

A Free Course on the History of Western Art

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22-02 THOMAS COLE

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Thomas Cole, *Lake with Dead Trees (Catskill)*, detail, 1825,
Allen Memorial Art Museum

- This is Section 22 on nineteenth-century American art and this talk is on Thomas Cole (1801–1848), founder of the Hudson River School. He combined European Romanticism with a uniquely American approach, shaping the nation's cultural and artistic identity.

NOTES

A chronological selection of Thomas Cole's most significant and best-known works, focusing on paintings that both illustrate his artistic development and serve as landmarks in his career and reputation. Cole (1801–1848) is remembered as the founder of the Hudson River School, and his works combine Romantic landscape, allegory, and a sense of the sublime in nature.

Early Career: Discovery of the American Landscape

1825 – *Lake with Dead Trees (Catskill)*, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin. One of Cole's first exhibited works; helped launch his reputation with its rugged wilderness subject, painted after his arrival in the Catskills.

1825 – *View of Fort Ticonderoga*, Yale University Art Gallery. Another early success, showing the blend of historical resonance with untamed landscape.

1826–1830: Establishing Reputation

1826–1828 – *Kaaterskill Falls* (multiple versions; e.g., Wadsworth Atheneum). A quintessential Hudson River landscape, emphasizing the sublime wilderness.

1827 – *View on the Catskill—Early Autumn*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Demonstrates Cole's balance of grandeur with close observation of seasonal detail.

1829 – *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden*, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Marks his turn toward allegorical and biblical subjects, blending narrative with landscape.

1830s: Allegory, History, and National Themes

1833–1836 – *The Course of Empire* (five-part cycle), New-York Historical Society. His most famous allegorical series, charting the rise and fall of an imaginary empire. A moral reflection on history, civilization, and human hubris.

1836 – *View from Mount Holyoke, Northampton, Massachusetts, after a Thunderstorm (The Oxbow)*, The Met. Perhaps Cole's single most iconic painting; a landscape with allegorical overtones contrasting wilderness and cultivation, often read as a statement on American progress.

1840s: Later Masterpieces and Moral Visions

1842 – *The Voyage of Life* (four-part cycle), National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Another celebrated allegorical series, tracing human life from childhood to old age, set in symbolic landscapes.

1843 – *The Architect's Dream*, Toledo Museum of Art. A grand fantasy landscape uniting architecture from different eras; commissioned by architect Ithiel Town.

1844 – *Catskill Creek* (multiple versions, e.g., Albany Institute of History & Art). A return to intimate views of the American landscape, showing his lifelong attachment to the Catskills.

1846 – *Prometheus Bound*, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. A late mythological subject, showing Cole's continuing interest in allegory and the sublime.

1847 – *A View of the Two Lakes and Mountain House, Catskill Mountains, Morning*, The Brooklyn Museum. A reflective landscape, among the last major works before his early death in 1848.

Summary:

1820s: Wilderness landscapes (Kaaterskill Falls, Lake with Dead Trees).

Early 1830s: Moral and biblical allegory (*Expulsion from Eden*).

Mid-1830s: Ambitious national and historical cycles (*Course of Empire*, *The Oxbow*).

1840s: Mature allegorical cycles and visionary works (*Voyage of Life*, *Architect's Dream*).

Late 1840s: Poetic reflections on nature (Catskill Creek, Two Lakes and Mountain House)

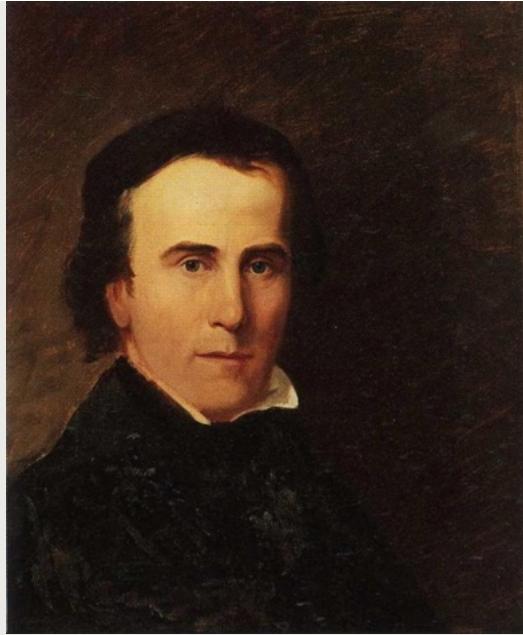
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Thomas Cole (1801-1848), *Self-portrait*, 1836, 45.7 × 55.9 cm, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

Thomas Cole (1801-1848), *Self-portrait*, 1836, 45.7 × 55.9 cm, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

- He was born in Lancashire in 1801 to a family of modest means. He learnt engrave wooden blocks for calico printing but did not receive a formal artistic training. When he was 18 he moved with his family to Ohio and was immediately captivated by the American wilderness, very different from the industrial towns of northern England.
- He began to sketch and taught himself to draw. He began as a portrait painter but quickly turned to painting landscapes.
- He painted this self-portrait when he was 35 and at the height of his career. He had returned from a European tour a few years before and was working on his monumental cycle of paintings called *The Course of Empire*. He presents himself as thoughtful, dignified and serious, almost Puritanical. He was known as a **modest, religious, and deeply thoughtful** person and his portrait reflects this and his vision of art as a vehicle for truth, honesty and spirituality.

BIOGRAPHY

Early Life and Immigration (1801–1818)

Thomas Cole was born in 1801 in Bolton-le-Moors, Lancashire, England, into a family of **modest means**. His father, a woollen manufacturer, struggled during the economic upheavals of the Industrial Revolution, and young Thomas was apprenticed to a calico printer, where he learned to engrave wooden blocks. This early training gave him a keen eye for pattern and design, but the family's

fortunes remained unstable. **In 1818, the Coles emigrated to the United States**, settling first in Steubenville, **Ohio**. The American wilderness, so different from the industrial towns of England, impressed the teenage Cole deeply. He began to sketch the landscape around him, teaching himself to draw, and briefly worked as a portrait painter before turning to the natural scenery that would define his career.

Beginnings as a Landscape Painter (1818–1829)

Cole's family **moved to Pennsylvania and later to New York**, where his artistic ambitions found encouragement. By **1825 he was living in New York City**, painting landscapes of the **Catskill Mountains and the Hudson River**. His breakthrough came that same year when three of his works were purchased by leading cultural figures—John Trumbull, William Dunlap, and Asher B. Durand—who recognized his talent. The American public, still forming its cultural identity, responded enthusiastically to Cole's depictions of untamed wilderness, which contrasted sharply with European pastoral scenes. His style combined careful observation with a Romantic sense of the sublime, suggesting that **America's natural beauty carried moral and even spiritual significance**.

