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Announcing the 2019 Skywalk Arts Festival in the Inaugural Year of the Hudson River Skywalk on Sunday, September 22 at Three Locations: the Rip Van Winkle Bridge, Thomas Cole National Historic Site, and Olana State Historic Site

The Skywalk Arts Festival is Presented by Historic Bridges of the Hudson Valley, in Conjunction with the New York State Bridge Authority and the Two Historic Sites, and Celebrates the New Scenic Walkway at the Place where American Art Began

The Festival includes Free Special Events Celebrating the Art of the Hudson Valley, including an Art Performance by Internationally Acclaimed Artist Shi Guorui Connecting the Three Skywalk Locations with Beams of Light across the Sky over the Hudson River.

Catskill, NY: Historic Bridges of the Hudson Valley, Thomas Cole National Historic Site and Olana State Historic Site announced today the third annual Skywalk Arts Festival to take place on the afternoon of Sunday, September 22. The Festival celebrates the art of the Hudson Valley and the inaugural year of the Hudson River Skywalk, a new scenic walkway at the place where American art 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 via the Rip Van Winkle Bridge, offering sweeping views of the Hudson River Valley and the Catskill Mountains.

Rip Van Winkle Bridge Park | 12-4 PM

Visitors are invited to the park next to the historic Rip Van Winkle Bridge's toll plaza in Catskill, New York, from 12 to 4 pm to view and purchase artwork by local artists, participate in art-making activities, listen to live music by songwriter James Hearne and enjoy Carnival Foods food truck. To enter the Bridge Authority Parking Lot, motorists must travel on Route 23 east and pass through Toll Lane 1 (Full Service Lane). The bridge park is also a short walk from the Thomas Cole National Historic Site.

Performance of Light across the Hudson River | 1 PM

Internationally acclaimed artist Shi Guorui will present a performance of light entitled *1.7 Mile Lights* to connect Frederic Church's Olana with the Thomas Cole National Historic Site. He will reflect beams of light across the sky above the Hudson River to illuminate the bonds between the two 19th-century artists, their homes, and our contemporary moment. The light performance will be visible from Olana's Ridge Road, the Rip Van Winkle Bridge walkway, and the Skywalk path from the Thomas Cole Site to the Bridge. Shi Guorui is a renowned contemporary photographer who uses the ancient camera obscura process. The performance of light is influenced by his artistic practice, Taoist rituals, and the relationship between artists Thomas Cole and Frederic Church. The performance is part of a new solo exhibition of Shi Guorui's work that will open at the Thomas Cole Site at 2pm on the same day.

**THOMAS
COLE** NATIONAL
HISTORIC
SITE



Thomas Cole Historic Site Contemporary Art Opening and Free Admission | 2-4 PM

Visit the Thomas Cole Site between 2 and 4 pm to see the new exhibition *SHI GUORUI: Ab/Sense-Pre/Sense*, presented as part of its annual series *OPEN HOUSE: Contemporary Art in Conversation with Cole*. The exhibition features a new series of giant landscape photographs made by the contemporary artist Shi Guorui. The photographs are created using a camera obscura and pay homage to the landscapes and legacy of Thomas Cole (1801-1848), founder of America's first major art movement, now known as the Hudson River School of landscape painting. Shi Guorui is internationally recognized for his large-scale camera obscura photographs. His work has been featured in exhibitions at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the de Young Museum in San Francisco, among other museums in North America, Europe, and Asia. Originally based in Beijing, China, Shi Guorui now has a studio and home in Catskill, New York.

Frederic Church's OLANA | 9 AM – 4 PM

Start your day at Olana and join Stephanie Fischer for a monthly "Yoga of the Earth" class in the landscape at 9 AM, open to all levels. At 10 AM, attend a "Spots of Time: Writing and Thinking Walk" along Frederic Church's carriage roads, with poet Celia Bland and art historian Susan Merriam who will engage in a creative interdisciplinary conversation about nature; as the gorgeous panoramas from Olana unfold, Bland and Merriam evoke Romanticism through poetry and art history. Gracie's Food Truck will be at Olana selling food and beverages.

Immerse yourself in Frederic Church's masterpiece and the artful landscape that he designed over four decades. Join landscape designer and historian David Dew Bruner for a walking tour along Olana's historic Ridge Road with its sweeping views of the Berkshires, City of Hudson, the Catskill Mountains and Olana itself. David will address the significant role that Olana has played in landmark environmental conservation decisions during the 20th and 21st centuries and the history of landscape architecture. This is a free one-mile tour of easy walking along gravel and paved roads and will take place rain or shine at 1 PM, 2:30 PM, and 4 PM. Good walking shoes and water are encouraged. To purchase tickets or pre-register for the walking tour, please visit OLANA.org

The Skywalk Arts Festival is supported by Empire State Development's I LOVE NEW YORK program under the Market NY Initiative and through a grant from the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area.

The event coincides with the Hudson River Valley Ramble, an annual event series that celebrates the history, culture and natural resources of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area, as well as the amazing landscape, communities, and trails throughout the region. Ramble events occur every weekend in September. Learn more at hudsonrivervalleyramble.com.

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. The Hudson River Skywalk Region includes the City of Hudson and the Village of Catskill, which both offer historic downtowns with restaurants, shopping and accommodations. The City of Hudson connects to New York City via AMTRAK.

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HISTORIC BRIDGES OF THE HUDSON VALLEY

Historic Bridges of the Hudson Valley is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting the history and general knowledge of the bridges of the New York State Bridge Authority and their role and contribution to shaping the economy, as well as the continued importance of the bridges to sustain the vitality of the Hudson Valley region and the Northeastern transportation corridor. Learn more at www.hbhv.org.

About Olana and The Olana Partnership: Olana is the greatest masterpiece of Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900), a preeminent American artist of the mid-19th century and the most intact artist's home, studio, and designed landscape in the United States. 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 five miles of carriage roads and a Persian-inspired house at its summit embraces unrivaled panoramic views of the Hudson Valley and Catskill Mountains and welcomes more than 170,000 visitors annually. The house is open for guided touring, and reservations are highly recommended. The landscape is free and open daily 8:00 AM-sunset.

Olana State Historic Site, administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, is a designated National Historic Landmark and one of the most visited sites in the state. The Olana Partnership, a private not-for-profit education corporation, works cooperatively with New York State to support the restoration, conservation, and interpretation of Olana. The Olana Partnership operates Olana State Historic Site in a cooperative agreement with New York State Parks. Keep in touch on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter at @olanashs.

Olana VISITOR INFORMATION: The landscape is free and open daily 8:00 AM to sunset. For a current list of tours of the main house and artist-designed landscape, visit: www.olana.org/hours-and-admission.

The Thomas Cole National Historic Site: The Thomas Cole National Historic Site is the birthplace of American art, 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 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 offers guided and self-guided tours, special exhibitions of both 19th-century and contemporary art, printed publications, lectures, extensive online programs, activities for school groups, the Cole Fellowship program, 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 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.



Thomas Cole VISITOR INFORMATION: The Thomas Cole National Historic Site is open Tuesday through Sunday from June to November 3 and for reduced hours in the cooler months. For details see: www.thomascole.org/visit. Keep in touch on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter at @thomascolesite.

