

Storm King Art Center

For Immediate Release
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STORM KING ANNOUNCES OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF *STORM KING WAVEFIELD*, MONUMENTAL WORK BY MAYA LIN

*Four-acre earthwork opens to public May 9, 2009,
accompanied by special exhibition of renowned artist's work.*

On May 9, 2009, the Storm King Art Center, in Mountainville, New York, launches *Storm King Wavefield*, the largest site-specific earthwork created to date by acclaimed artist and environmentalist Maya Lin. Occupying an eleven-acre site that was a gravel pit until Ms. Lin reclaimed it for the work, the ambitious *Storm King Wavefield* comprises seven rows—each over 300 feet long—of carefully scaled, undulating hills that give the appearance of ocean waves. The four-acre work culminates a series of three wavefields by Ms. Lin. It is the newest addition to the sculpture park's distinguished permanent collection.

Storm King Art Center President John P. Stern states, "We are thrilled to add this work by Maya Lin, one of the most influential environmental artists of our time, to the Art Center's collection. *Storm King Wavefield* is singular in both ambition and its literal integration of art and landscape. This project perfectly reflects Storm King's mission of bringing nature and sculpture into harmony."

Maya Lin adds, "I am enormously pleased to have had the opportunity to create a work in this superb setting. It is my hope that, by providing an immersive environment that blurs the distinction between viewer and artwork, and artwork and nature, *Storm King Wavefield* will focus visitors' attention on the landscape in which the work is sited."



Maya Lin. *Storm King Wavefield*, 2007-2008. Earth and grass. 240,000 square feet (11-acre site). Storm King Art Center, Mountainville, New York. Photograph by Jerry L. Thompson.

Storm King Wavefield

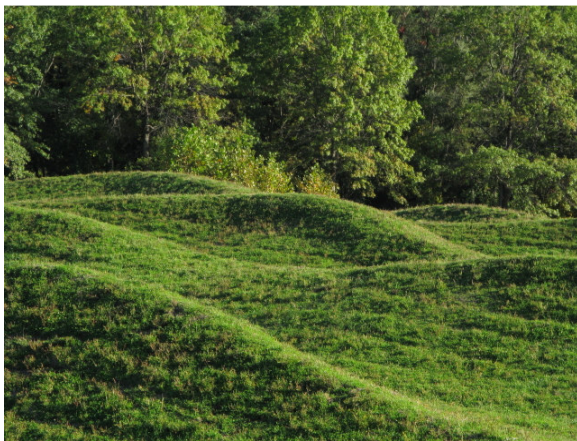
Storm King Wavefield is a pastoral, mesmerizing work that encourages active viewer participation. Inspired by studies of naturally occurring wave formations, which Lin has abstracted, the sculpture evokes a tension between movement and stasis. Over the course of creating the work,

the artist visited the Art Center on numerous occasions, walking the terrain and drawing inspiration from the natural “galleries” defined by tree-lines, meadows, woodland, sky, and mountains. The site she selected is located in a secluded area of the southwestern part of the sculpture park.

Storm King Director and Curator David Collens notes, “Maya Lin has created a magnificent addition to the Art Center’s collection of post-war sculpture, one that establishes an engaging dialogue with other works. In addition, she produced the wavefield in the most environmentally sensitive manner, beginning with materials that were already on site and adding only topsoil and low-impact grasses.”

Using the concept of fluid dynamics and applying sophisticated cartographic methods of measurement, Ms. Lin meticulously translated the scale, pacing, and pattern of mid-sea waves into gravel, earth, and grass. Each of the “waves” measures between 305 and 368 feet in length and, with the grasses, rises to a height of between ten and fifteen feet. Walking through the wavefield is akin to being amid large swells at sea: One may temporarily lose visual contact with adjacent waves and the horizon, or rise to the crest and see for miles. As with other artworks at Storm King, the experience of the wavefield will change with each visit, depending on the season, the weather, and the time of day.