European Influence and Allegory (1829–1836)

In 1829 Cole embarked on his first European tour, traveling to England, France, and **especially Italy**. In London he admired the landscapes of **J.M.W. Turner and John Constable**, absorbing their techniques of atmosphere and light. In Italy he immersed himself in classical ruins and **Renaissance art**, experiences that deepened his interest in history and allegory. Returning to **America in 1832**, he brought with him a broadened vision. His works from this period, such as *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden* and the monumental cycle *The Course of Empire* (1833–36), combined grand historical themes with landscape settings, reflecting both European influences and his concern about the moral direction of American society in the age of rapid expansion and industrial growth.

Maturity and Moral Vision (1836–1844)

By the mid-1830s Cole was established as the leading landscape painter in the United States and the founder of what would later be called the Hudson River School. His 1836 masterpiece, *The Oxbow*, balanced wilderness and cultivation in a way that many saw as a metaphor for the American nation's future. During this period **Cole married Maria Bartow in 1836** and settled in **Catskill, New York**, in a house that became his **lifelong**

home and studio. His **reputation grew, and wealthy patrons** commissioned ambitious allegorical series, most famously *The Voyage of Life* (1842). These works revealed his conviction that art should carry moral instruction, not simply aesthetic pleasure.

Late Years and Legacy (1844–1848)

In his final years Cole continued to experiment with **visionary and allegorical themes**, producing works such as *The Architect's Dream* (1843) and *Catskill Creek* (1844). He maintained **ties with younger artists, notably Frederic Edwin Church**, who **became his pupil** and would carry forward his legacy. Personally, Cole was known as **modest, religious, and deeply thoughtful**, often worried about the impact of industrial progress on the natural world he cherished. His **sudden death from pleurisy in 1848, at the age of 47**, shocked the American art community. Though his career was brief, Cole left an enduring influence: he had elevated American landscape painting to a form of national expression, combining Romantic grandeur with moral and spiritual depth.

THE HUDSON RIVER SCHOOL — GROWTH, MEMBERSHIP & RELATIONSHIPS

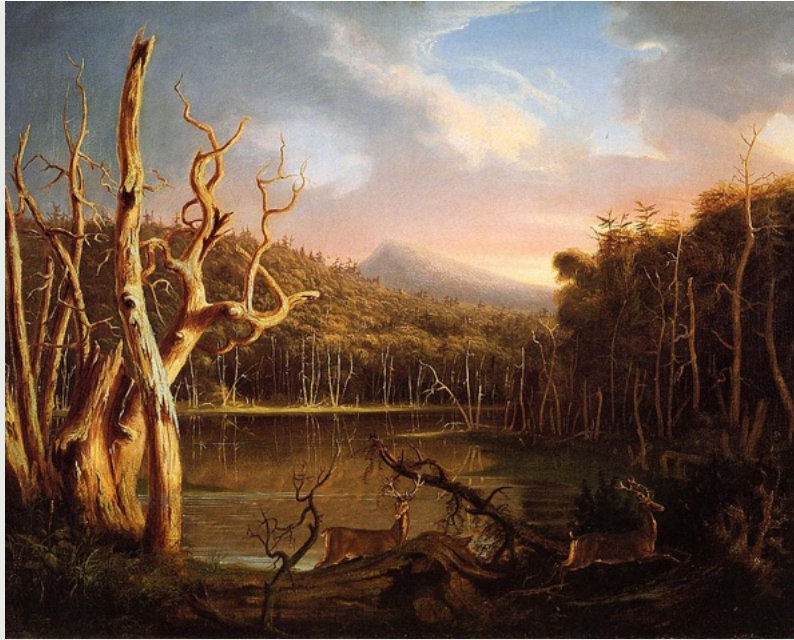
Founding circle: Early figures who shaped the movement were Thomas Doughty, Asher B. Durand, and Thomas Cole. Cole is generally credited as the movement's intellectual leader—he popularised the idea that American landscape could express national identity and moral meaning. (Encyclopedia Britannica)

Teacher / pupil line: Cole → Frederic Edwin Church. Church studied with Cole (and later with Samuel F.B. Morse/Asher Durand indirectly through influence) and became the movement's best-known "grand tour" landscape painter—traveling widely and producing monumental vistas (e.g., *Heart of the Andes*). Church carried Cole's sense of grandeur into exotic locales and spectacular scale. (The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

Friends & advocates: Asher B. Durand was a close friend and early advocate. Durand began as an engraver and moved into landscape painting influenced by both Cole and the English pastoral tradition; his **Kindred Spirits** commemorates Cole and poet William Cullen Bryant and signals the network of friendship and mutual promotion among the group. (The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

Later generation: Artists like Jasper Cropsey, John F. Kensett, Sanford

Gifford, and Albert Bierstadt were influenced by the Hudson River School idiom but diversified it—Kensett toward luminous, quieter “luminist” views; Bierstadt toward grand western spectacle; Cropsey toward autumnal lyricism. The School is better thought of as a loose movement or network rather than a formal academy. (The Metropolitan Museum of Art)



Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *Lake with Dead Trees (Catskill)*, 1825, 68.6 × 85.7 cm, Allen Memorial Art Museum

Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *Lake with Dead Trees (Catskill)*, 1825, 68.6 × 85.7 cm, Allen Memorial Art Museum

- *Lake with Dead Trees* (1825) is **one of the first works** that drew **serious critical attention**. It marked his emergence as a **distinctive voice** in American painting. The scene depicts a still lake in the Catskill Mountains, its waters broken by the stark silhouettes of bleached, dead tree trunks. Beyond the lake rises a rugged landscape, with forested slopes and a dramatic sky filled with passing light and shadow. The setting is not an exact topographical view but an imaginative composition based on Cole's sketching trips into the Catskills shortly after he moved to New York.
- He included **two deer** in the foreground, almost lost in the wilderness. Their presence is not incidental: they **lend scale** to the vastness of the scene, and they suggest that even in death and decay, the wilderness sustains life.
- At the time, Cole was twenty-four years old, recently arrived in New York from Ohio, and struggling to establish himself. His earlier attempts at portraiture had brought little success, but in the **Catskills he discovered** subjects that fulfilled his Romantic sensibilities and with a **public eager to see the grandeur** of their own land painted with seriousness. When *Lake with Dead Trees* was exhibited in 1825, **critics praised its freshness and originality**. The *New York Evening Post* noted the "**boldness of design**" and the "**wildness**" of the scene, qualities that set Cole apart from the **genteel landscapes then in fashion**.
- By transforming a remote, untamed view into a **poetic vision** of nature's

grandeur, Cole announced the arrival of a new school of American landscape painting—later named the **Hudson River School**, of which more later.

NOTES

Early Career: Discovery of the American Landscape

1825 – *Lake with Dead Trees (Catskill)*, Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin. One of Cole's first exhibited works; helped launch his reputation with its rugged wilderness subject, painted after his arrival in the Catskills.

