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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **THE THOMAS COLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE WILL REMAIN OPEN LONGER THIS FALL, EXTENDING A SEASON OF IMPRESSIVE ATTENDANCE GROWTH**

**The growing interest in the Hudson River School is also evidenced by the opening of a major Thomas Cole exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City in January 2018 traveling to the National Gallery in London**

**Catskill, NY – September 21, 2017** – The Thomas Cole National Historic Site announced today that it will extend its season to include three weekends in November, building on a season of impressive attendance growth and adding several new initiatives.

The 2017 season at the Thomas Cole Site, originally scheduled to run through October, will now include three weekends in November: Friday through Sunday, November 3 - 5, 10 - 12, and 17 - 19. The extended season builds on a 25% attendance growth over last year resulting from the fact that the Site has, for the first time in its history, four exhibitions running simultaneously in addition to its permanent collection. Those exhibitions are:

- **LAST CHANCE. CLOSING OCT 29:** *Sanford R. Gifford in the Catskills*, an exhibition in the New Studio, curated by Kevin J. Avery.
- **EXTENDED THROUGH NOV 19:** *Kiki Smith / From the Creek*, a unique installation inside and outside the historic rooms of Cole's home, created by the artist and curated by Kate Menconeri.
- **EXTENDED THROUGH NOV 19:** *The Parlors*, an immersive experience combining technology and meticulous restoration of Cole's interior designs in his 1815 home, including the earliest-known interior decorative painting by an American artist.
- **EXTENDED THROUGH NOV 19:** *Mind Upon Nature: Thomas Cole's Creative Process*, an exhibition in the Main House featuring Cole's paintings and sketches.

Other new initiatives this fall include the following:

### **Skywalk Arts Festival**

The Thomas Cole Site will join with Historic Bridges of the Hudson Valley, the New York State Bridge Authority, and the Olana State Historic Site to present the first annual Skywalk Arts Festival at the Rip Van Winkle Bridge, adjacent to the Thomas Cole Site. The Festival, which will coincide with the Cole Site's annual Community Day at the historic site and special programming at Olana, will take place on Sunday, September 24, from 1 to 4 pm. Community day at the Thomas Cole Site includes free admission to the historic site and exhibitions and activities for the whole family. The Skywalk Arts Festival celebrates the art of the Hudson Valley and the in-progress Skywalk pedestrian crossing, which will eventually connect the homes of Thomas Cole and Frederic Church.



## First Fridays

The Thomas Cole Site will be open to visitors for free on the first Friday of October, Friday, October 6. This began in September and takes place in conjunction with First Fridays in Catskill, a new promotional initiative designed to draw arts enthusiasts to downtown Catskill on Friday afternoons and evenings. The celebration highlights the Village's remarkable artistic and cultural activities and its spectacular setting – at the base of the Catskill Mountains along the Hudson River, just a 9-minute drive from the Hudson Amtrak station – at one of the best times to visit this beautiful area, as the leaves start to blaze with color. The Fall First Fridays initiative highlights the vibrant community of Catskill and builds on a tradition of free special events at the Thomas Cole National Historic Site, ensuring that everyone has access to this cultural landmark. Fall First Fridays include free admission to the Historic Site, extended hours at local shops within walking distance, and special events including a fashion show and dance festival.

## Raymond Beecher Memorial Lecture – in Preparation for Upcoming Metropolitan Museum Exhibition

For the first time in history, Thomas Cole will be the subject of a major exhibition organized by The Metropolitan Museum of Art and by The National Gallery, London. Titled "Thomas Cole's Journey: Atlantic Crossings," the exhibition is curated by Elizabeth Mankin Kornhauser, Alice Pratt Brown Curator of American Paintings and Sculpture at the Met; Tim Barringer, Paul Mellon Professor in the History of Art at Yale University; and Christopher Riopelle, Curator of Post 1800 Paintings at the National Gallery, London. As the Met states: "This exhibition will establish Thomas Cole as a major artist of the 19<sup>th</sup> century within a global context." The exhibition will take place at the Met from January 30 to May 13, 2018, and at the National Gallery from June 11 to October 7, 2018.

In celebration and anticipation of the exhibition, the Thomas Cole Site will hold its 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Raymond Beecher Memorial Lecture presented by Elizabeth Mankin Kornhauser, co-curator of the upcoming Met exhibition, on Tuesday, October 24, 2017, from 6 to 7:30 pm at a private venue on East 77<sup>th</sup> Street in New York City. Dr. Kornhauser's lecture will offer a special preview of the groundbreaking international exhibition of Cole's work that will open at the Met in January. The Lecture and reception are hosted by the Thomas Cole Site's Board of Trustees and Connie Simmons and James Krugman. Tickets are available in advance at [thomascole.org/events](http://thomascole.org/events) and will not be sold at the door.

**THE THOMAS COLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** preserves and interprets the 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 gardens. It is a National Historic Landmark and an affiliated area of the National Park System. The Cole Site's activities include guided tours, exhibitions, 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 see the nearby views 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 Thomas Cole National Historic Site is located at 218 Spring Street in Catskill, New York. Thomas Cole’s home, studios, special exhibitions, and grounds are open at various times throughout the year. For details see: [www.thomascole.org](http://www.thomascole.org).

*The Parlors* has been made possible by the National Endowment for the Humanities: Exploring the human endeavor, the Institute of Museum and Library Services MA-10-15-0116-15. Support provided by Empire State Development’s I LOVE NEW YORK program under the Market NY initiative. The project is supported by the Hudson River Valley Greenway, Herzog’s of Kingston, Eli Wilner & Company of New York City, and Geoff Howell Studio. The exhibition *Sanford R. Gifford in the Catskills* is made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and the support of Michael Altman Fine Art & Advisory Services. It is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue that is sponsored by the Barrie & Deedee Wigmore Foundation.

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### **National Endowment for the Humanities Policy Statement**

Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this press release do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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