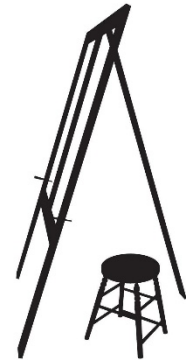


# THOMAS COLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE



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**Thomas Cole National Historic Site Announces the First-Ever Publications on Maria Bartow Cole (1813-1884) and Emily Cole (1843-1913), Who Lived in, Owned and Made Art on the Historic Property.**

**The Publications, *Journal and Letters of Maria Bartow Cole* and *The Art of Emily Cole* Coincide with the National Celebration of Women’s History Month.**

**Catskill, NY – March 26, 2024** – The Thomas Cole National Historic Site announced today the publication of two books revealing the journal and letters of Maria Bartow Cole (1813-1884) and celebrating the artwork of Emily Cole (1843-1913). The two women lived in, owned and made art on the historic property. The books are the *Journal & Letters of Maria Bartow Cole, 1831 to 1851*, with a first printing of 300 copies, and *The Art of Emily Cole*, with a first printing of 350 copies. The books are published by the Thomas Cole National Historic Site.

The *Journal & Letters of Maria Bartow Cole, 1831 to 1851*, publishes for the first time the writing of Maria Bartow Cole, who married the artist Thomas Cole in 1836. Upon their marriage, Thomas moved into the home where Maria and her uncle and three sisters were living, known today with the surrounding property as the Thomas Cole National Historic Site. Maria’s letters to her husband on negotiations with patrons evidence her astute business sense: “Tell them that you have subjects [for paintings], and what you will paint them for, and be sure you have it in the bargain that you may exhibit them if you wish to.” The couple had five children, including the artist Emily Cole. Following Thomas’s early death in 1848, Maria went on to assume ownership of the historic property.

*The Art of Emily Cole* is the first publication to focus on the accomplished 19<sup>th</sup>-century artist. Emily created an extensive oeuvre of botanical paintings on paper and ceramics and over 100 of her artworks reside in the collection of the Thomas Cole Site. Her mother was Maria Bartow Cole and her father was Thomas Cole. Emily exhibited and sold her work in New York City and Catskill and was a charter member of the New York Society of Ceramic Arts in 1892, an organization founded with the objective to promote the appreciation of ceramic arts. The new publication includes 30 full-color plates of the artist’s work and an original essay by Amanda Malmstrom, Associate Curator of the Thomas Cole Site, debuting new research exploring the themes in Emily’s work and contextualizing her practice within the art movements of the day. Malmstrom curated the first posthumous exhibition of Emily Cole’s artwork in 2019.

*Journal & Letters of Maria Bartow Cole, 1831 to 1851* was transcribed by historians and researchers Sylvia Hasenkopf and Maureen Hennessy and Class of 2023 Cole Fellow Kristen Marchetti, who is now pursuing her master's degree at the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University. The original historic documents reside in the collections of the Albany Institute of History & Art Library and the New York State Library, Manuscripts and Special Collections. Heather Palmer, Director of Visitor Engagement, and Margaret DiStefano, Marketing & Visitor Services Coordinator, served as co-editors of the publication. The renowned Cole Scholar Alan Wallach served as consulting scholar on the project.

*The Art of Emily Cole* is authored by Amanda Malmstrom, Associate Curator of the Thomas Cole Site. It includes a Director's Foreword by Elizabeth B. Jacks and an introductory essay by Chief Curator Kate Menconeri. Class of 2024 Cole Fellows Catherine Augustyn and Michaela Davidson served as Assistant Editors.

"Many important histories that help explain our own times unfolded here on this property," says Elizabeth Jacks, Executive Director of the Thomas Cole Site. "Publishing the writings of Maria Bartow Cole brings us the authentic first person voice of a 19<sup>th</sup>-century woman living in New York. Maria describes the happenings of her daily life framed by the unspoken restraints placed on women at the time. Though many have been removed since then, for example the prohibition on married women owning property, others linger to the present day."

"The first publication illuminating Emily Cole's work stands as a bound treasure trove of the accomplished artist's meticulously rendered and dynamic paintings," notes Amanda Malmstrom, Associate Curator and author of *The Art of Emily Cole*. "Together, Emily Cole's body of work proclaims flora not as smaller, less-important elements within a larger landscape, but as profoundly interesting and important organisms that beseech study and contemplation as allegorically-rich subject matter. With this publication, we proclaim the Thomas Cole National Historic Site as not only the home and studios of the Hudson River School founder, but also that of the highly sought-after porcelain painter, Emily Cole."

The books are available for purchase online and in store at the Thomas Cole National Historic Site and [store.thomascole.org](http://store.thomascole.org). *Journal & Letters of Maria Bartow Cole, 1831 to 1851* retails for \$12 and *The Art of Emily Cole* retails for \$25. For wholesale inquiries, please contact Meg at [mdistefano@thomascole.org](mailto:mdistefano@thomascole.org).

*The Art of Emily Cole* was made possible by the Henry Luce Foundation.



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### **The 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 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 19<sup>th</sup>-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: [www.thomascole.org/visit](http://www.thomascole.org/visit). The grounds are open every day for free from dawn to dusk. Keep in touch on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter at [@thomascolesite](https://www.instagram.com/thomascolesite).