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Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *Kaaterskill Falls*, 1826–27, 25.2 × 36.3 cm, Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford

Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *Kaaterskill Falls*, 1826–27, 25.2 × 36.3 cm, Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford

- *Kaaterskill Falls* is **among his most celebrated early landscapes** and helped **solidify his reputation** as the foremost interpreter of the American wilderness. Painted around 1826–27, the work depicts one of the Catskills' most famous natural landmarks: **a two-tier waterfall plunging nearly 260 feet**, surrounded by steep cliffs and dense forest. For many visitors, **Kaaterskill Falls epitomised the grandeur of the Hudson Valley**, and Cole's rendering gave visual form to the Romantic awe such places inspired.
- The painting presents the falls from a dramatic low vantage point, the water descending in two stages, framed by rugged rock and encroaching forest. At the base, tiny human figures—barely noticeable against the immensity of the landscape—underscore the scale and sublimity of nature. Their presence also suggests the experience of **tourism and discovery**: by the 1820s, the Catskills were becoming a **popular retreat for city dwellers**, and Cole himself had traveled there on sketching expeditions soon after settling in New York. The Catskills are about 100 miles north of New York west of the Hudson River.
- The beauty and grandeur of the American landscape carried symbolic weight: their untamed power evoked the sublime, while their location within a landscape of wilderness spoke to the idea of America as a new Eden.
- Critics received the painting with enthusiasm. Reviewers praised Cole's ability to convey both **topographical accuracy and emotional resonance**. His treatment

of **light, atmosphere, and natural detail** distinguished him from earlier American landscapists, who often subordinated nature to portraiture or historical themes.

NOTES

1826–1830: Establishing Reputation

1826–1828 – *Kaaterskill Falls* (multiple versions; e.g., Wadsworth Atheneum).
A quintessential Hudson River landscape, emphasizing the sublime wilderness.

REFERENCES

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Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *Gelyna* also known as *View near Ticonderoga*, 1828, Fort Ticonderoga Museum, Ticonderoga, New York

Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *Gelyna* also known as *View near Ticonderoga*, 1828, Fort Ticonderoga Museum, Ticonderoga, New York

- This is *View of Fort Ticonderoga* (1826, pronounced 'tai-kon-duh-**row**-guh") is another early work that **established his reputation** as the leading painter of the American wilderness.
- At first glance it appears to be a straightforward landscape but he has enriched the scene with **figures, symbolism, and literary reference**, setting it apart from mere topography.
- In the foreground there are two figures in military dress. The one on the lower left approaches the second figure laying at the edge of a cliff in the lower middle of the painting.
- Cole has painted a scene from a short story called ***Gelyna*** (pronounced "juh-**LEE**-nuh"): ***A Tale of Albany and Ticonderoga Seventy Years Ago*** by Gulian Verplanck. In the story are Major Edward Rutledge and his friend Captain Herman Cuyler (pronounced "**KYE**-ler") who fought in the Battle of Carillon (pronounced "kuh-**RI**-luhn") in July 1758 and during the battle Rutledge was wounded and carried from the battle by Cuyler. They are separated and the painting shows the scene in which Cuyler finds Rutledge wounded and dying. Rutledge dies on the day he was supposed to marry his fiancée Gelyna Vandyke, the sister-in-law of Cuyler.

NOTES

Early Career: Discovery of the American Landscape

1825 – *View of Fort Ticonderoga*, Yale University Art Gallery. Another early success, showing the blend of historical resonance with untamed landscape. Amid a wooded mountainous terrain with a storm just passing through, two figures in military dress appear in the foreground. One figure on the lower left approaches the second figure laying at the edge of a cliff in the lower middle of the painting. The figures appear to have been a later 1829 addition.

The painting, which Cole completed around 1826-1829, depicts the romantic ruins of Fort Ticonderoga with a narrative backdrop from the story "Gelyna". The figures illustrate a scene from the story "Gelyna," depicting Captain Cuyler discovering the death of his friend, Major Rutledge.

A short story called "Gelyna: A Tale of Albany and Ticonderoga Seventy Years Ago" was published in "The Talisman" in 1830. Cole's painting depicts a scene from this story. The main characters in the story are Maj. Edward Rutledge his fiancée Gelyna Vandyke and his friend Capt. Herman Cuyler. Rutledge and Cuyler were part of Abercromby's troops during the Battle of Carillon in July 1758. During the course of the battle, Rutledge is wounded and separated from Cuyler. The painting shows the scene in which Cuyler finds Rutledge wounded and dying. Rutledge dies on the day he was supposed to marry Gelyna, July 8, 1758.

Thomas Cole (1801-1848) is known for his landscape and historic paintings and as the founder of the Hudson River School. Cole lived and worked in the Catskills. He visited William Ferris Pell at his summer home the Pavilion on the grounds of Fort Ticonderoga.

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Thomas Cole (1801–1848),
*Expulsion from the Garden
of Eden*, 1827-28, 100.9 ×
138.4 cm, Museum of Fine
Arts, Boston

Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden*, 1827-28, 100.9 × 138.4 cm, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

1826–1830: Establishing Reputation

- *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden* is an early ambitious work, now in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (collections.mfa.org [1]). The painting illustrates the Genesis narrative of Adam and Eve being cast out of Paradise, but Cole treats the subject less as a Biblical illustration and more as a vehicle for landscape and allegory together. The couple are small, humbled, covering their faces, moving from the right side of the canvas through a natural archway into a left half of dark, savage wilderness with blasted trees, ominous rocks, a wolf, a vulture, volcanic peaks. (Artchive [2])
- Cole chose this subject to explore moral and spiritual dimensions, tying them to nature: Eden represents innocence and divine order; the fallen world represents exile, loss, and the consequences of knowledge. The division of the canvas into these two worlds realms shows Cole's growing conviction that landscape painting could do more than delight the eye—it could carry ethical and spiritual weight. He had been long impressed by European Romantic literature and art; in *Expulsion* one sees echoes of John Martin's illustrations for *Paradise Lost*, especially in the dramatic scale and the theatrical use of light and architecture of nature. (collections.mfa.org [1])
- At the time, Cole was still in his twenties, struggling for recognition. *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden* was exhibited in 1828 at the National Academy of

Design alongside another religious work, *Garden of Eden*. Although they failed to sell immediately, these works attracted attention and patronage. In particular, his patron Robert Gilmore encouraged him to pursue what Cole called a "higher form of landscape painting." (collections.mfa.org [1])

- Critical reaction was mixed but respectful; audiences and critics recognized Cole's **dramatic handling of light**, his **inventive landscape composition**, and his difference from the more genteel pastoral and topographical scenes then common in America. While some may have found the Biblical subject **over-wrought**, many saw it as proof that painting could aspire to moral seriousness. *Expulsion* helped to establish the idea that landscape could be history or allegory, not just scenery.
- In terms of its role for the Hudson River School, *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden* is key: it shows what Cole meant by "a higher style" of landscape painting, integrating spiritual, moral, and aesthetic concerns. It lays groundwork for his later monumental cycles, like *The Course of Empire* and *The Voyage of Life*. Artists in the School adopted his model: nature as metaphor, moral vision, drama in light and scale, wilderness vs. cultivation contrast. Thus *Expulsion* is a foundational work for the movement's identity. (collections.mfa.org [1]). Note that the Hudson River School was not a school but a loose collection of artists with similar aims.

