



Philip Greenspun's Weblog

A posting every day; an interesting idea every three months...

North America's best sculpture park: Edward Tufte's Hogpen Hill Farms

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As the child of a mother whose college major was Art History and whose vocation was art teacher, much of my youth was spent in art museums. My parents spent a lot of time traveling around Europe with their Michelin Guides checking off every one-star church after admiring its fresco or altarpiece. Thus in my peregrinations around the 50 states, every Canadian province and territory including Nunavut, and the gringo highlights of Mexico, I have felt a genetic compulsion to visit art museums and sculpture parks. I believe that I have seen all of the major sculpture parks on our continent.

The archetypical sculpture park is [Storm King Art Center](#), north of New York City. It is a beautiful landscape dotted with individually excellent works, which relate to each other oftentimes less than do the different holes of a miniature golf course (see [my posting on the similarities between golf courses and sculpture parks like these](#)). Back in November 2013 I visited Edward Tufte's Hogpen Hill Farms in Woodbury, Connecticut ([my photos](#) (taken while herding a 4-year-old); [better ones on Tufte's site](#)). Tufte has spent nearly a decade now reshaping the landscape with backhoes, digging up boulders to create Stonehenge-like environments, and adding metal sculptures that are all unified by having come from one mind (see [The Mythical Man-Month](#) for why this is important in software projects (short answer: even if three designers have more collective brainpower than one, the ultimate design will be more maintainable if it isn't cluttered with ideas from three brains... terrible news for the open source community!)).

Many of the individual works at Storm King are fantastic, but the overall experience is more interesting, thought-provoking, and awe-inspiring at Hogpen Hill Farms. So I'm nominating the 234-acre place for North America's best sculpture park!

[The next open house won't be until the fall but it is worth watching [edwardtufte.com](#) and marking your calendar now.]