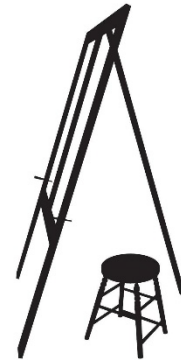


# THOMAS COLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

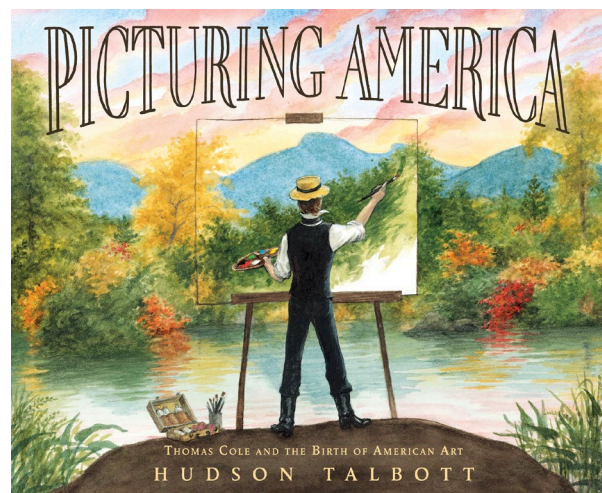
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**Thomas Cole National Historic Site Will Host May 25 Paperback Launch of *Picturing America: Thomas Cole and the Birth of American Art* by Renowned Children's Book Author and Illustrator Hudson Talbott**

**Coinciding with the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Cole's First Trip to Catskill, NY, in 1825, the Book Launch Will Include Remarks and a Book-Signing by Hudson Talbott and a Pop-up Exhibition of Original Paintings Created for the Book**

**Catskill, NY – May 14, 2025** – The Thomas Cole National Historic Site announced today that it will host on Sunday, May 25, the paperback launch of *Picturing America: Thomas Cole and the Birth of American Art* by renowned children's book author and illustrator Hudson Talbott. The launch coincides with the 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration of Cole's first trip to Catskill, NY, in 1825, which changed the course of American art.

The 32-page picture book takes readers on a unique journey through the life of Thomas Cole (1801-1848), father of the influential American art movement known as the Hudson River School of landscape painting. Through the life of Thomas Cole, the book also introduces readers to the role of the artist, highlights Cole's pioneering passion for the environment, and celebrates a love of painting that will inspire readers to draw and paint the landscape around them.



The launch will take place on Sunday, May 25, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm. It will consist of remarks and a book-signing by Hudson Talbott as well as a pop-up exhibition of original paintings that he created for the book. *Picturing America* was published in hardback in 2018 by Nancy Paulsen Books, an imprint of Penguin Random House. The paperback version is the first children's book published by the Thomas Cole National Historic Site.

Hudson Talbott, who has been a member of the Board of Trustees of the Thomas Cole National Historic Site for over 20 years, has written and illustrated over 25 books for young readers. His latest book, *A Walk in the Words*, won the American Library Association's Schneider Family Book Award. He collaborated with Stephen Sondheim on the book version of the composer's musical "*Into the Woods*," illustrated the ALA Notable Book *Leonardo's Horse* and the Newbury Honor Book *Show Way*. His book *We're Back! A Dinosaur's Story* was adapted into an animated film by Steven Spielberg.

"We are excited to publish the paperback version of *Picturing America* and to host this launch event with Hudson Talbott," said Maura O'Shea, Executive Director of the Thomas Cole National Historic Site. "Core to the Thomas Cole Site's mission is engaging new audiences, and central to that is intriguing children at an early age in art, in drawing the world around us, and in the crucial role that Thomas Cole played in showing others what our nation looked like 200 years ago. The Thomas Cole Site benefits in that regard from the year-round advice and expertise of Hudson Talbott as a longstanding member of our Board of Trustees and a resident of the Hudson Valley."

Reflecting on Thomas Cole's first trip to Catskill in 1825, Tim Barringer, Yale University's Paul Mellon Professor of the History of Art, says, "Thomas Cole's first visit to Catskill is an event whose significance resonates through the history of American art to the present day." Betsy Kornhauser, Curator Emerita at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, states, "When Cole took his first trip up the Hudson River in 1825 and took sketches of the Catskill region, his early wilderness scenes launched a new paradigm for American art." Franklin Kelly, Senior Curator and Christiane Ellis Valone Curator of American Paintings at the National Gallery of Art, says, "If landscape painting in America can be said to have a 'big bang' moment, that was surely it."

To commemorate the anniversary, the Thomas Cole Site has created a range of materials that are available online at [thomascole.org/cole200](http://thomascole.org/cole200). Additional 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary programming will be announced in the coming months.

### **Thomas Cole National Historic Site**

The Thomas Cole National Historic Site is an international destination presenting the original home and studios of the artist and early environmentalist Thomas Cole (1801-1848). Cole founded the influential art movement of the United States, now known as the Hudson River School of American landscape painting. Located on six acres in the Hudson Valley, the site includes the 1815 Main House where the artist lived; Cole's 1839 Old Studio; the reconstructed 1846 New Studio building, which now features a museum gallery of rotating exhibitions; a new visitors center called the Cole Center, designed by AD100 Stephen Shadley; and gardens and grounds with panoramic views of the Catskill Mountains. It is a National Historic Landmark and an affiliated area of the National Park System, operating as an independent 501c3 nonprofit organization. Activities include special exhibitions of both 19th-century and contemporary art, print publications, lectures, extensive online programs, school programs, the Cole Fellowship, free community events, and innovative public programs such as the Hudson River School Art Trail—a map and website that enable people to visit the places in

nature that Cole painted—and the Hudson River Skywalk, a scenic walkway connecting the Thomas Cole Site with Frederic Church’s Olana over the Hudson River. The goal of all programs at the Thomas Cole Site is to enable visitors to find meaning and inspiration in Thomas Cole’s life and work. The themes that Cole explored in his art and writings—such as landscape preservation and our conception of nature as a restorative power—are both historic and timely, providing the opportunity to connect to audiences with insights that are highly relevant to their own lives.

**Visitor Information**

The hours of the Thomas Cole National Historic Site vary by season. For details see: [www.thomascole.org/visit](http://www.thomascole.org/visit). The grounds are open every day for free from dawn to dusk. Keep in touch on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter at [@thomascolesite](https://www.instagram.com/thomascolesite).