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NOTES

Close reading & why Cole chose the subject

Cole stages the Fall as a landscape drama: Eden occupies the right side—luminous, lush, and ordered—while the left is a blasted, post-lapsarian world of jagged rocks, ominous birds and a wolf, and shattered vegetation. Adam and Eve are almost dwarfed by the scene; rather than isolating emotion in gestures, Cole externalizes moral consequence in the environment itself. This

choice reflects his conviction that nature can embody moral and spiritual states—a core premise of his art and of American Romanticism. ([Khan Academy][1])

Critical reaction & Cole's reputation at the time

When shown in the late 1820s, *Expulsion* attracted notice for its ambitious fusion of Biblical narrative and landscape. Critics and patrons recognized Cole's dramatic handling of light and his novel idea that landscape could carry allegorical weight; although not an immediate commercial sensation, the work helped secure patronage that allowed Cole to pursue larger cycles. Contemporary reviews registered both admiration and puzzlement—some readers found the scale and symbolism audacious compared to the gentler American landscapes then common. ([Smart History][3])

Comparisons: Cole's later allegories & European Romantics

Expulsion is a direct antecedent of Cole's mature cycles—*The Course of Empire* and *The Voyage of Life*—where landscape becomes sequential moral history rather than a single event; see the dramatic apocalypse of *Destruction* vs. the moral pilgrimage in *Voyage*. In technique and theatricality Cole owes debts to European Romantics: the apocalyptic drama of John Martin (Miltonic vistas and cataclysmic light) and Turner's atmospheric effects, while Cole's moralising landscape aligns loosely with Friedrich's spiritual solitude—yet Cole grafted these influences onto distinctly American topography. ([Wikimedia Commons][4])

Role in the Hudson River School

Expulsion models the “higher style” of landscape Cole championed: landscape as history, moral allegory, and national voice. By demonstrating that American scenery could host grand, didactic narratives, it helped define the intellectual and aesthetic program that colleagues and pupils—Asher B. Durand, Frederic Edwin Church and others—developed into what later critics called the Hudson River School. In short, *Expulsion* is foundational: it shows Cole moving landscape beyond topography into moral theatre, a move central to the School's identity. ([Artsy][5])

From Museum of Fine Arts website (text adapted from Davis, et al., *MFA Highlights: American Painting* (Boston, 2003) available at www.mfashop.com/mfa-publications.html):

- Thomas Cole first exhibited *Expulsion from the Garden of Eden* along with his *Garden of Eden* (Amon Carter Museum) in 1828 at the National

Academy of Design, of which he had been a founding member. Writing to his patron Robert Gilmore, Cole noted that his submissions aimed for a higher form of landscape painting. Although the works failed to sell, Gilmore supported Cole's travels abroad and set him on his way to receiving a major commission from New York art patron Luman Reed to paint a series of five monumental canvases depicting the *Course of Empire* (1836, New-York Historical Society).

- Immigrating to the United States from England at the age of eighteen, Cole was likely inspired by contemporary British art when he conceived his scene of the Expulsion. He had relied upon British drawing books and prints for the rudiments of his artistic education, and his scene of Adam and Eve dwarfed by promontories of terrifying proportions recalls British painter and printmaker John Martin's illustrations for John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, which was popular on both sides of the Atlantic. Cole's dramatic use of light streaming through the rocky portal to Paradise is clearly reminiscent of Martin's history paintings.
- In his 1835 *Essay on American Scenery*, Cole would describe the beauties of the American wilderness and its capacity to reveal God's creation as a metaphoric Eden. He considered European scenery to reflect the ravages of civilization, for which extensive forests had been felled, rugged mountains had been smoothed, and impetuous rivers had been turned from their courses. In contrast, Cole believed the American wilderness to embody a state of divine grace and lamented that the signs of progress were rapidly encroaching. In his *Expulsion*, Cole vividly portrays both Paradise and a hostile world replete with the consequences of earthly knowledge. These opposing realms meet near the center of the canvas. The profusion of flora and fauna evokes the beauty and harmony of Eden. Outside the gate to Paradise, Adam and Eve are cast into an abyss marked by blasted trees, desolate rocks, and an ominous wolf.

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[4]: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File%3ACole_Thomas_The_Course_of_Empire_Destruction_1836.jpg?utm_source=chatgpt.com "File:Cole Thomas The Course of Empire ... "

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Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *View of Catskill Creek* (formerly *Distant View of Roundtop*), c. 1833, Albany Institute of History & Art, New York

Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *View of Catskill Creek* (formerly *Distant View of Roundtop*), c. 1833, Albany Institute of History & Art, New York

- *View of Catskill Creek* is a quintessential example of **early Hudson River School painting**, capturing the serene beauty of the Catskill Mountains. It shows a tranquil summer evening on Catskill Creek, with North Mountain in the background, site of the famed Catskill Mountain House resort.
(albanyinstitute.org [1])
- The painting reflects Cole's **deep connection to the Catskill region**, where he lived from 1836 until his death in 1848. This period marked a significant evolution in his work, as he moved from European-inspired landscapes to scenes that celebrated the American wilderness. The Catskill Mountains, with their dramatic vistas and changing seasons, provided Cole with endless inspiration.
- Critically, Cole's landscapes were lauded for their **meticulous detail and the emotional depth** they conveyed. His works were seen as more than mere representations of nature; they were imbued with moral and philosophical undertones, reflecting the nation's burgeoning identity and its relationship with the natural world. The American landscape was seen as a New Eden, unspoilt nature, awe inspiring and full of wonder, a reflection of the American spirit embodied in the American people—hard working, honest and spiritual.
- **The Catskill region also played a pivotal role in the development of American tourism driven by the desire to immerse oneself in God's**

untouched creation. The construction of the **Catskill Mountain House in 1824** made the area **accessible to a broader audience**, fostering a new appreciation for the American landscape. Cole's paintings, including this piece, contributed to the romanticised image of the Catskills, attracting visitors and artists alike. (albanyinstitute.org [2])

- Of course, I am talking about the views of many people at that time rather than today, although the pioneering spirit is still an element of American culture.

NOTES

1840s: Later Masterpieces and Moral Visions

1844 – *Catskill Creek* (multiple versions, e.g., Albany Institute of History & Art). A return to intimate views of the American landscape, showing his lifelong attachment to the Catskills.

