CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE AT CHESTERWOOD: 40 YRS

1. Lin Emery
   Octet, 2017
   Polished aluminum
   150 x 60 in.
   Collection of the artist

2. Mary Ann Unger
   Unfurling, 1986
   Aluminum
   19-1/2 x 28-1/2 x 36-1/2 in.
   Mary Ann Unger Estate and Maxwell Davidson Gallery, NY

3. Mary Ann Unger
   Beehive Temple, 1987
   Painted aluminum
   51 x 29 x 32 in.
   Mary Ann Unger Estate and Maxwell Davidson Gallery, NY

4. Mark di Suvero
   For Lincoln, 2018
   Steel, stainless steel
   147 x 115 x 70 in.
   Courtesy of the artist and Paula Cooper Gallery, NY

5. George Rickey
   Rectangle and Square, Unfolding, Gyrotris, 1995
   Stainless steel
   171 x 86-1/2 in.
   Maximum: 225 x 162 x 123 in.
   Collection of Matthew Bender IV

6. Roger Phillips
   Dimensions of Split Disc on Two Squares, 2013
   Stainless steel and painted aluminum
   94 x 67-1/2 x 49 in.
   Collection of the artist

7. John Van Alstine
   Sisyphean Holiday XXX, 2015
   Riverstone, galvanized and powder-coated steel
   73 x 64 x 24 in.
   Collection of the artist

8. Alexander Calder
   Crossed Blades (Intermediate maquette), 1967
   Painted sheet metal
   85 x 76 x 87 in.
   Private Collection

9. George Rickey
   Open Trapezoids Excentric, One Up One Down, Variation V, 1984
   Stainless steel
   155 x 22 x 23 in.
   Courtesy of Maxwell Davidson Gallery, NY

10. Kenneth Snelson
    Stainless steel
    108 x 114 x 130 in.
    Marlborough Gallery, NY

11. Pedro S. de Movellán
    Untitled, 2018
    Aluminum, stainless steel
    Maximum: 103 x 73 in.
    Courtesy of the artist and Maxwell Davidson Gallery, NY

12. Stephen M. Day
    Triple Column Twist, 1982
    Painted steel
    144 x 48 x 48 in.
    Collection of the artist

Highlight tours of the exhibition will be conducted on Fridays in July and August at 2pm with museum admission.

Please direct all sales inquiries to the Director’s office at 413-298-2031 or dthassler@savingplaces.org
Contemporary Sculpture at Chesterwood: 40 YRS
Sponsored by the Nancy Woodson Spire Foundation

Co-curated by Maxwell Davidson III, President of the Maxwell Davidson Gallery, and Charles C. Davidson, Partner and Senior Director of the Maxwell Davidson Gallery

This year, Chesterwood is commemorating forty years of exhibiting outdoor contemporary sculpture at Daniel Chester French's former home and studio in Stockbridge, MA. The first Contemporary Sculpture at Chesterwood exhibition featured two stainless steel sculptures by George Rickey: Two Planes, Horizontal and Vertical and One Up, One Down. Eclectic Forty years later his work continues to be relevant and eagerly sought after for outdoor private and public spaces as well as for museum collections. Kinetic sculptures by Rickey and others are featured at Chesterwood for this celebratory occasion as well as works by several notable artists, Alexander Calder, Kenneth Snelson, and Mark di Suvero, who are exhibited at the site for the first time.

Chesterwood is notably one of the earliest venues in the United States to showcase large-scale works in an outdoor setting. The idea for a contemporary outdoor sculpture show was initiated at a Chesterwood Advisory Council meeting in October, 1974. While the Council first suggested featuring neo-classical works to reflect the style and legacy of French sculpture for years, Chesterwood's Director, Daniel Chester French, promoted dynamic, abstract works forged from materials such as cement, lucite, and steel. The late John Davis Hatch, a distinguished art historian who was the director of a number of important museums during his long career, coordinated the first exhibition and brought together sculpture by twenty-three artists working in the Berkshires region. “There could have been more,” Davis wrote in the foreword to the exhibition catalogue, referring to the number of artists creating outdoor sculpture in the surrounding area, but “space became the problem, as the desire was to give every work a selected chance to be seen and enjoyed to its maximum potential.” Since 1978, Chesterwood has exhibited sculpture by over six hundred emerging and established artists, including Leonard Baskin, Morgan Bulkeley, Herbert Ferber, Glenda Goodacre, Sam Francis, George Rickey, and Richard Serra. Following the inaugural exhibition, Rickey contributed works to six more exhibitions spanning the years from 1986 to 2001. The outdoor sculpture show has traditionally been organized through a juried or selection process by prominent art curators, historians, and gallery directors with the guidance of Chesterwood staff.

