

**THOMAS COLE** NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE



**Catskill Mountain Wild**  
Guided Nature Tours

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**The Thomas Cole National Historic Site and Catskill Mountain Wild Launch a Series of Professionally Guided Hikes: the Hudson River School Art Trail Hikes 2018**

**The First Hike Will Take Place on Saturday, June 23**

**Catskill, NY – June 12, 2018** – The [Thomas Cole National Historic Site](#) and [Catskill Mountain Wild](#) announced today the launch of a series of professionally guided hikes: the Hudson River School Art Trail Hikes 2018. Thomas Cole (1801-1848) founded America’s first major art movement, the Hudson River School of landscape painting, and many of the views that inspired him, his legendary student Frederic Church, and other Hudson River School artists are made accessible by the Hudson River School Art Trail, which includes 20 locations in the Hudson River Valley.

The 2018 Hudson River School Art Trail Hikes will take place once a month, starting on June 23, through October. The details of the first hike are shown below. Subsequent hikes will take place on Fridays on July 27, August 24, September 28, and October 26. The details of those hikes, as well as information to register for any or all hikes, can be found at [www.thomascole.org/events](http://www.thomascole.org/events). All hikes will begin in Haines Falls or Catskill, NY.

Each hike will be guided by a licensed guide from Catskill Mountain Wild, a guide service creating custom outdoor adventures in the Catskill Mountains, Hudson River Valley and beyond. The 2018 Hudson River School Art Trail Hikes are made possible by support from the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area and the Carol T. Savage Art Trail Docent Program.

The Hudson River School Art Trail is a cooperative effort across multiple organizations that was established in 2012 to facilitate a connection between the landscapes that inspired Hudson River School artists and contemporary audiences. The richly researched program enables visitors to see the spectacular views in nature that Cole, Church and other Hudson River School artists painted. The Art Trail is presented by the Cole Site in partnership with Olana State Historic Site, The Olana Partnership, the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, the National Park Service Rivers & Trails program, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and New York State Parks, and the Greene County Tourism & Planning Department.

Following are details on the first hike:

**Week 1:** Hudson River School Art Trail Site #5: Kaaterskill Falls - June 23<sup>rd</sup>

**TIME:** 5pm – 8pm (end times are approximate)

**LOCATION:** Laurel House Road Parking Area - Haines Falls, NY

**MILEAGE:** Less than 2 miles -- mileage can be added if group wants a longer hike.

**DIFFICULTY:** Easy/Moderate

**DESCRIPTION:** Visit the views that 19<sup>th</sup>-century artists Thomas Cole, Frederic Church, Sanford Gifford, and Asher B. Durand all painted. When Thomas Cole first visited Kaaterskill Falls in 1825, there was already a viewing platform on top for tourists. However, he chose to omit this detail from his paintings to present a scene less impacted by human development. The hike starts on gentle terrain. It will then turn a little rugged, as we enter the forest and descend into Kaaterskill Clove. We will be able to visit both tiers of Kaaterskill Falls. The spring rains typically fill the streams and lakes above the falls, making June a great time to visit. After spending some time sketching at the bottom of the waterfalls, we will hike back out of the clove to the parking area. At this time, the group will have a chance to extend the hike on the Kaaterskill Rail Trail. The Kaaterskill Rail Trail is a long flat stretch of trail that can take us to a new view point of Kaaterskill Falls, and eventually leads to the Mountain Top Historical Society. To see the corresponding Hudson River School paintings, visit [www.hudsonriverschool.org](http://www.hudsonriverschool.org).

**THE HUDSON RIVER SCHOOL ART TRAIL (HRSAT)** is a cooperative effort across multiple organizations that was established in 2012 to facilitate a connection between the landscapes that inspired Thomas Cole and contemporary audiences. The richly researched program enables visitors to see the spectacular views in nature that Thomas Cole and other Hudson River School artists painted. The HRSAT is presented by the TCNHS in partnership with Olana New York State Historic Site, The Olana Partnership, the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, the National Park Service Rivers & Trails program, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and New York State Parks, and the Greene County Tourism & Planning Department. The project includes a website and guide book that identifies 20 sites and counting that were painted by the Hudson River School artists. The website includes maps and directions to each site as well as photographs of the contemporary views paired with 19<sup>th</sup>-century paintings. On location at the sites are interpretive panels and rubbing medallions featuring a drawing of the scene by a local artist. The experience invites reflection on development vs. preservation and our contemporary relationship to nature. Learn more at [www.hudsonriverschool.org](http://www.hudsonriverschool.org).

**CATSKILL MOUNTAIN WILD** is an outdoor guide service offering hiking, fishing, camping and paddling tours as well as a variety of other outdoor adventures in the Catskill Mountains and surrounding areas. Your lead guide, Jeff Vincent, is a Catskill native, 3500 Club Member and Appalachian Trail thru-hiker. Licensed by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation and certified by the National Safety Council in First Aid and CPR. Visit [www.CatskillMountainWild.com](http://www.CatskillMountainWild.com) for more information and be sure to follow @catskill\_mountain\_wild on Facebook and Instagram.

**THE THOMAS COLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** is an international destination presenting the original home and studios of Thomas Cole, the founder of the Hudson River School of painting, the nation's first major art movement. Located on 6 acres in the Hudson Valley, the site includes the 1815 Main House; Cole's 1839 Old Studio; the recently reconstructed New Studio building; and panoramic views of the Catskill Mountains. It is a National Historic Landmark and an affiliated area of the National Park System. The Cole Site's activities include guided tours, special exhibitions of both 19<sup>th</sup>-century and contemporary art, printed publications, extensive online programs, activities for school groups, free community events, lectures, and innovative public programs such as the Hudson River School Art Trail—a map and website that enables visitors to visit the places that Cole painted. The goal of all programs at the 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 for Thomas Cole's home, studios and special exhibitions vary by season. For details see: [www.thomascole.org/visit](http://www.thomascole.org/visit). Keep in touch on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter at @thomascolesite.