of the park, which according to Storm King curator David Collens had not been used before. Talasnik chose the spot, the artist explained while completing the installation Thursday afternoon, for its proximity to works by artists who have inspired him, particularly Isamu Noguchi. Noguchi's *Momo Taro* (1977–1978) rides the top of the hill. The landscape architect's 40-ton, stone interpretation of the Japanese legend—the story of a boy born from a peach—is explained in a framed, handwritten letter (with carets and crossed-out lines) on display in *The View From Here*.

Another work involves the entirety of Storm King, in a sense. Gonzalez's interactive *You & Me* (2010) asks visitors to stand at marked points in the park and follow the artist's suggested sightlines. This creates new views of older work on the grounds (framing di Suveros and Calders in the distance) and of fellow visitors standing at other points. Gonzalez's project is another, artist-imposed way of experiencing Storm King, which can otherwise feel a bit like a browsing a greatest-hits collection of 20th and 21st century sculpture if your visit is rushed.

THE VIEW FROM HERE OPENS JUNE 5. STORM KING ART CENTER IS LOCATED AT OLD PLEASANT VILL ROAD, MOUNTAINVILLE, NEW YORK.