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ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Outdoor Sculptures Kissed by Nature

The Region Holds Some of the Best Parks for Showcasing Artworks, and Here's Where to Find Them

By BENJAMIN GENOCCHIO

From where I stand, there is sculpture as far as the eye can see. That's the beauty and power of art in the natural world. It surrounds you, bonding with the landscape. It gives you a way of looking at nature, and art, in a new way.

ART REVIEW

I am visiting the LongHouse Reserve outside East Hampton. But I could easily be in Westchester, Connecticut or New Jersey. The New York region has a surprising diversity of outdoor sculpture parks that come alive each spring; each makes for a restorative weekend outing.

Some of these parks have newly installed sculptures, several with a Pop accessibility and aesthetic distinction that set them apart from so many other colorless, assembly-line outdoor works — you know the stuff I'm griping about, painted steel hulks rusting away in a suburban park or field.

What follows is a selection of the best outdoor sculpture parks and public art installations around the region this summer.

Westchester

It would be hard to find anyone who doesn't love Storm King, a 500-acre property in the Hudson Valley in New York encompassing woods, a stream, several ponds, alfalfa fields, lawns and rolling hills dotted with spectacular sculptures. Alluring pieces

by Deborah Masters and Louise Bourgeois are among the newest additions to the center's superb permanent collection of post-war American and European works.

Ms. Bourgeois's sculptures are grouped near the patio of the museum building beneath a fringe of leaves. Among them is one of her menacing 10-foot-high bronze spiders poised to strike its prey. Other pieces are tamer, but no less unsettling, including several granite benches, each carved in the shape of a human eyeball.

Over by the parking area, Ms. Masters has installed a group of three carved concrete figurative sculptures titled "Travelers" (2007). The group, portraying a displaced family, was conceived as a response to news media images of refugees fleeing disasters. The mother carries an infant and

household items, the father holds a lamb, and the child juggles a fish and bird. Tender and affecting, the pieces remind visitors of the suffering of those who have little else than the land we walk on.

Storm King Art Center, Old Pleasant Hill Road, Mountainville; (845) 534-3115 or www.stormking.org.

