

# STORM KING ART CENTER

STORM KING TO PRESENT *DAVID SMITH: THE WHITE SCULPTURES*  
FROM MAY 13 – NOVEMBER 12, 2017

Exhibition is the First to Critically and Fully Explore the Artist's Use of the Color White

2017 Marks a Formative Anniversary in Storm King's History:  
50 Years Ago, Storm King Acquired 13 David Smith Sculptures and Sited them Directly in the  
Landscape, Beginning Storm King's Central Practice of Pairing Art and Nature



David Smith, *Primo Piano II*, 1962. Steel, painted, and bronze. 85 x 158 x 15 in. (215.9 x 401.3 x 38.1 cm).  
The Estate of David Smith, New York, courtesy Hauser & Wirth.  
© The Estate of David Smith/Licensed by VAGA, New York. Photo by Jerry L. Thompson.

Mountainville, NY, February 9, 2017—Storm King Art Center will present ***David Smith: The White Sculptures***, from May 13 to November 12, 2017, the first exhibition to critically and fully consider the use of the color white within David Smith's works. At the time of the artist's death in 1965, eight monumental steel sculptures, painted white, stood in the fields surrounding his home and studio in the Adirondack Mountains; many of these will be on view at Storm King. *David Smith: The White Sculptures* will be the first public presentation to unite three among these—the entire *Primo Piano* series: *Primo Piano I, II, and III*, all from 1962. The exhibition will also feature a selection of Smith's earliest constructions, created out of white coral gathered by the artist during his stay in the Virgin Islands in 1931-32, and rarely shown since.

"We're thrilled to present the extraordinary work of David Smith for our 2017 season, and to highlight an artist who has played a vital role in Storm King's history," says **Storm King President, John P. Stern**. "Our presentation provides a singular opportunity to see a focused series of Smith's work, while celebrating the deep connections between his art and one of the core values of Storm King's mission: to explore art in nature."

The exhibition celebrates the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Storm King's 1967 acquisition of 13 Smith sculptures,

which were sited directly in the landscape. This marked the start of Storm King's focus on the large-scale, outdoor art installations for which it is now well known. The central works of the exhibition, large welded-steel constructions that Smith painted with white industrial enamel, will be installed outdoors on Storm King's Museum Hill. Smaller sculptures as well as paintings, drawings, and photographs that further explore the artist's use of white will be displayed inside Storm King's Museum Building.

Following Smith's death, his white sculptures became central to an art-historical debate regarding proper custodianship of works of art when Clement Greenberg, an executor of the David Smith Estate, had the artist's white paint stripped from five of Smith's sculptures. Greenberg's actions were exposed in a 1974 *Art in America* article by the influential art historian and Smith scholar Rosalind Krauss. The works were subsequently restored to their original white color by the Estate. *David Smith: The White Sculptures* is the first exhibition to bring together and present these works as a group, and to offer viewers the opportunity to fully consider Smith's complex use of the color white.

David Smith (1906-1965) is widely considered to be one of the foremost artists of the twentieth century, and was the American sculptor most linked to Abstract Expressionism. In 1933 he made the first welded iron sculpture in America, and went on to produce a diverse body of work that has influenced the generations of sculptors who have followed. In the 1950s, Smith began to install groups of sculptures in the fields outside his home and studio in the Adirondack Mountains, contemplating and photographing them in all seasons against the sky, clouds, and surrounding scenery. Smith emphasized the visual nature of sculpture as image, and innovatively incorporated open space into his work. He used white both as a color and as a means to define the structure of positive and negative space in his large outdoor sculptures as well as in his *Sprays* - paintings and works on paper he produced with industrial spray enamel. Seen in Storm King's natural landscape, whose rolling hills approximate the geography of Smith's Adirondack property, *David Smith: The White Sculptures* will echo Smith's commitment to presenting art and nature as integrated entities.

*David Smith: The White Sculptures* is made possible by generous lead support from the Bafflin

Foundation, Hauser & Wirth, the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Support is also provided by Candida Smith and Carroll Cavanagh and The Henry Moore Foundation. Additional support is provided by the Robert Lehman Foundation, Inc. Support for the exhibition catalogue is provided by Furthermore: a program of the J.M. Kaplan Fund.

Support for education-related programming is provided by the Sidney E. Frank Foundation, and artist talks are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.



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On view concurrently from May 13 through November 12, 2017 will be the exhibition ***Outlooks: Heather Hart***, an interactive, sculptural environment in the form of a domestic rooftop, which will be activated by performances, discussions, and events. *Outlooks*, now in its fifth year, is an exhibition series that invites one emerging or mid-career contemporary artist to create a new, site-specific work to be installed at Storm King for a single season.

### **Publication**

*David Smith: The White Sculptures* will be accompanied by a fully illustrated publication, as well as a video that documents Smith's career and the history of Storm King's involvement with David Smith's work.

### **New York City Public Program**

#### ***David Smith: Artists Respond***

**Wednesday, February 15, 6:30pm**

#### **Storm King Art Center at Parsons School of Design**

The Bob and Sheila Hoerle Lecture Hall/Hoerle Lecture Hall, The New School University Center  
63 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY

Corin Hewitt and Erin Shirreff will be in discussion with Sarah Hamill, revealing moments of intentional and unexpected intersection between their practices and the life and work of David Smith. The program is inspired by Storm King's forthcoming exhibition *David Smith: The White Sculptures*.

Reserve tickets through [davidsmithartistsrespond.eventbrite.com](http://davidsmithartistsrespond.eventbrite.com).

### **About David Smith**

David Smith was an American sculptor, painter, draftsman, and photographer. Born on March 9, 1906, in Decatur, Indiana, Smith moved in 1926 to New York, where he studied painting at the Art Students League. He began to work in sculpture in the early 1930s, making constructions from wood, wire, stone, aluminum rod, soldered metal, and found materials. He also began to weld metal sculptures using an oxyacetylene torch, producing a group of “heads” made from found tools and machine parts that were likely the first welded-metal sculptures made in the United States. In 1940, Smith moved permanently to Bolton Landing, in upstate New York. There he began to create and install in the fields around his home increasingly large-scale sculptures, many of which—like the unique works that comprise his Tanktotem, Zig, and Cubi series—reveal the artist’s constantly evolving formal and thematic vocabulary. Smith was awarded Guggenheim Fellowships in 1950 and 1951. He represented the United States at the 1951 International Biennale in Sao Paulo and at the Venice Biennial in 1954 and 1958, and was appointed to the National Council on the Arts by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965. Smith died in an automobile accident on May 23, 1965.

David Smith’s work is owned by numerous national and international public collections including: the Museum of Modern Art, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, in New York; the Art Institute of Chicago; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Storm King Art Center; Tate Modern, London; the Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum, Duisberg, Germany; and the Israel Museum, Jerusalem. Recent solo exhibitions include presentations at museums and galleries in New York, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC, as well as in London, Paris, Munich, Valencia, and Zurich. Smith’s sculptures are prominently featured in the Royal Academy’s *Abstract Expressionism* exhibition, which remains on view in London until January 2017, then travels to the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao.

### **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. There are periodic Winter Weekends and special events throughout the winter, though Storm King is essentially closed to the public from December through March, reopening April 5, 2017. 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](http://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, #TheWhiteSculptures, #Outlooks, and #HeatherHart when posting.

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