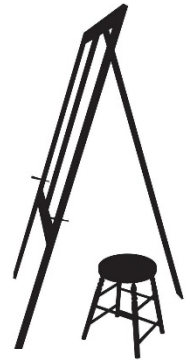


THOMAS COLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jennifer Greim, jgreim@thomascole.org
Director of Advancement and External Affairs

Thomas Cole National Historic Site Celebrates Grand Opening of Purpose-Built Stand-Alone Visitor Center, the First Cultural Building by Renowned Designer Stephen Shadley

New York Lt. Governor Antonio Delgado Joins Ribbon Cutting for the “Cole Center,” Which Reorients Visitors' Introduction to the Site, Embraces the Catskill Mountains, and References Thomas Cole’s 19th-Century Architectural Designs

Catskill, NY – July 22, 2024 – New York State Lieutenant Governor Antonio Delgado joined officials of the Thomas Cole National Historic Site and other state and local officials on Monday, July 22, to cut the ceremonial ribbon marking the opening of the Cole Center, the historic site’s purpose-built stand-alone visitor center. The new building transforms how visitors experience the national historic landmark, orienting visitors upon arrival toward the Catskill Mountains that inspired the artist and early environmentalist Thomas Cole (1801-1848). The new



Photo left to right: Paul Brown; Benjamin Davidson; Emma Davidson Tribbs, TCNHS Trustee; Anne Miller, TCNHS Trustee; Tara Sullivan, TCNHS Trustee; Elizabeth B. Jacks, TCNHS Executive Director; Lt. Governor Antonio Delgado; Lisa Fox Martin, TCNHS Chairman; Stephen Shadley, Interior and Architectural Designer & TCNHS Trustee; Robert J. Rodriguez, DASNY President & CEO; Mike Yevoli, Regional Director, Capital Region, Empire State Development; Warren Hart, Deputy County Administrator, Greene County, NY; Hudson Talbott, TCNHS Trustee; Emma Cohen, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Senator Michelle Hinchey; Carrie Feder, TCNHS Trustee; and Chester the dog. Photo credit: Adam T. Deen.

building and its bluestone forecourt present a panoramic vista of the historic campus and mountain views.



Left to right: Lisa Fox Martin, TCNHS Chairman; Lt. Governor Antonio Delgado; Stephen Shadley, Interior and Architectural Designer & TCNHS Trustee; Elizabeth B. Jacks, TCNHS Executive Director. Photo credit: Adam T. Deen.

The Cole Center was designed *pro bono* by Stephen Shadley, the renowned New York City-based interior and architectural designer, who is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Thomas Cole National Historic Site. He is best known for creating homes for Hollywood stars including Jennifer Aniston and Diane Keaton.

The Cole Center is the first cultural building that Shadley has designed. It puts the natural setting and historic campus in the foreground of the new structure, which opens onto the forecourt through an expanse of nearly 20-foot-high windows. Those windows embrace and reflect the dramatic view of the Catskill Mountains, and the center's muted green exterior allows it to recede into the landscape. The exterior design references and draws inspiration from Thomas Cole's own 19th-century architectural designs, one of which – his 1846 New Studio building – was previously reconstructed and is part of the historic campus now framed by the view from the new building. The historic campus consists of the 1815 Main House, the 1839 Old Studio, the reconstructed 1846 New Studio, and the gardens and grounds against the backdrop of the Catskill Mountains.

The Cole Center is a multi-purpose open-concept space. It hosts visitor orientation, a gift shop with refreshments, and the forecourt with its stunning views. It is designed to accommodate events, talks, student groups, and creative activities.

“Thomas Cole’s landscape paintings helped capture the wonders of New York and the Hudson Valley,” said Lieutenant Governor Antonio Delgado. “His home and studios at the Thomas Cole National Historic Site in Catskill are both an important reminder to preserve the beauty of our environment and a critical economic driver for the State’s cultural industry. The new Cole Center gives New Yorkers and visitors the amenities they expect at a world-renowned National Historic Landmark.”