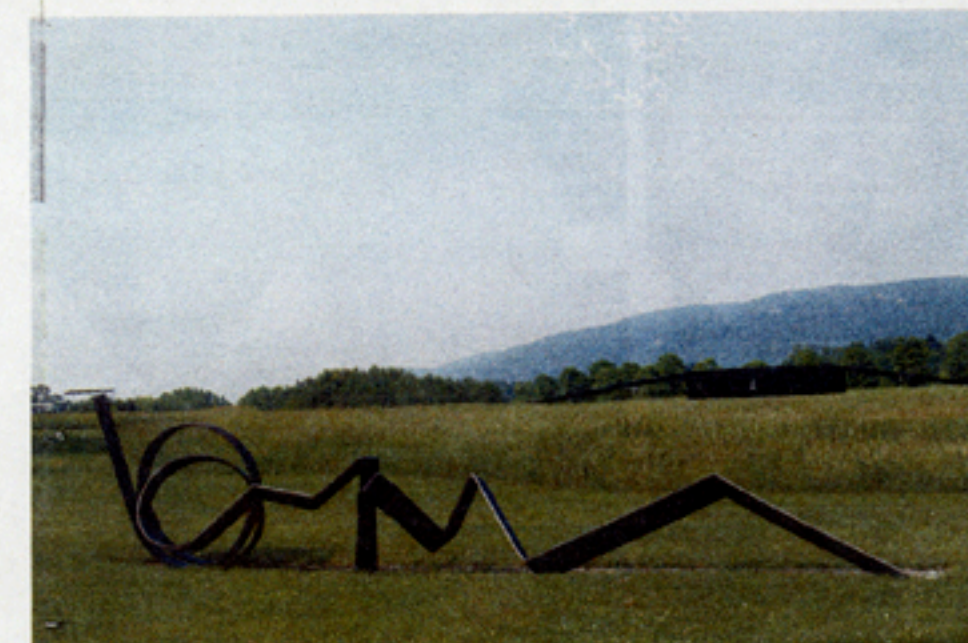


Photographs by Susan Stava for The New York Times



INSTALLATIONS

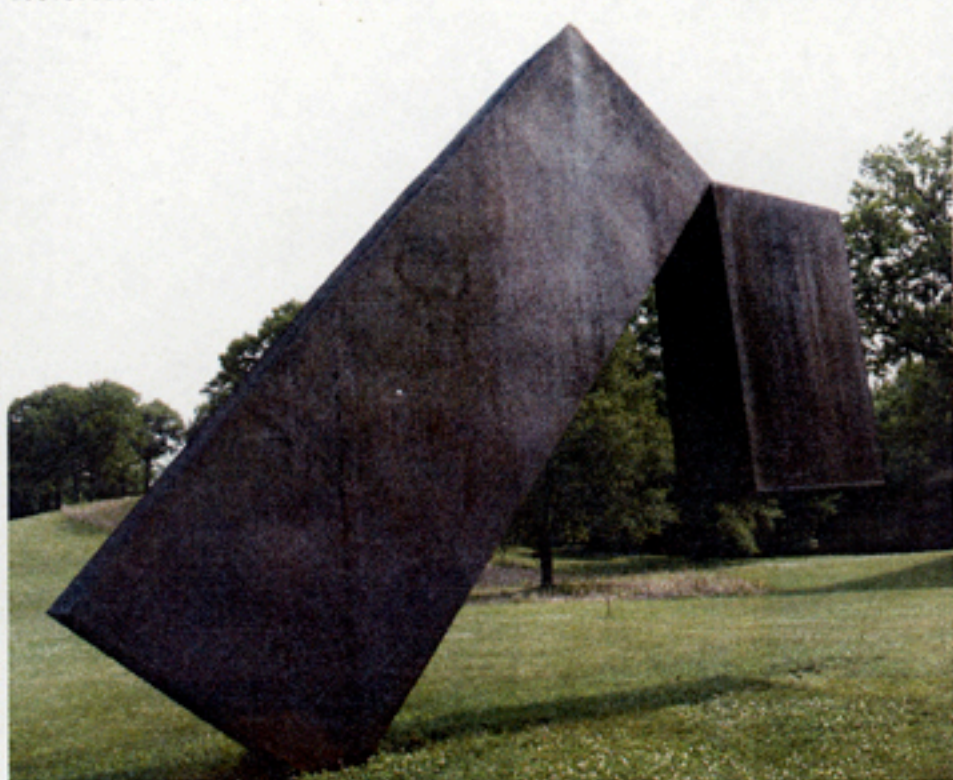
Clockwise, from top left, Roy Lichtenstein's "House II" (1997) at LongHouse Reserve; Louise Bourgeois's "Eye Benches II" at Storm King; Deborah Masters's "Tomashi" at Storm King; pieces by Matej Andraz Vogrincic set up in the Farmington Canal; Curt Brill's "Dana" (2003) at Grounds for Sculpture; and Dennis Oppenheim's "Entrance to a Garden" (2004), a shirt-shaped steel mesh arch, at LongHouse Reserve.



Foreground, "Day Game" by David Stoltz. Back, untitled work by Robert Grosvenor.



A park bench is dwarfed by Alexander Liberman's "Iliad."



The aptly named "Suspended" by Menashe Kadishman.

BIG on art

Storm King Art Center does sculpture in a big way, even massive.

From bigger than life size to awe-inspiring in size, shape, texture and color.

While the artwork may be large, the canvas on which they are displayed is even larger — 500 acres of hills, valleys and woods. And in those woods are tucked smaller sculptures, more closely aligned with smaller parks.

The center itself is off the beaten path on Old Pleasant Hill Road in Mountainville, but some of the sculptures, because of their enormity, are easily seen while driving on the New York state Thruway.

The latest installations are two works that were commissioned by the center, both by Deborah Masters. "Travellers" consists of three large figures; a man, woman and teen-age girl. All were cast in concrete. The other work consists of a sole female head — 7 feet high — called "Tomashi."

Director and Curator David Collens, who has been with the center for 33 years, has been instrumental in attracting many of the sculptors whose work is on or has been on display.

He is a veritable walking encyclopedia on sculpture.

The center is open at 11 a.m. Wednesdays through Sundays. For more information, visit www.stormking.org.

— Bob Rozycki



Deborah Masters' newly installed "Tomashi" peers over a ridge.



