

ALBANY INSTITUTE OF HISTORY & ART

Albany Institute of History & Art

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NEWS

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ONLINE EXHIBITION PROVIDES ACCESS AND CONTEXT TO FAMOUS HUDSON RIVER SCHOOL MOVEMENT

The Making of the Hudson River School now available via www.AlbanyInstitute.org

ALBANY, NY— “What is the Hudson River School?” is the frequently asked question that prompted the Albany Institute of History & Art to present the exhibition *The Making of the Hudson River School: More than the Eye Beholds* in 2013. Popular with Capital Region residents and tourists alike, the exhibition featured 96 works from the Albany Institute’s collection of Hudson River School paintings, drawings, prints, and historical documents, along with 38 works from several private collections that had not been shown before in a public exhibition. This exhibition, which highlights such a key component of New York State’s history and the history of American art, has been digitized and is now available as the museum’s first online exhibition, bringing the story of the Hudson River School to greater audiences.

The Hudson River School refers to American landscape painting created between 1825 and roughly 1875. It was not an actual school, but rather a group of artists who mainly lived and painted in the Hudson River valley of New York. They frequently knew one another, went on sketching trips together, and exhibited their paintings side by side at exhibitions and galleries. The name Hudson River School was not used by the artists themselves, but came into general use in the 1870s, at a time when their style was losing popularity.

The Making of the Hudson River School: More than the Eye Beholds exhibition was designed at the same time that the Albany Institute was creating a more robust website that would share more of the museum’s collections via the internet. The Albany Institute of History & Art has a significant Hudson River School collection, which contains finished paintings as well as artists’ sketchbooks, studies, account books, letters, personal papers, and more. The exhibition *The Making of the Hudson River School* utilized the variety of the museum’s collections and

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combined these pieces with almost 40 works borrowed from private collectors that had not been publicly shown. Together, they revealed some of the major influences and historical happenings that helped shape the Hudson River School, including European traditions and cultural movements, as well as America's natural environment and commercial spirit.

According to exhibition curator Douglas McCombs, "We had developed the capacity to host exhibitions on our website and we knew we wanted to share this exhibition with the diverse audiences that the internet reaches. *Making of the Hudson River School* includes works not offered in other exhibitions. This exhibition looks at trends and shows subject by subject analysis of the individual components that influenced these artists, like photography for instance. These topics will help web visitors better understand the Hudson River School and its significance."

The Hudson River School emerged alongside the new medium of photography, the new science of geology, and new technologies that transformed travel and inaugurated an industrial revolution. These influences were discussed in sections in the physical exhibition and are now navigable online through the Albany Institute's website, www.albanyinstitute.org/online-exhibitions.html. "The online exhibition replicates the exhibition we had on-site," says McCombs. "Visitors are able to read the labels, view the artwork, and tour each section. We made a point to photograph the works that were on loan for the show and those are included as well. Plus, each image can be enlarged for closer viewing."

Support for this online exhibition came from a grant from the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area. The mission of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area is to recognize, preserve, protect, and interpret the nationally significant historic, cultural, and natural resources of the Hudson River Valley for the benefit of the Nation. Learn more on their website, <http://www.hudsonrivervalley.com/Home.aspx>

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The Albany Institute of History & Art is located at 125 Washington Avenue in Albany, New York. Free parking is available in the museum's lot at the corner of Elk and Dove Streets. The museum is open Wednesday-Saturday 10AM-5PM, Thursdays until 8PM*, and Sunday Noon-5PM. On Tuesdays, the museum is open to registered groups only. The museum is closed on Mondays and some holidays. *AIHA now offers free admission on Thursdays from 5PM-8PM.

Admission is free for Institute members; \$10/adults; \$8/seniors; \$8/students with ID; \$6/children 6-12; FREE/children under 6. Bank of America and Merrill Lynch card holders get free admission to the Albany Institute of History & Art on the first weekends of the months that *Triple Play! Baseball at the Albany Institute* is open (February through July 2015). This is part of Bank of America's Museums on Us program. You can learn more about this program on their website, <http://museums.bankofamerica.com/>.