“The Cole Center and its forecourt are sited at a distance above our campus not only to separate it from the historic structures but to afford a perch from which to view the entire

grounds and the Catskill Mountains beyond,” said Stephen Shadley. “Its wood siding, large windows, and high roofline are very much inspired by Thomas Cole’s own design for his New Studio, and, in fact, there are massive reproductions of some of his most important works that grace the lofty interior walls. It’s an homage to his work and to his workplace!”

“Stephen Shadley’s design achieves all of that – and so much more,” said Elizabeth B. Jacks, Executive Director of the Thomas Cole National Historic Site. “The new building is supremely elegant in its simplicity and fulfills a critical need to welcome and orient our growing audiences. Visitors expect and need a place to sit down, find refreshment, and enjoy the view, which brings the entire historic campus into focus. We are so grateful to Stephen Shadley for donating his world-class design services for this landmark project, and to the many enthusiastic supporters who made it happen.”

Empire State Development President, CEO and Commissioner Hope Knight said, “The Thomas Cole National Historic Site is a jewel in the state’s tourism crown that showcases the history and origins of the Hudson River School, a quintessential New York art movement. The new Cole Center will help to welcome even more visitors from around the world who travel New York and stay in our communities, support our small businesses, and generate revenue for local economies. We are proud to support this project at one of the state’s cultural and historic landmarks.”

Thomas Cole founded the Hudson River School of landscape painting and advocated for the preservation of the natural landscape. As an architect, he designed several buildings that were constructed, most notably the Ohio State Capitol in Columbus.

The Cole Center’s project team, led by Stephen Shadley, included Jere Tatich of Elan Planning, Design and Architecture PLLC; Peter Nelson, Builder; Dean Riddle, Landscape Designer; Blake Hays, Visual Merchandiser; Garry Nack, Thomas Cole Site Manager of Buildings & Grounds; Elizabeth B. Jacks; Maura O’Shea, Thomas Cole Site Deputy Director; Traci Horgen, Thomas Cole Site Chief Operating Officer; and Jimmy Bulich, Thomas Cole Site Trustee Emeritus. The Cole Center is a cornerstone of a \$1.8 million Master Plan to enhance the Historic Site’s six-acre campus, preserve its history, and expand its impact.

Implementation of the Master Plan is made possible by a grant of \$360,000 from Empire State Development, and significant support from the National Park Service, David Bury and The Bay and Paul Foundations, Stephen Shadley Designs, Anonymous, Hudson River Valley Greenway, Brown Foundation, The J.M. Kaplan Fund, Nina Matis & Alan Gosule, Evelyn Trebilcock & Douglas Hammond, Educational Foundation of America, Lisa Fox Martin, Kristin Gamble, Anne Miller & Stuart Breslow, Robert A. Miller & Kathy Klingenstein, Warner Foundation, Arteque & Gertjan Meijer, Jimmy & Micaela Bulich, The Cranshaw Corporation, Gary DiMauro & Kathryn Windley, Aleta & David Forer, Jean D. Hamilton & Richard N. McCarthy, Hudson River Bank & Trust Foundation, Meredith J. Kane, James LaForce & Stephen Henderson, Alison Lanckenau, Norman J.

Olson, Elizabeth J. & Alfred L. Scott, Lindsay & Arthur Shea, Lois & Arthur Stainman, and many other generous individuals and foundations.

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 19th-century art movement of the United States, now known as the Hudson River School of American landscape painting. Located on 6 acres in the Hudson Valley, the site includes the 1815 Main House; Cole's 1839 Old Studio; the reconstructed 1846 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. 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 new 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: thomascole.org/visit. The grounds are open every day for free from dawn to dusk. Keep in touch on Facebook, Instagram, and X at [@thomascolesite](https://www.instagram.com/thomascolesite).

###