Working in close coordination with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and with landscape architects Edwina von Gal and Darrel Morrison, Ms. Lin utilized the gravel at the site to create the underlying structure of *Storm King Wavefield*. This was then covered in topsoil, which in turn was planted with grasses including Creeping Red Fescus, Deertongue Grass, Canada Bluegrass, Sideoats Grama Grass, and Partridge Pea, creating a natural drainage system. In addition, she kept track of her travels to and from the site, as well as the energy



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used by the contractors who executed the work; as a final stage in the process, Storm King and Ms. Lin are formulating a plan to plant indigenous trees around the periphery of the eleven-acre site to help offset the calculated carbon footprint generated by the production of the work.

Halina Duda, of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, notes, “It has been a joy to watch *Storm King Wavefield* develop. So often, the reclamation of

mines, like the former gravel pit on Storm King’s grounds, simply entails adding a layer of topsoil and vegetation. In contrast, Storm King and Maya Lin have gone so much further: Ms. Lin has not only created a wonderful work of art, but has also undertaken an important environmental project. The State Department of Environmental Conservation is grateful to her and to Storm King for transforming a depleted mine into something beautiful.”

Special Exhibition

The opening of *Storm King Wavefield* is accompanied by a special exhibition, *Maya Lin: Bodies of Water*, on view in Storm King’s museum building through November 15, 2009. The exhibition features roughly a dozen works that reflect the artist’s interest in water in its various states. The works include installation, sculpture, photographs, models, and drawings, among them examples related to the development of *Storm King Wavefield*. Several works also draw attention to the plight of sites around the world that suffer from human encroachment and industrial pollution.

Highlights of the works on view include a new piece, fabricated in recycled wood, that evokes a single wave; a work titled *Pin River*, comprising tens of thousands of straight pins set into the gallery wall, creating the illusion of a shadow image of the Hudson River system; and *Dew Point*, a series of cast-glass drops of water.

The exhibition also includes a video and photographs of Ms. Lin at work.

Maya Lin: Artist and Environmentalist

Maya Lin designs sculpture, earthworks, and public places that invite viewers to examine and connect anew with their natural surroundings. Her lifelong interest in landscape and the environment has led to the creation of three-dimensional works that are influenced by natural topographies and geology, as well as by ice floes; water patterns, such as those embodied by *Storm King Wavefield*; solar eclipses; and aerial views of the planet. Working in the tradition of the monumental earthworks created in the 1960s and 1970s by such artists as Robert Smithson and Michael Heizer, Ms. Lin



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brings a contemporary perspective to the theme of land- and seascape and the environment by merging the rational order of technology with the organic and irregular forms of nature.

The Storm King project was preceded by two other wavefields: *The Wave Field* (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, 1995), a 10,000-square-foot project based upon the Stokes wave, characterized by repetitive, cupped waves ranging in scale from three to six feet in height; and *Flutter* (Miami, 2005), a 30,000-square-foot work, taking its form from the shallow wave formations created in sand by ocean-wave action, with individual rows forming a continuous pattern of waves that fluctuate from two to four feet in height.

In addition to her site-specific works at, among other places, the Wanas Sculpture Park, in Sweden; the Wexner Center for the Arts, in Columbus, Ohio; the U.S. embassy in Beijing; and the California Academy of Sciences, in San Francisco, Ms. Lin's artwork has been exhibited throughout the United States and internationally. The touring exhibition *Maya Lin: Systematic Landscapes*, organized by the University of Washington's Henry Art Gallery, will be on view at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, in Washington, DC, from March 14 through July 12, 2009.

Storm King Art Center

Widely known as one of the world's outstanding sculpture parks, the Storm King Art Center is located approximately one hour north of New York City, in New York's Hudson Valley. The Art Center's permanent collection of sculpture, dating from 1945 to the present, includes works by many of the twentieth century's most influential artists, integrated into a pristine, 500-acre landscape of rolling hills, fields, and woodlands. Several of these works, like *Storm King Wavefield*, have been specially commissioned for Storm King. The collection is regularly complemented by temporary installations, both outdoors and in the museum building, and by public and education programs. In 2009, Storm King is open from April 1 through November 15: Wednesday through Sunday, 11:00 am to 5:30 pm (open until 8:00 pm on Saturdays, May 23–September 6; until 5:00 pm daily, November 2–15). The Art Center is closed Mondays and Tuesdays, except for the Monday holidays marking Memorial Day (May 25), Independence Day (July 6), Labor Day (September 7), and Columbus Day (October 12). For more information, the public may visit www.stormkingartcenter.org.

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