For more information, visit www.albanyinstitute.org or call (518) 463-4478.

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Founded in 1791, the Albany Institute of History & Art is New York's oldest museum. Its collections document the Hudson Valley as a crossroads of culture, influencing the art and history of the region, the state, and the nation. With more than 35,000 objects and one million documents in the library, it is an important resource for the region, giving our community a sense of the part the Hudson Valley played in the American story, and our own place in history. Permanent and temporary exhibitions are open year-round and create a sense of place, allowing visitors to meet the people who helped shape this region. Over 25,000 people visit the Albany Institute of History & Art every year, enjoying the collections, workshops, school programs, and lectures, helping to build an understanding of the history and culture of our region. Among the museum's best-known and most-loved collections are the 19th century Hudson River School landscape paintings by artists like Thomas Cole and Frederic Church, the 19th century sculpture collections, and, of course, the famous Albany Mummies that came to the museum in 1909 and have been on view ever since. For more information, please visit www.albanyinstitute.org and be sure to follow us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/albanyinstitute) and Twitter (@AlbanyInstitute).

SAMPLE IMAGES FOLLOW

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SAMPLE IMAGES

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THE MAKING OF THE HUDSON RIVER SCHOOL: PART 10

The Tourist's Gaze



EXHIBITION MENU

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[The Topographical Tradition](#)

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[Something Truly American](#)

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This online exhibition has been supported by a grant from the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area.



THE TOURIST'S GAZE

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Throughout the nineteenth century, Americans built a transportation network that stretched across the country. Turnpikes, steamboats, canals, and railroads gave travelers easy access to the scenic beauties of the American landscape; while published guidebooks, maps, and tourist hotels provided updated information and accommodations.

The Catskill Mountains developed as one of the first scenic areas in the United States to receive tourists. Steamboats cruising up and down the Hudson River easily brought travelers to Catskill Landing and from there stagecoaches transported them to the top of the mountains. In 1824, a group of land investors constructed the first tourist hotel in the Catskills on the eastern ridge overlooking the Hudson Valley. The Catskill Mountain House, as it was named, grew in size and elegance. It stood at the center of regional tourism and became a destination for sightseers and artists alike.

In a small pamphlet titled *Scenery of the Catskill Mountains*, published specifically for the Mountain House, compiler David Murooch gathered poems and writings that paid homage to the scenery of the Catskills. Murooch opened with the following statement: "The matter in the following pages has been collected and published in this form for the information and amusement of the lovers of natural scenery." Among those included in the book was artist Thomas Cole, who first painted the Catskills in 1825 and brought their rugged beauty to the attention of art lovers throughout the Northeast.

Cole and later Hudson River School artists ventured to scenic areas throughout the nation, from Maine to the Rocky Mountains, capturing the sites that became favored tourist destinations. Their paintings, exhibited in galleries and exhibitions, influenced the way Americans viewed the landscape as locations of wonder, beauty, and historical association.



Perspective Painting of Lake George

Ezra Ames (1768-1835)
Oil on wood panel, 1812
Bequest of Frank W. Van Dyke, 1997.41

The Albany artist Ezra Ames occasionally veered from his usual practice of painting portraits to engage in decorative painting, including mourning lockets, girls' needlework projects, and home furnishings. His view of Lake George from the south end of the lake is one of his rare attempts at landscape art.

In 1812, when Ames painted his view, the United States had just entered a period of military conflict with Great Britain. Fear of British attack from Canada transformed Lake George and the small community of

Caldwell, shown on the left-hand side of the painting, into a military outpost, as suggested by the two uniformed officers who stand on the earthworks of Fort George, located in the foreground. The scene, however, is not one of armed confrontation but rather the locus of tourist activities. One of the officers converses with two finely dressed women, who may very well be sightseers; and the canopied boat heading toward Caldwell is designed for leisure excursions, not military activities. Horatio Spafford commented in his *Gazetteer of the State of New York* (1813), "as a place of resort, in connection with the Springs of Saratoga County, Caldwell attracts considerable notice, and few similar waters in the world are more admired than Lake George."