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- [![View of Catskill Creek (formerly Distant View of Roundtop)](<https://images.openai.com/thumbnails/url/mlmCNHicu1mUUVJSUGylr5-al1xUWVCSmqJbkpRnoJdeXJJYkpmsl5yfq5-Zm5ieWmxfaAuUsXL0S7F0Tw5OSw9xtPB3tixl80hJd6wwM44PKTMKM7PwcC4PSTMomQ3w8CzzDS30yPPxdA1OyzNPNEwMzSv1NjRVKwYArMUoYA>)](https://www.albanyinstitute.org/collection/details/view-of-catskill-creek-formerly-distant-view-of-roundtop?utm_source=chatgpt.com)



Cole's 1833 sketch for the arrangement of the paintings around Luman Reed's fireplace: the sketch also shows above the paintings three aspects of the sun: left (rising); center (zenith); right (setting)

Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *The Course of Empire: The Savage State, The Arcadian or Pastoral State, The Consummation of Empire, Destruction, Desolation*, 1836, 129.5 × 193 cm, New York Historical, Upper West Side, Manhattan, New York

- This is Cole's sketch of a series of five painting surrounding the fireplace of Luman Reed who commissioned him to paint a series called ***The Course of Empire***.
- It consists of
 - (CLICK) *The Savage State*, note the teepees of native Americans on the right. In the 1820s, the dominant view of Native Americans among white Americans was a contradictory and deeply negative mix of paternalism, prejudice, and aggressive expansionism. Native Americans were encouraged to convert to Christianity, learn English, and adopt European-style agriculture and private property ownership.
 - (CLICK) In *The Pastoral State* we see a structure like Stonehenge with figures dressed in Roman togas, a type of Arcadian landscape representing the early stage of civilisation.
 - (CLICK) *The Consummation of Empire* is the best known work of this

series and I will deal with it in more detail in a moment.

- (CLICK) *Destruction* shows the dramatic and violent end of the Empire
- and finally (CLICK) *Desolation* shows the decaying remains of the Empire, the eventual state of all Empires.
- This cycle stands as his most ambitious moral allegory, a five-part series tracing the rise and fall of a great civilization. While each canvas—from *The Savage State* to *Desolation*—has significance, *Consummation* (1836) embodies the series' message most dramatically so let's look at it more closely.

NOTES

1830s: Allegory, History, and National Themes

1833–1836 – *The Course of Empire* (five-part cycle), New-York Historical Society. His most famous allegorical series, charting the rise and fall of an imaginary empire. A moral reflection on history, civilization, and human hubris.

REFERENCES

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Course_of_Empire_\(paintings\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Course_of_Empire_(paintings))



Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *The Course of Empire: The Consummation of Empire*, 1836, 129.5 × 193 cm, New York Historical, Upper West Side, Manhattan, New York

Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *The Course of Empire: The Consummation of Empire*, 1836, 129.5 × 193 cm, New York Historical, Upper West Side, Manhattan, New York

- The scene depicts a **classical city at the very height of power**: temples, colonnades, and statues line a magnificent harbour, its waters crowded with ships, while a triumphal procession crosses a bridge at the painting's center. The architectural grandeur and festive atmosphere recall imperial Rome at its zenith.
- Cole selected *Consummation* to embody the seductive pinnacle of human achievement—**wealth, power, and cultural refinement**—yet to foreshadow its **fragility**. The glowing light, abundance of figures, and architectural symmetry celebrate civilization's creative energies, but for Cole the painting was a **warning: unchecked materialism and pride in oneself and one's Empire inevitably contain the seeds of decline**.
- *Consummation* is the turning point before **chaos and destruction**, a moral lesson he believed urgently relevant to the America of Andrew Jackson (1767–1845, 7th President from **1829–1837**), where rapid territorial expansion and commercial ambition seemed to echo Rome's dangerous trajectory. Jackson's vision of an agrarian republic and a desire for southern dominance, led to the forced displacement of Native American tribes embodied in the Indian Removal Act of 1830.
- The critical reaction to Cole's cycle was mixed. Some patrons and fellow artists

admired its epic scope and saw in it an American rival to European history painting. Others found the allegory **overblown** or questioned whether **landscape was a suitable vehicle** for such moral lessons. Nonetheless, *The Course of Empire* **helped cement Cole's reputation** as more than a mere landscapist: he had fused history painting with landscape on a grand scale, elevating the status of American art.

- 1836 was also the year **he married Maria Bartow** and settled in a house called "Cedar Grove" in the **Catskills**, New York, a house that became his **lifelong home and studio**. They had five children over the years and his **reputation continued to grow from this point onwards**.

NOTES

1830s: Allegory, History, and National Themes

1833–1836 – *The Course of Empire* (five-part cycle), New-York Historical Society. His most famous allegorical series, charting the rise and fall of an imaginary empire. A moral reflection on history, civilization, and human hubris.

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Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *View on the Catskill — Early Autumn*, 1836-37, 99.1 × 160 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art

Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *View on the Catskill — Early Autumn*, 1836-37, 99.1 × 160 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art

- This is *View on the Catskill — Early Autumn*. He had just completed *The Course of Empire* (1833-36), and had begun to speak and write explicitly about nature, civilization, and the loss of the wilderness. (The Metropolitan Museum of Art [1])

Personal & Historical Circumstances:

- This painting was made in response to environmental changes around Cole's beloved Catskill valley. The Canajoharie (pronounced "**can-ih-joe-HAIR-ee**") & Catskill Railroad was being built through the region in 1836, which threatened trees, forests, and the quality of the natural scenery that Cole cherished. He expressed deep distress in letters to friends and patrons about what he called "**ruthless sacrifice**" of the landscape. (See explorethomascole.org [2]) This was also the period in which Cole had published his ***Essay on American Scenery*** (1836), in which he lays out ideas about the aesthetic and moral value of rural nature versus the encroachments of industrial progress. (cwi.pressbooks.pub [3])

The Scene & Figures:

- The scene here is calm and idyllic: there are pastoral figures in the foreground (a woman with child, a man rowing a boat, a man in a field with horses), reflecting human presence living in harmony with nature. (explorethomascole.org [2]) A notable detail is a tree stump in the left foreground, clearly felled, which serves as a warning symbol of what is being lost. (explorethomascole.org [2])

Why He Painted It:

- Cole intended this painting as both a nostalgic portrait of the Catskill valley before its transformation, and a moral warning. He wished to preserve visually what he felt was being destroyed. The painting is thus less a literal topographical record than a composite “ideal” view, drawing on earlier sketches but omitting many of the scars of development. It serves both as homage and protest—celebrating the beauty of nature, foregrounding the pastoral ideal, and lamenting the coming loss. (explorethomascole.org [2])

