



**For Immediate Release: May 29, 2019**

Thomas Cole Site, Director of External Relations, Jennifer Greim, [JGreim@thomascole.org](mailto:JGreim@thomascole.org)  
The Olana Partnership, Development & Marketing Communications Manager, Melanie Hasbrook, [mhasbrook@olana.org](mailto:mhasbrook@olana.org)

**The Ribbon Cutting of the Hudson River Skywalk, a New Scenic Walkway where American Landscape Painting Began, Will Take Place on Saturday, June 1 at the Rip Van Winkle Bridge Riverfront Park in Catskill, New York.**

**The Opening Day Festivities will Kick Off with a Parade of Paintings from the Thomas Cole Historic Site and Frederic Church’s Olana Coming Together at the Bridge over the Hudson River.**

**Catskill and Hudson, NY:** The Olana State Historic Site and Thomas Cole National Historic Site announced today the ribbon cutting of the Hudson River Skywalk, a new scenic walkway at the place where American landscape painting began. Join the community in celebrating the opening on Saturday, June 1.

The new experience connects the homes and studios of the major Hudson River School artists, Thomas Cole and Frederic Church, over the Hudson River and across the Rip Van Winkle Bridge, offering sweeping views of the Hudson River Valley and the Catskill Mountains. The walkway connects Columbia and Greene Counties at the Rip Van Winkle Bridge across the Hudson River.

**Parade of Paintings | 10:30 am & 10:45 am**

The grand opening festivities will kick off with a *Parade of Paintings* starting at each historic site and coming together at the Rip Van Winkle Bridge over the Hudson River. Everyone is invited to join and participants will receive a free Hudson River Skywalk gift. Please meet at 10:30 am at Frederic Church’s Olana and 10:45 am at the Thomas Cole Site. Meeting details and free reservations are available at [hudsonriverskywalk.org/events](http://hudsonriverskywalk.org/events).

**Ribbon Cutting & Student Musical Performance | 12:00 PM**

A ribbon cutting will be held at the riverfront park next to the Rip Van Winkle Bridge toll plaza in Catskill accompanied by a musical performance of “River of Dreams” by local students. “River of Dreams” is an original song by Frank Cuthbert adapted from Hudson Talbott’s acclaimed children’s book by the same name exploring the History of the Hudson River.

**Live Music & Food Trucks | 12:30-3:00 pm**

The ceremony will be followed by an afternoon of live music including indie-rocker James Hearne and food trucks including Brooks BBQ at the riverfront park.

### **Event Parking Information**

Parking and shuttle buses will run starting at 11 a.m. The last shuttle will leave the Colewood Avenue stop at 3:30 p.m.

You can find parking and shuttle stops at:

- Catskill United Methodist Church, 40 Woodland Ave., Catskill
- Greene County Government Building, 411 Main St., Catskill (Parking is behind the building.)

The shuttle stop for the Rip Van Winkle Bridge will be located on Colewood Avenue at the intersection with Route 23, which is a short walk to the event location.

The Hudson River Skywalk is a public-private partnership project between various entities, including the New York State Bridge Authority, New York State Department of Transportation, Historic Bridges of the Hudson Valley, Thomas Cole National Historic Site, Olana State Historic Site, The Olana Partnership, Greene and Columbia Counties, Scenic Hudson, Temple Israel and Columbia Memorial Health.

Support is provided in part by Empire State Development’s I Love NY Program under the Market NY initiative.

### **HUDSON RIVER SKYWALK**

See America’s first canvas with the Hudson River Skywalk, a new scenic walkway at the place where American landscape painting began. The new walkway connects the homes and studios of the major Hudson River School artists, Thomas Cole and Frederic Church, over the Hudson River and across the Rip Van Winkle Bridge, offering sweeping views of the Hudson River Valley and the Catskill Mountains.

Thomas Cole and Frederic Church met as teacher and student here in the Hudson River Skywalk Region nearly 200 years ago and started a multi-generational friendship. They drew inspiration from this magnificent landscape that remains remarkably unchanged due to extensive preservation efforts. You’ve seen the paintings in museums, now see the real thing.

The Hudson River Skywalk Region includes the City of Hudson and the Village of Catskill, which both offer historic Main Streets with restaurants, shopping and accommodations. The City of Hudson connects to New York City via AMTRAK. Visit [hudsonriverskywalk.org](http://hudsonriverskywalk.org) for a map and directions.

**THE THOMAS COLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE** is an international destination presenting the original home and studios of Thomas Cole (1801-1848), 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 Thomas 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 enable visitors to visit the places that Cole painted. 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 historic and timely, providing the opportunity to connect to audiences with insights that are highly relevant to their own lives. To learn more, visit [thomascole.org](http://thomascole.org).

**OLANA & THE OLANA PARTNERSHIP:** Olana is the greatest masterpiece of Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900), the preeminent American artist of the mid-19th Century. Church designed Olana as a holistic environment integrating his advanced ideas about art, architecture, landscape design, and environmental conservation. Olana’s 250-acre artist-designed landscape with a Persian-inspired house at its summit embraces unrivaled 360-degree views of the Hudson Valley region, and as a public park today, Olana welcomes visitors from around the world.

Olana State Historic Site, a historic site administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Taconic Region, is a designated National Historic Landmark and one of the most visited sites in the state. For more information, visit: [www.olana.org](http://www.olana.org)

**Olana VISITOR INFORMATION:** The landscape is free and open daily 8am to sunset. For a current list of tours of the main house and artist-designed landscape, visit: <https://www.olana.org/tour-category/individual/>. Keep in touch on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter at @olanashs.

**Thomas Cole 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.