A close-up view of Alexander Liberman's "Adonai."



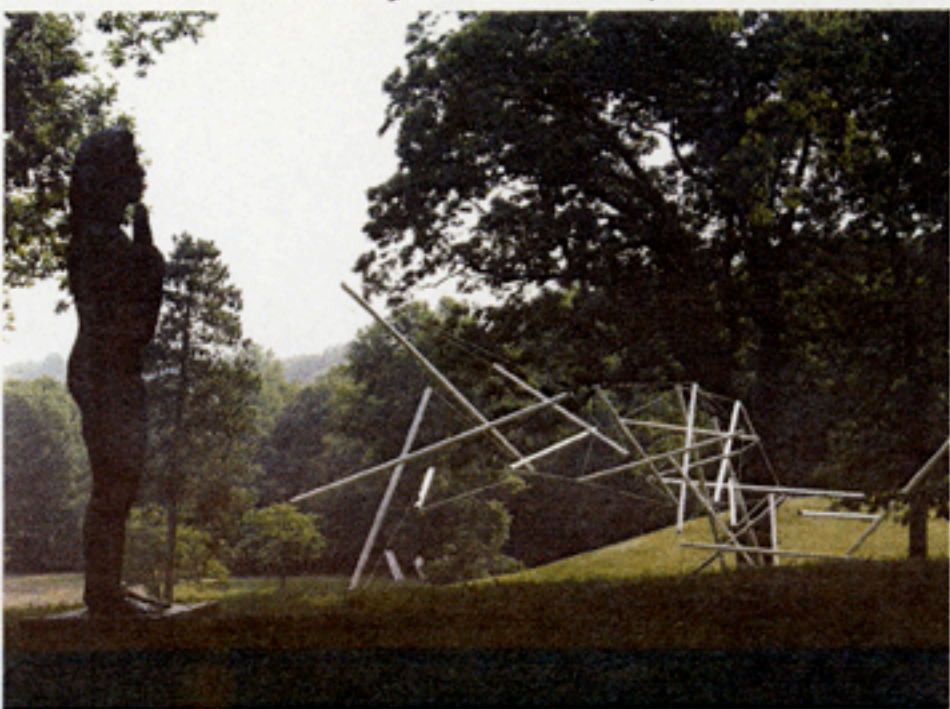
Stone columns from the Danskammer mansion were erected in 1964.



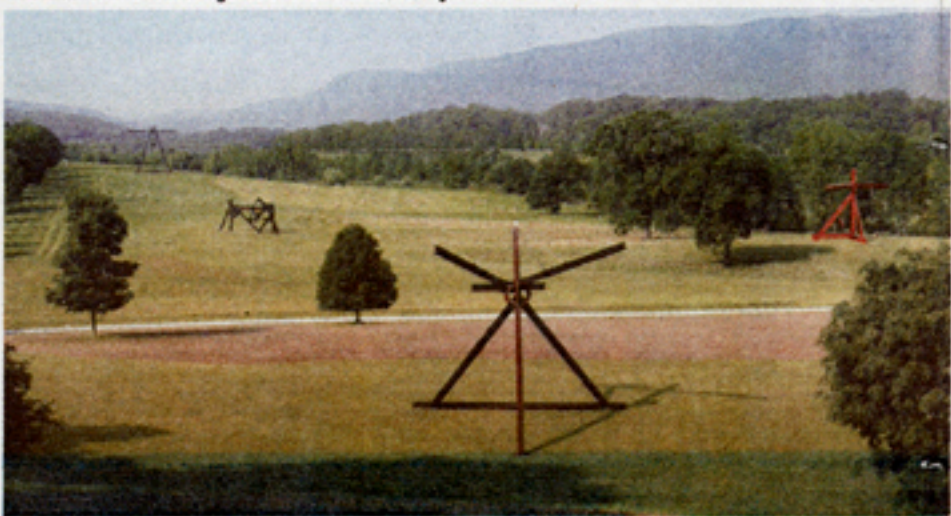
David Collens in front of the museum building, which was built in 1935 as a private residence.



The mother and father figures of the "Travellers" by Deborah Masters.



A member of the "Travellers" trio stands in silhouette above Kenneth Snelson's "Free Ride Home."



Mark di Suvero's sculptures can be seen from the nearby Thruway.