NOTES

• **1826–1830: Establishing Reputation**

- 1827 – *View on the Catskill—Early Autumn*, The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Demonstrates Cole’s balance of grandeur with close observation of seasonal detail.
- **Overall composition:** A broad, panoramic “ideal” view of the Catskill valley in calm, early-autumn light. A low horizon and expansive sky produce a tranquil, pastoral mood rather than the dramatic “sublime” of some earlier works.
- **Figures & staffage:** Small pastoral figures (woman with child, a boatman, a hunter, onlookers) populate the immediate foreground. Their scale emphasizes human modesty within the landscape and suggests a settled, agrarian life in harmony with nature.
- **Symbolic detail:** The felled-tree stump at left is a deliberate motif — a warning symbol of deforestation and industrial encroachment (Cole painted this while the Canajoharie & Catskill Railroad works began to cut into the valley). The painting thus functions as both homage and a quiet protest.
- **Why he painted it:** Cole intended to preserve visually the pastoral character of the Catskills and to urge viewers to value what was being lost to “progress.” The work echoes ideas he set out in his *Essay on American Scenery* (1835–36).

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[and-the-proto-environmental-imagination/?utm_source=chatgpt.com](https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/10501?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

"Thomas Cole and the Proto-Environmental Imagination"

Thomas Cole - View on the Catskill—Early Autumn - American - The Metropolitan Museum of Art]

(https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/10501?utm_source=chatgpt.com)

Provenance / Accession: Gift in memory of Jonathan Sturges by his children; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Object number 95.13.3.

Comparisons — within Cole's oeuvre

- vs. *Kaaterskill Falls* (c.1826–27): *Falls* emphasizes the sublime—dramatic verticality, roaring water, tiny human figures lost in grandeur. *View on the Catskill* shifts to a pastoral, moralized landscape: human presence is integrated rather than overwhelmed. (Compare images/notes from Wadsworth Atheneum & Met). ([The Metropolitan Museum of Art][1])
- vs. *The Oxbow* (1836): Both works address wilderness vs. cultivation, but *The Oxbow* stages that contrast as allegory (wild stormed landscape vs. peaceful cultivated valley) while *View on the Catskill* leans toward nostalgic preservation — a pictorial plea rather than a stark allegory. ([The Metropolitan Museum of Art][4])
- vs. *The Voyage of Life* (1842, NGA): *Voyage* is explicitly allegorical and moralized; *View on the Catskill* is subtler, blending pictorial beauty with environmental concern rather than insisting on a single moral narrative. ([The Metropolitan Museum of Art][4])



Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *View from Mount Holyoke, Northampton, Massachusetts, after a Thunderstorm—The Oxbow*, 1836, 130.8 x 193 cm, The Met

- This is one of his most well-known works. *View from Mount Holyoke, Northampton, Massachusetts, after a Thunderstorm (The Oxbow)*, painted in 1836, **perhaps his most iconic single canvas**. It offers not just a sweeping panorama of the Connecticut River Valley but a meditation on the **tension between wilderness and cultivation**—one of the central themes of his career. From the dramatic height of Mount Holyoke, Cole depicts a **broad landscape divided in two**. On the **left, a wild, storm-lashed wilderness** occupies the foreground: dark, broken trees, jagged slopes, and heavy clouds still rolling away. **On the right, the landscape opens into a serene, sunlit river valley**, its oxbow curve clearly visible amid a patchwork of farms and settlements.
- (CLICK) Cole even placed a **symbol of himself** in the scene: a stool, easel and umbrella near the central foreground. This self-portrait underscores the painter's mediating role between nature and culture, wilderness and art. His vantage point situates him at the hinge between the two halves, suggesting that the artist, like the nation, must choose a path forward.
- (CLICK) The painting was executed the same year as *The Course of Empire*, and together they form a statement on America's destiny. While *Empire* warned of the dangers of hubris, *The Oxbow* posed a subtler question: **should America remain in a state of sublime wilderness or embrace the pastoral ideal of cultivated progress?**

- In the context of the **Hudson River School**, *The Oxbow* is **foundational**: it unites grandeur, allegory, and topographical precision. Cole's successors, including his **pupil Frederic Edwin Church**, would build on this model, blending spectacular scenery with reflections on America's cultural and spiritual identity.

NOTES

1830s: Allegory, History, and National Themes

1836 – *View from Mount Holyoke, Northampton, Massachusetts, after a Thunderstorm (The Oxbow)*, The Met. Perhaps Cole's single most iconic painting; a landscape with allegorical overtones contrasting wilderness and cultivation, often read as a statement on American progress.

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Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *The Architect's Dream*, 1840, 134.7 × 213.6 cm, Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio

Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *The Architect's Dream*, 1840, 134.7 × 213.6 cm, Toledo Museum of Art

- Thomas Cole painted *The Architect's Dream* in 1840 as a commission from **Ithiel Town**, one of America's most **prominent architects** of the early 19th century. ([explorethomascole.org][1]) The painting is a **grand architectural fantasy** rather than a traditional landscape: it assembles monuments of **Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Gothic** architectural styles all in one sweeping vision. In the foreground one sees a **reclining figure on a large stack of books** or folios (which may represent either Town himself or perhaps Cole seeing himself in an architectural role), a monumental column inscribed with both "T. Cole" (for the painter) and "I. Town Architect." (explorethomascole.org [1])
- Cole produced this painting in **about five weeks**, a relatively short time for such a detailed and ambitious piece. ([explorethomascole.org][1]) At the time, Cole was interested in architecture himself — he had been involved in architectural drawings and designs (for example for the Ohio State Capitol, and for St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Catskill after a fire) and had access to Town's large library of architectural books. (explorethomascole.org [1])
- Ithiel Town (1784-1844) was trained under Asher Benjamin, he worked in revival styles (Greek, Gothic, Egyptian), **patented the "Town lattice" bridge**, and amassed a very large architecture library. ([Wikipedia][2]) **Town commissioned this work** hoping for a landscape in which architecture might be ornament; **but was disappointed because the architecture dominates**, contrary to his wishes. He thought the **architecture should be "subservient" to landscape**. ([Google

Arts & Culture][3])

- Critical response was mixed. Some critics found the painting “**too full of poetry,**” while others praised it as showing “**as much genius as many of his best.**” But its almost wholly architectural subject made it diverge from what viewers expected from Cole. (explorethomascole.org [1])
- Because Town rejected the painting, **Cole retained possession** of *The Architect's Dream*. It **stayed in his family after his death**, unsold, **until 1949**, when the **Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio**, purchased it (with funds from Florence Scott Libbey) as a major acquisition. (Google Arts & Culture [3])