The 2018 Contemporary Sculpture at Chesterwood show is generously sponsored by the Nancy Woodson Spire Foundation and co-curated by Maxwell Davidson III, President of the Maxwell Davidson Gallery and Charles C. Davidson, Partner and Senior Director of the Maxwell Davidson Gallery. Established in 1968, the Maxwell Davidson Gallery in New York has maintained an involvement in and commitment to the field of kinetic sculpture; the gallery has long established itself as a pioneer in the field of kinetic art worldwide and recently presented major exhibitions of Alexander Calder, Kenneth Snelson, and Mary Ann Unger, which are exhibited at the site for the first time.

Curatorial Statement

In 1978, Chesterwood held its inaugural sculpture show, curated by John Davis Hatch V. In addressing the 40th anniversary of Contemporary Sculpture at Chesterwood, we decide to pay homage to that original exhibition without necessarily reimagining it; I never saw it in person, and so the scope of this 2018 exhibition will be far narrower. Using Chesterwood’s picturesque setting and its devotion to sculpture, coupled with Maxwell Davidson Gallery’s own 50th anniversary and dedication to kinetic sculpture, the idea was to present works that somehow tie together both institutions and both exhibitions.

George Rickey was a good place to start.

The original show included mostly Berkshire-based artists, including George Rickey who, at the time, lived in nearby Chatham, NY. In that same summer of 1978, my father, Maxwell Davidson III, visited Rickey at his studio, bought two works from the artist, and drove them back to his gallery in New York. It was the beginning of a longstanding friendship and partnership between Maxwell Davidson Gallery and George Rickey.

Rickey has several connections that made finding other artists’ works for this exhibition easier. Alexander Calder’s sculpture is perhaps the most sought after kinetic work, however, his outdoor works exist on their own as successfully as any of his more well-known indoor works. Stephen M. Day, who was also a part of the inaugural exhibition, worked with and trained as an engineer, thus his works as a technician. Day’s sculpture is wholly different from Rickey’s, but retains an intimation of movement all its own.

Pedro S. de Movellán has had twelve solo exhibitions at Maxwell Davidson Gallery. He is constantly rewriting the language and vocabulary of contemporary kinetic sculpture, introducing new techniques and materials with unmatched skill and ingenuity. De Movellán is also local—he’s studio is within minutes of Chesterwood—and his proximity hearkens back to the intent of Hatch’s original show.

Lin Emery has been making sculpture for over six decades. Since the 1970s, her work has been primarily kinetic. Her more organic forms are a perfect counterpart to the bare, Constructivist leanings of Rickey’s.

John Van Alstine’s massive works are not figurative, but his ability to create a sense of movement and lightness with huge objects speaks to the immensely detailed marble works of Chesterfield.

Mary Ann Unger was a New York-based artist who made very few outdoor works. Those that were actually made and still exist today satisfy the breadth of talent of an often overlooked artist who died far too young in the midst of her prime.

Roger Phillips has worked with metal since childhood. Based in New York City, he studied at Bard College, Fogg Art Museum’s Modern Design, and the Jewish Museum. Much of his outdoor work is kinetic with its own Constructivist bent, though with decidedly more focus on color than Rickey’s works.

Kenneth Snelson, a personal friend of Rickey’s, was a pioneer who combined physics and art to create work that appears both delicate and sturdy. The elements of his sculptures appear to float as though in free fall.

Perhaps best known for his monumental girder works (often painted a signature red), Mark di Suvero also makes sculptures that are kinetic, large in mass. This new work takes on a far more expressionistic form than many of his more orthogonal sculptures, and runs a delicate, albeit probably steel, connective thread throughout this exhibition.

40 YRS is a celebration of Contemporary Sculpture at Chesterwood, of its commitment to presentation and to art, and of its continually expanding and forward-looking vision. This small show takes from some of the finest sculptures of a century of art-making, presents them outside the traditional gallery or museum space, and creates a relationship between past and present, artist and institution, and, most importantly, between art and viewer. Many thanks to the participating artists as well as to Matthew Bender, Eve Biddle, Paula Cooper Gallery, Jim Hatch, Allison Kaufman, Brittni LoSchlau, Ivana Matrosova, Amanda Riegel, Katharine Snelson, Jastie Stewart, Angela Thompson, Chesterwood’s Dana Plson and Gerry Blache (and his crew), my father Maxwell Davidson III for his passionate support of art and kinetic sculpture, and, of course, Donna Hassler, for her invitation to curate this year’s anniversary exhibition.

Alexander Lerner
Stephen D. Day
Lin Emery
Pedro S. de Movellán
Roger Phillips
George Rickey
Kenneth Snelson
Mark di Suvero
Mary Ann Unger
John Van Alstine

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