



All of the *Gradient* sculptures are located on land protected by the Brandywine Conservancy, which has inspired remarkable achievements in conservation over its nearly fifty-year history. The Conservancy currently holds 460 conservation and agricultural easements and has contributed to the permanent preservation of more than 62,000 acres of land. At the core of the Conservancy's mission is a commitment to protect water quality and quantity within the Brandywine. To achieve its mission, the Conservancy reaches beyond traditional land preservation techniques and employs a multi-faceted approach to conservation. The Conservancy works with private landowners who wish to see their lands protected forever, often through the use of conservation easements, legal agreements that establish perpetual restrictions on the use and development of the land while keeping it in private ownership. The Municipal Assistance Program provides innovative community planning services to municipal governments, another means of achieving the Conservancy's conservation goals. From revisions to zoning and land development ordinances to the implementation of Transferable Development Rights programs, Municipal Assistance Program staff members apply knowledge and experience in open space conservation, growth management and land use planning techniques.

By implementing a multitude of land conservation and stewardship techniques and engaging a broad array of stakeholders and partnering organizations in its work, the Conservancy works to ensure that the unique character and ecology that define the Brandywine Valley is preserved for present and future generations.



Gradients

A SCULPTURE INSTALLATION BY JAMES WELLING

BRANDYWINE RIVER MUSEUM OF ART

August 9–November 15, 2015

Digital renderings of the *Gradient* sculptures shown in the original James Welling photographs (taken July 2015) on which they were based.

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Over the last five years, the Los Angeles-based artist James Welling (b. 1951) has been intensively engaged with the work of painter Andrew Wyeth (1917–2009). A renowned photographer with a critically acclaimed body of work, Welling explored both Cushing, Maine, and Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, the two centers of Wyeth's life and work, to create a group of photographs related to Wyeth. This recent series—his largest to date—open a distinctive view into the visual cosmos of the two artists. A selection of approximately 50 of Welling's *Wyeth* photographs are currently on display at the Brandywine River Museum of Art in an exhibition entitled *Things Beyond Resemblance: James Welling Photographs*.

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Brandywine has commissioned Welling to create his first sculptures. These works—titled *Gradients*—have been installed at nine sites around the museum's 200-acre campus. Welling's process began with photographs taken in July 2015 at sites the artist chose specifically for their importance to the life and work of Andrew Wyeth. He then took digital samples of the colors found in the photographs and placed them into a digital file using a process known as gradient mapping. The resulting "map" is a smooth gradation of color representing bits of the chromatic spectrum from the original photographed site. The gradient itself was then printed using the dye sublimation process, which fused the ink directly onto a metal plate.

Mounted to walls or fastened to perforated steel supports, the printed images on metal create enigmatic signage that ties back both to Welling's photographs on display in the museum and to the palette of the environment in which Wyeth lived. Welling's temporary, site-specific installation not only extends *Things Beyond Resemblance* into the very landscape that has been inspirational to both artists, but marks a significant expansion of Welling's personal artistic practice.

The *Gradient* sculptures are placed both indoors and out, calling attention to places and landscapes significant to Wyeth's work. For instance, a *Gradient* installed inside the kitchen at Kuerner Farm references paintings Wyeth made of the space, such as *Groundhog Day* (1959), and a Welling photograph called *Anna's Kitchen* (2010), which appears in the concurrent Welling exhibition. This work challenges viewers to examine the colors they see around them in the Kuerner kitchen, and compare their experience to Welling's creation.

Gradients draws attention to the ephemeral quality of the rich colors found in nature. Though Welling photographed many areas around the Brandywine in July, when the landscape was lush and verdant green, certain sculptures such as those located on the banks of the Brandywine adjacent to the museum, hold that moment of color frozen in time. As the Brandywine autumn progresses, visitors will be reminded of the colors of summer and observe subtle shifts and sweeping changes in the colorscape over time.



Welling's experimentation with arrangements of sampled colors dates back to 1985, before the onset of efficient digital photo alteration. He returned to the idea in 2012, during the first public display of photographs from his Wyeth series. In an adjoining gallery, Welling exhibited experiments in which gradient maps extracted from his Wyeth photographs were layered onto black and white photograms. In the current project, the gradients stand alone, free of the photogram's armature. The only referents are the colors captured in nature and their underlying connection to the colors of Wyeth's Brandywine valley.



Three of the *Gradient* sculptures can be viewed on a self-guided tour using the map provided. Six additional sculptures located at the N. C. Wyeth House and Studio, the Andrew Wyeth Studio and the Kuerner Farm can only be viewed as part of a guided tour (advance tickets required). To reserve a tour, visit the museum's visitor services desk or www.brandywine.org.