Catskill Mountain House

DeWitt Clinton Boutelle (1820-1884)
Oil on canvas, 1845

Screen shot of portion of web page "The Tourist's Gaze"

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49

T. Church Jr

(47)

Mr Church came to the city under me on the
4th June 1844 - He is to pay me
\$ 300 for the year 300 00

Paid his expenses to Hartford -	4 25
Paid for Letters	25
Silver White	75
Maples Yellow	63
to some Yellow	25
Resmanent 1 Plan	1 50
Letter	12 1/2
Letter	12 1/2
Oct 10 To Burnett's work on painting	27 00
Resmanent 1 Plan	1 50
Maples yellow	63
to some yellow	6 1/2
Resmanent	25
Copal Varnish	37 1/2
182 Whermarine	3 00
April 1845 To Cash paid for transportation } Picture Frame 184 } Cotton 66 1/2 }	56
	12 1/2
	41 36 1/4
	341 36

Thomas Cole's Account Book
Bound volume, marbles paper boards, ink and
pencil inscriptions on paper
1837-1847
Albany Institute of History & Art Library, CV 553



Entrance to the Highlands of the Hudson
Hippolyte-Louis Garnier (1802-1855)
Oil on canvas, c. 1845
Gift of Albert B. Roberts, 2006.49.6

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Up the Hudson

Published by Nathaniel Currier (1813-1888) and James Merritt Ives (1824-1895), New York, NY

Hand-colored lithograph on paper, c. 1872

Bequest of Ledyard Cogswell, Jr., 1954.59.93



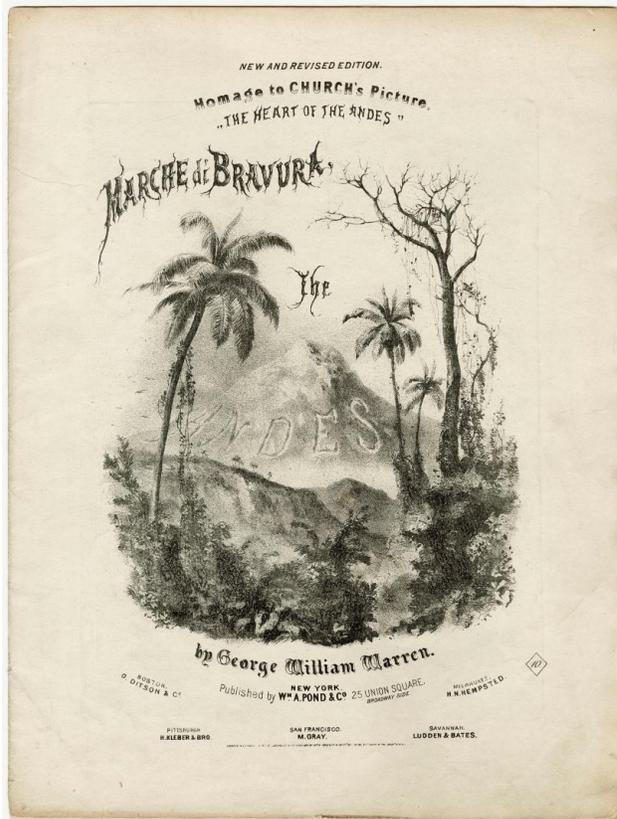
Mount Chimborazo, Ecuador

Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900)

Pencil with white gouache on wove paper, 1859

Gift of Mrs. Florence Vincent Cole, CV 553

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Marche di Bravura, the Andes
Composed by George William Warren
Published by William A. Pond & Co., New York City
Lithograph on paper, 1863
Gift of Thomas Nelson, LIB 2011.227



Cathedral Ledge
Asher B. Durand (1796-1886)
Oil on canvas, 1855
Gift of Miss Jane E. Rosell
1987.20.4