

# Dennis Oppenheim's Art Receives Major Examination in "Terrestrial Studio" at Storm King

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by Hamptons Art Hub Staff

NEW WINDSOR, N.Y. – The art of [Dennis Oppenheim](#) receives a close examination this summer at [Storm King Art Center](#) in Upstate New York in the Lower Hudson Valley. Teaming up with the artist's estate, "[Dennis Oppenheim: Terrestrial Studio](#)" will present outdoor and indoor sculpture plus installation, sound, film, photography and unveil two major earthworks conceived by the artist, but never fully realized in his lifetime. The exhibition will be installed in several locations set across Storm King's landscape including the South Fields, Meadows, and Museum Hill, as well as inside the Museum Building. The show is organized by Storm King Director and Chief Curator, David R. Collens; Curator Nora Lawrence, and Assistant Curator Theresa Choi.

Opening simultaneously are site-specific outdoor installations by [Josephine Halvorson](#) as part of the sculpture park and art museum's Outlooks series. Both exhibitions will be on view from May 14 through November 13, 2016. Storm King opens for the season on April 6, 2016 and remains open to visitors through November 27.

"Dennis Oppenheim: Terrestrial Studio" will include 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.

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



“Red Rocks (from Alternative Landscape Components)” (detail) by Dennis Oppenheim, 2006. Acrylic and steel. Four elements: 44 x 42 x 36”; 66 x 56 x 30”; 36 x 36 x 36”; 42 x 42 x 42”. ©Dennis Oppenheim. Courtesy Dennis Oppenheim Estate.

On top of Museum Hill, the work [Entrance to a Garden](#) (2004) will be installed. 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 has displayed the shirt, the work has never before been executed with its full shadow configuration. Visitors will pass through the arched entryway, and find benches in the form of buttons and cuffs.

In Storm King’s South Fields will be [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 will follow 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 will be the first full-scale, outdoor realization of Dead Furrow. The geometric, concrete structure will be surrounded by parallel lengths of colored industrial pipe, simulating double furrows in an endless field.

[Wishing the Mountains Madness](#) (1977) contrasts the expansive field and the infinite sky. In this work, star units will be 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) will be joined by [Architectural Cactus #1](#) through [Architectural Cactus #5](#) to create the colorful and whimsical Cactus Grove. In

various locations on Storm King’s property, Oppenheim’s [Alternative Landscape Components](#) (2006)—welded steel and acrylic rocks, shrubs, and trees with foliage of cut industrial and common household items—will be sited nearby their real-world counterparts. Preliminary drawings for this extensive series will be shown in the Museum Building.

A sound piece at the entrance to the Museum Building will bridge indoor and outdoor works: the artist’s footsteps, recorded as [A Sound Enclosed Land Area](#) (1967), will be audible there. Upstairs, the sounds of bees swarming will be heard in the work [Beehive Volcano](#) (1979). Films documenting performance work will be on view, including [Star Exchange](#) (1970) and [Toward Becoming a Scarecrow](#) (1971), which will explore how, for this artist, the natural world can contain marks of relationships and personal histories.

One gallery will be 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 will be accompanied by a dedicated website and a fully illustrated publication.

Dennis Oppenheim lived and worked in New York City, since 1968, and East Hampton (since 1985) at the time of his death. Dennis Oppenheim’s work is included in collections by major museums worldwide including Tate Gallery (London); Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam); Reina Sofia (Madrid); [The Metropolitan Museum of Art](#), the [Whitney Museum of American Art](#), the [Brooklyn Museum](#), the Jewish Museum, [MoMA’s PS1](#) (all in New York), the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Seattle Museum of Art and others. In South Florida, Oppenheim’s work is included the collections of [Museum of Contemporary Art](#) (North Miami, FL); Florida International University Art Museum (Miami); Fort Lauderdale Museum of Art and others. In the Hamptons, Oppenheim’s art is included in collections held by [Guild Hall](#) and the [Parrish Art Museum](#).

Storm King Art Center is set on 500-acres of fields and woodlands in the lower Hudson Valley. The outdoor sculpture park presents over 100 sculptures sited to speak to the landscape and to the art around it.

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**BASIC FACTS:** “Dennis Oppenheim: Terrestrial Studio” is on view from May 14 to November 13, 2016. Storm King Art Center is located at 1 Museum Rd, New Windsor, NY 12553. [www.stormking.org](http://www.stormking.org).

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