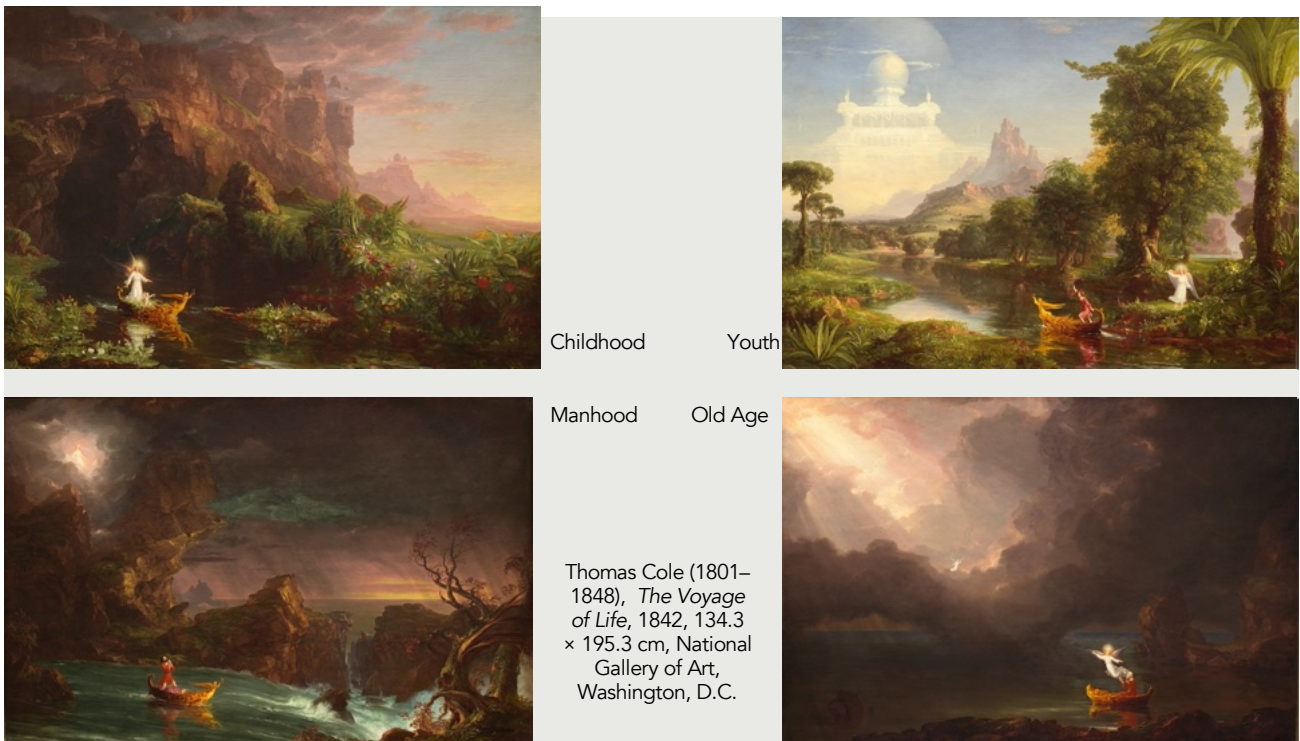
NOTES

1840s: Later Masterpieces and Moral Visions

1843 – *The Architect's Dream*, Toledo Museum of Art. A grand fantasy landscape uniting architecture from different eras; commissioned by architect Ithiel Town.

REFERENCES

- [1]: https://explorethomascole.org/project/the-architects-dream/?utm_source=chatgpt.com "The Architect's Dream"
- [2]: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ithiel_Town?utm_source=chatgpt.com "Ithiel Town"
- [3]: https://artsandculture.google.com/story/thomas-cole-the-architect-s-dream-the-toledo-museum-of-art/UwWh4X2yPzzOKw?hl=en&utm_source=chatgpt.com "Thomas Cole: The Architect's Dream"



Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *The Voyage of Life: Childhood*, 1842, 134.3 × 195.3 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

The Voyage of Life: Youth, 1842, 134 × 195 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

The Voyage of Life: Manhood, 1842, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

The Voyage of Life: Old Age, 1842, 133.4 × 196.2 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

- By the late 1830s, Cole had developed a reputation **beyond mere landscape painting**: he wished to convey **moral, spiritual, and religious ideas** through nature. *The Voyage of Life* was a deliberate undertaking to make the messages more accessible: simpler narrative (one man's life vs. a whole civilization), symbolic elements labelled by Cole in writing to accompany the paintings.
- At this point Cole was well-established; he had completed major cycles like *The Course of Empire*, and was known for blending history, religion, and landscape. He was commissioned by Samuel Ward, Sr. for the *Voyage of Life* series, with **the intention that the paintings would tour and be viewed widely**. Cole's reputation was such that his "higher style" had both supporters and critics; some admired the moral depth, others found allegory heavy-handed.
- In this four-part series we see a person starting life, represented as a stream, coming out from a cavern in a boat with a guardian angel. This proceeds to *Youth* with the splendour and wonders of life seen ahead on the horizon. We proceed, bottom left to *Manhood* and a turbulent and dangerous period of life

with dangers all around and finally in *Old Age* there is calm after the storm, the clouds are clearing, the sun shines through and in the distance another angel is seen taking over from life's guardian angel.

- Early critical praise (1840s) included: **"Mr. Cole has given us more than landscape. He has elevated the art by wedding it to moral instruction."** — Contemporary New York review (1840 exhibition). Later critical assessment: **"In these canvases, Cole became the Milton of American painting: fusing sublime scenery with Christian allegory."** — 20th-century art historian Matthew Baigell, *Thomas Cole's Vision of America*.
- Modern interpretation: **"The Voyage of Life is both sermon and landscape: nature transformed into a stage for spiritual progress."** — Elizabeth Mankin Kornhauser, catalogue for *Thomas Cole's Journey: Atlantic Crossings* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018).
- *Childhood* in particular, with its lush beauty and hopeful symbolisms, was well received, helping renew interest in Cole's more spiritual side. ([The Talbot Spy][3])

NOTES

1840s: Later Masterpieces and Moral Visions

1842 – *The Voyage of Life* (four-part cycle), National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Another celebrated allegorical series, tracing human life from childhood to old age, set in symbolic landscapes.

The Voyage of Life – Voices of Artist and Critics

Thomas Cole (on *Childhood*): "A stream issues from the darkness of a cavern; on its waters a boat glides outward, bearing a laughing infant, guarded by a celestial spirit." — Cole's own description, *Essay on American Scenery notes & letters* (1839–40).

Thomas Cole (on the allegory): "The river is the stream of Life... the guardian angel will continue with the voyager as long as his earthly course permits." — Cole, explanatory text circulated with the series.

