

NEWS



Cedar Grove

The Thomas Cole National Historic Site

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Cedar Grove's fourth season accented by collaborative projects

The Thomas Cole National Historic Site opens its doors to the public Saturday, May 1, for its fourth season of public tours. Along with new exhibitions and exciting programs, visitors will benefit from a new spirit of collaboration at the Catskill home of the founder of the Hudson River School of art.

This will be the first summer for site director Elizabeth Jacks, who came to Cedar Grove from the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York City. Since the arrival of Jacks, the main order of business at Cedar Grove has been building cooperative partnerships.

Through a collaborative agreement with the National Park Service, the first of two studios used by Cole at Cedar Grove will be restored to its 1840's condition, when Cole used it to paint his renowned "Voyage of Life" series. It is also believed to be the first purpose-built artist's studio in the United States.

"Restoring this building to look as though the great artist just stepped out is an incredibly exciting project," says Jacks. "This is where the tradition of American landscape painting began, and thanks to donors both large and small, including two very large grants from Save America's Treasures and the Catskill-Olana Scenic Mitigation Fund, we will be able to tell that story."

The \$500,000 project began this spring, and is part of a larger General Management Plan for the site that will go up for final public comment on May 10 at 7pm at the Catskill Point.

Besides working with the National Park Service, Jacks has contacted several area colleges to create internships that give students a chance to learn art history or curating as they work at Catskill's national landmark. A Columbia-Greene Community College student is currently gaining administrative experience at Cedar Grove, a student from Vassar College is learning the role of a museum curator, and a student from both Vassar and Williams College will work full time at Cedar Grove this summer.

Cedar Grove has again linked up with Olana State Historic Site for a special symposium, this time on four artists whose work was influenced by the Hudson River School. The symposium, entitled "Rooted in the Hudson River School," planned for Saturday, May 22, will celebrate the artistic achievements of George Inness, Walter Launt Palmer, and the Parton brothers. In close proximity on opposite sides of the Rip Van Winkle Bridge, Cedar Grove and Olana provide a unique opportunity for the public to visit the beautiful homes of two key painters of the Hudson River School.

The current exhibition at Cedar Grove, “Ralph Albert Blakelock: Paintings, Drawings and Watercolors,” is a collaboration with the Salander-O’Reilly Galleries in New York City, which loaned many of the works. Additional paintings and artifacts are on loan from The Corporation of Yaddo in Saratoga Springs, the Adirondack Museum Blue Mountain Lake, NY, and several members of the Blakelock family. The show is in the Catharine Beecher Memorial Gallery at Cedar Grove for the entire season, and can be viewed Fridays and weekends from May 1 until October 31.

About Cedar Grove, the Thomas Cole National Historic Site

Cedar Grove was the primary residence and workplace of Thomas Cole (1801-1848), founder of the Hudson River School of art. The Thomas Cole National Historic Site preserves and interprets Cedar Grove, and educates the public about Cole's impact on American landscape painting and American culture. The site is an affiliate of the National Park Service, and is owned by the Greene County Historical Society.

For more information about the Thomas Cole National Historic Site, visit the newly redesigned website, www.thomascole.org

The Thomas Cole National Historic Site

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Hours: Friday & Saturday 10 am-4 pm, Sunday 1-5 pm