



Cedar Grove

The Thomas Cole National Historic Site

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thomas Cole Historic Site Presents a New Exhibition

Jasper Cropsey: Interpreting Nature in America



Jasper Cropsey, *The Catskill Mountain House*, 1855. Newington Cropsey Foundation

CATSKILL, NY - The Thomas Cole National Historic Site is pleased to announce the 2006 exhibition at Cedar Grove, continuing a series of exhibitions focusing on significant figures in the rise of 19th-century American landscape painting. The new exhibition on Jasper Cropsey (1823-1900) will open to the public on May 7 and will be on view through October 29, 2006.

Cropsey was a leading member of America's first native school of painting, the Hudson River School, a group of painters who coalesced in the 1840s under the guiding genius of their forerunner and artistic mentor, Thomas Cole. Cole's ideas are considered to be crucial to the development of Cropsey's work -- perhaps even more so than for any of his colleagues. Like Cole, Cropsey explored the American landscape in a range from the purely descriptive to the symbolic, and created a vital American art that contributed to the construction of a national identity.

Curated by Elizabeth Stevens, the exhibition will feature paintings from both public and private collections.



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About Thomas Cole

Long regarded as the founder of America's first art movement, known as the Hudson River School, Thomas Cole (1801-1848) is a central figure in the development of American culture. When Cole made his first trip up the Hudson River in 1825, thought-leaders in America were searching for something distinctly American to establish the nation's own culture as separate from that of Europe. Thomas Cole found it in the Catskill Mountain wilderness, which came to symbolize the unspoiled character of the new nation. Lionized during his lifetime and celebrated by a generation of artists who followed in his footsteps, Cole is now widely regarded as the father of American landscape painting.

About the Hudson River School

The Hudson River School is the first coherent American art style, and was the prevalent genre of the 19th-century. With roots in European Romanticism, the Hudson River painters, nonetheless, defined a distinct vision for American art through sweeping depictions of its landscape. The movement is credited with having a major influence on America's understanding of its natural environment, its national destiny, the idea that nature reflected the divine, and the desire for touring the country's natural wonders.

About Cedar Grove

Cedar Grove is the site where the artist Thomas Cole lived, worked and was married, and where he died at the age of 47. Today the site consists of the Federal style brick home (c. 1815), as well as Thomas Cole's original studio building, on 5 landscaped acres with a magnificent view of the Catskill Mountains. In recent years the house has undergone a major restoration, and now contains both furnished rooms and gallery rooms with special exhibitions. The newly restored studio contains Cole's original easel and art-making tools, and offers a greater understanding of the artist and his working environment.