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Explore Thomas Cole"

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[3]: https://talbotspy.org/looking-at-the-masters-thomas-cole-and-his-voyage-of-life/?utm_source=chatgpt.com "Looking at the Masters: Thomas Cole and his Voyage of Life - Talbot Spy"



Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *The Voyage of Life: Childhood* (part of a four-part cycle), 1842, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

- *Childhood* serves to root the series: it shows birth, innocence and possibility. It reflects Cole's interest in a spiritual life and in using light, nature, and allegory to evoke moral meaning. (National Gallery of Art [2])
- It introduces **the voyager as an infant**, in a golden boat steered by a **guardian angel**. The boat glides out of a dark, craggy cave—Cole's own metaphor for our earthly origins and the "mysterious Past." The river is calm and narrow, bordered by luxuriant herbage and spring flowers; the rising sun (rosy light) bathes the scene in dawn glow, symbolizing innocence, wonder, and the freshness of early life. On the boat's prow is a figurehead and "**Figures of the Hours**" referring to the Horae, the personifications of the seasons and hours in Greek mythology, who were often depicted as beautiful maidens, emphasizing time's presence even at birth. The flora includes the Egyptian lotus, which Cole describes as a symbol of human life. ([explorethomascole.org][1])
- *Childhood* marks a culmination of what Cole had been developing: landscape as allegory, **nature infused with moral and religious meaning**, and the use of symbolic narratives rather than purely topographical or sublime scenes. **It influenced his younger followers** (e.g. **Frederic Edwin Church** 1826-1900, **Jasper Cropsey** 1823-1900) not only in how to depict nature, **but in why**—landscape as **spiritual terrain**. The series expanded the **thematic possibilities for the Hudson River School**, showing that natural scenery could serve both aesthetic and ethical, even prophetic, aims. ([National Gallery of Art][2])

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Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *A View of the Two Lakes and Mountain House, Catskill Mountains, Morning*, 1844, 91 × 136.9 cm, Brooklyn Museum

Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *A View of the Two Lakes and Mountain House, Catskill Mountains, Morning*, 1844, 91 × 136.9 cm, Brooklyn Museum

- *A View of the Two Lakes and Mountain House, Catskill Mountains, Morning* (1844) is one of **Cole's final masterpieces**, painted in **the year before his untimely death**. The work captures the **Catskill Mountain House**—a popular resort opened in 1824—nestled amid the serene landscape of the Catskill Mountains. Cole's depiction includes the distinctive peaks of **High Peak and Round Top**, as well as the tranquil **North and South Lakes**, bathed in the soft light of morning. ([Brooklyn Museum][1])
- Today, it is housed in the Brooklyn Museum, serving as a testament to Cole's artistic vision and his profound connection to the American wilderness. (Brooklyn Museum [1]) The painting not only showcases his technical skill but also reflects the cultural and spiritual values of 19th-century America, highlighting the nation's reverence for its natural beauty and the emerging identity of American art.

NOTES

1840s: Later Masterpieces and Moral Visions

1847 – *A View of the Two Lakes and Mountain House, Catskill Mountains, Morning*, The Brooklyn Museum. A reflective landscape, among the last major works before his early death in 1848.

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- [3]: https://www.timesunion.com/hudsonvalley/culture/article/thomas-cole-hudson-river-school-legacy-18474582.php?utm_source=chatgpt.com "The complex legacy of Thomas Cole - Times Union"
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Thomas Cole
(1801–1848),
*Prometheus
Bound*, 1847,
162.56 ×
243.84 cm, Fine
Arts Museums
of San Francisco

Thomas Cole (1801–1848), *Prometheus Bound*, 1847, 162.56 × 243.84 cm, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco

- *Prometheus Bound* is one of **Cole's largest and most ambitious works**. It shows the Greek Titan Prometheus, bound to a rock on Mount Caucasus, enduring **daily torment as an eagle devours his regenerating liver**—a punishment imposed by Zeus for stealing fire and granting it to humanity. Cole's rendition emphasizes the **vast, desolate landscape** surrounding Prometheus, highlighting his isolation and suffering. The use of light, particularly the rising sun and the planet Jupiter (Zeus's Roman counterpart), adds a celestial dimension to the scene.
- While Cole never explicitly commented on the painting's meaning, art historians have suggested that it serves as an **allegory for oppression and the indomitable human spirit**. Some interpretations link the image to **abolitionist sentiments**, viewing Prometheus's suffering as symbolic of the plight of **enslaved individuals**. The shackles binding Prometheus are particularly poignant, potentially representing the chains of slavery and tyranny. Additionally, the painting's monumental scale and dramatic composition evoke themes of moral and political struggle. (FAMSF [1])
- Upon its exhibition **in London in 1847**, *Prometheus Bound* received **mixed reviews**. The painting was displayed at Westminster Hall as part of a competition to **decorate the Houses of Parliament**. However, its **allegorical subject matter was deemed unsuitable** for the British context, and it was placed high on the wall ("**skied**"), limiting its visibility and impact. Despite this,

the painting garnered praise for its dramatic execution and emotional depth. (Wikipedia [2])

- *Prometheus Bound* was **among Cole's final works before his death in 1848**. At this time, Cole was deeply engaged in exploring themes of **human suffering and moral consequence**, reflecting his personal concerns and the broader societal issues of his era. (Wikipedia [2])

NOTES

1840s: Later Masterpieces and Moral Visions

1846 – *Prometheus Bound*, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. A late mythological subject, showing Cole's continuing interest in allegory and the sublime.

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- [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/e4/Thomas_Cole - Prometheus Bound - Google Art Project.jpg/2560px-Thomas_Cole - Prometheus Bound - Google Art Project.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/e/e4/Thomas_Cole_-_Prometheus_Bound_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg/2560px-Thomas_Cole_-_Prometheus_Bound_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)
- [!Prometheus Bound (Thomas Cole) - Wikipedia](https://images.openai.com/thumbnails/url/Xwlsj3icu1mUUVJSUGylr5-al1xUWVCSmqJbkpRnoJdeXJJYkpmsl5yfq5-Zm5ieWmxfaAuUsXL0S7F0Tw5MdQ4qKjAPzwk1zCtP9k51zc_xdUlyKUmNyiQqd3N1z_ErCDZ3iQowNXUH6fVNsDQtDc0yNS0rUisGAM8KKTl)(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prometheus_Bound_%28Thomas_Cole%29?utm_source=chatgpt.com)



22-02 THOMAS COLE

DR. LAURENCE SHAFE

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Thomas Cole,
*Prometheus
Bound*, detail,
1847, Fine Arts
Museums, San
Francisco

- Cole died unexpectedly at the age of 47 from pleurisy, an inflammation of the lining around the lungs (Facebook [2]). His premature death **ended a prolific career** that had significantly influenced American art. Despite his relatively short life, **Cole's legacy endures through his role as the founder of the Hudson River School**, an art movement that **celebrated the American landscape** and emphasized themes of nature's grandeur and the human spirit's connection to it. (Times Union [3])
- Thank you for your time and attention and I look forward to giving my next talk in the series.



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