

# Dia:



Walter De Maria  
*The Lightning Field, 1977*  
Western New Mexico

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400 polished stainless steel poles

Each pole measures 2 inches in diameter and averages 20 feet and 7½ inches in height

Poles are spaced 220 feet apart and have solid pointed tips that define a horizontal plane

Total installation: one mile by one kilometer

A sculpture to be walked in as well as viewed, *The Lightning Field* is intended to be experienced over an extended period of time. A full encounter with *The Lightning Field* does not depend upon the occurrence of lightning, and visitors are encouraged to spend as much time as possible in the field, especially at sunrise and sunset. In order to provide this opportunity, Dia offers overnight visits during the months of May through October.

*The Lightning Field* has been on view to the public since 1977. This work was commissioned and is maintained by Dia Art Foundation.

## About the artist

Walter De Maria was born in Albany, California, in 1935, and studied history and art at the University of California, Berkeley. In 1960 he moved to New York, where he lived and worked until the end of his life. De Maria's early work of the 1960s included music, performance, and writing as well as sculptural and conceptual works. With Robert Whitman in 1963, De Maria founded a gallery at 9 Great Jones Street in New York and exhibited his sculptures there later that year. He also performed as a jazz percussionist with other musicians and joined the band the Primitives, which later evolved into the Velvet Underground. After his first solo gallery exhibition in 1965, De Maria's work was included in the 1966 *Primary Structures* exhibition at the Jewish Museum in New York. He began to create work outside the traditional gallery space, presenting his *Mile Long Drawing* in 1968 in California's Mojave Desert. Beginning in the mid-1970s, Dia commissioned some of the artist's most significant site-specific works, including *The Lightning Field* (1977) in western New Mexico, and *The New York Earth Room* (1977) and *The Broken Kilometer* (1979) in New York. Dia continues to maintain these long-term installations as well as De Maria's *The Vertical Earth Kilometer* (1977) in Kassel, Germany, which is the companion piece to *The Broken Kilometer*. De Maria died in 2013.

*The Lightning Field* is open to visitors from May through October.

Dia Art Foundation maintains three additional works of art by the artist: *The Broken Kilometer* (1979) and *The New York Earth Room* (1977), both in New York, as well as *The Vertical Earth Kilometer* (1977), in Kassel, Germany.

Dia Art Foundation is committed to advancing, realizing, and preserving the vision of artists. Dia Beacon in the Hudson Valley presents Dia's collection of art from the 1960s to the present as well as special exhibitions, new commissions, and public programs. Dia Chelsea in New York presents temporary exhibitions, new commissions, performances, lectures, and readings. Dia also maintains several long-term sites, including Walter De Maria's *The New York Earth Room* (1977) and *The Broken Kilometer* (1979), Max Neuhaus's *Times Square* (1977), Joseph Beuys's *7000 Eichen* (*7000 Oaks*, which was inaugurated at Documenta 7 in 1982), all of which are located in New York; Dia Bridgehampton, the Dan Flavin Art Institute (established in 1983), on Long Island, New York; De Maria's *The Lightning Field* (1977) in western New Mexico; Nancy Holt's *Sun Tunnels* (1973–76) in the Great Basin Desert and Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* (1970) in Great Salt Lake, Utah; Cameron Rowland's *Depreciation* (2018); and De Maria's *The Vertical Earth Kilometer* (1977) in Kassel, Germany.

**Dia Beacon**

Riggio Galleries  
3 Beekman Street  
Beacon, New York

**Dia Chelsea**

537 West 22nd Street  
New York, New York

**Dia Bridgehampton**

The Dan Flavin Art Institute  
23 Corwith Avenue  
Bridgehampton, New York