



Cedar Grove

The Thomas Cole National Historic Site

**Media Contact: Elizabeth Jacks
518-943-7465 ext. 3**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thomas Cole National Historic Site Presents a New Exhibition
Asher B. Durand: Intimate Observations



Asher B. Durand, *Woodland Path*, ca. 1846. Munson-Williams-Proctor Museum of Art, Utica, NY.

CATSKILL, NY - The Thomas Cole National Historic Site is pleased to announce the 2007 exhibition at Cedar Grove, *Asher B. Durand: Intimate Observations*, which continues a series of exhibitions exploring significant figures in 19th-century American landscape painting. *Intimate Observations*, the fourth exhibition in this series, will open to the public on May 20 and will be on view through October 28, 2007.

The exhibition coincides with major Durand exhibitions opening this spring at the Brooklyn Museum, the New-York Historical Society, and the National Academy in New York City, as well as a new book on the artist by Linda S. Ferber, the curator of the Brooklyn Museum's show.

Durand started his artistic career as an engraver, but he began painting landscapes in the mid 1830s upon the encouragement of Thomas Cole. The two artists became intimate friends and colleagues, and were both fellows of the National Academy of Design in New York. If Thomas Cole is recognized as the “founding father” of American landscape painting, then Durand was its “dean.” Durand’s paintings and his writings on art and America’s natural environment were

218 Spring Street, PO Box 426, Catskill, NY 12414 518-943-7465 www.thomascole.org



Cedar Grove

The Thomas Cole National Historic Site

highly influential on the next generation of American artists. As president of the National Academy for nearly twenty years (1845-1861), Durand worked to further the development of the American landscape painting tradition and to raise the profile of American art internationally.

Intimate Observations explores Durand's relationship to the landscapes near the Thomas Cole National Historic Site and his close friendship with Cole. Curated by Elizabeth Stevens, Edey Weissler, and Kirsten Jensen, with an accompanying catalogue featuring an essay by Lee A. Vedder, Director of Collections and Exhibitions, Allentown Art Museum, Allentown, PA, and formerly the Henry Luce Curatorial Fellow in American Art at The New-York Historical Society, the exhibition features paintings from both public and private collections, including the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute Museum of Art, the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center at Vassar College, and several private collectors.

Special Event: Durand Symposium on May 20, 2007

The exhibition opens to the public on May 20th at 10am for a free viewing and open house. At 1pm, the Thomas Cole National Historic Site and the Olana State Historic Site jointly present a symposium with three distinguished speakers: Linda S. Ferber, Vice President and Museum Director of the New-York Historical Society and former Andrew W. Mellon Curator of American Art and Chair, Department of American Art, Brooklyn Museum; Franklin Kelly, senior curator of American and British painting at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and a professor in the department of art history and archaeology at the University of Maryland, College Park; and Kenneth Myers, curator of American Art at the Detroit Institute of the Arts, Detroit, MI.

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, American cultural leaders 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 Cedar Grove

Cedar Grove is the site where the artist Thomas Cole lived, worked, was married, and where he died at the age of 47. Today the site consists of the Federal style brick home (c. 1815) in which Thomas Cole resided with his family, as well as the artist'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 period rooms and galleries featuring 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. Lectures and other public programs are offered throughout the year. The current schedule is available at www.thomascole.org. The site is owned by the Greene County Historical Society.