

Voice of the Landscape

A Palimpsest of Time and Place

Thomas Cole

Painter, Poet, Prophet

From Kaaterskill Falls
to the 21st Century

Paid for Mr. Washburn
 one [unclear] - Mr. [unclear]
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 one for [unclear]
 one for [unclear]
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 Mr. [unclear]

on Wednesday morning 8 o'clock
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one [unclear] [unclear]
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care of Mr. Samuel Corp
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Thomas Cole

N York. 1827-

paid

Thomas Cole

Paid [unclear] [unclear]
 in the year 1828 -

Mr. Pitkin

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L. [unclear]
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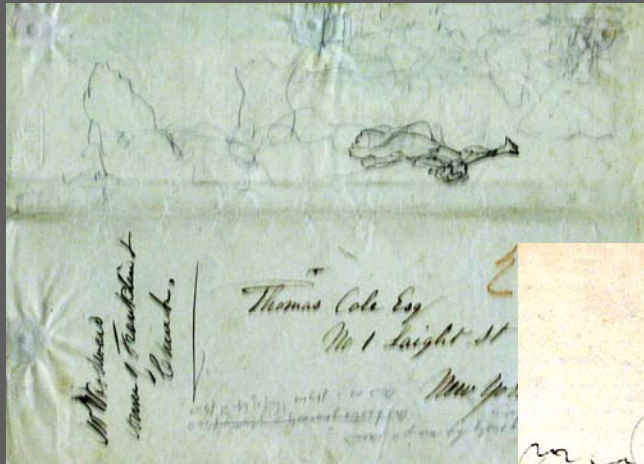
In the spring about March, \$50.
 Paid [unclear] [unclear] on the 21st of April 1828
 20 dollars on account
 40 dollars on account July 9th 1828

1827 April 18th 50

As it should be, this 1827 sketchbook resides within a vault rarely seen. We have long envisioned the book's pages, however, transported before us in the air. Thus revealing the process of art's creation and providing a transformative participatory experience.

It is now a possibility...

Subjects
The Ages -
The way of Life in four pictures -
The path of Pilgrimage -

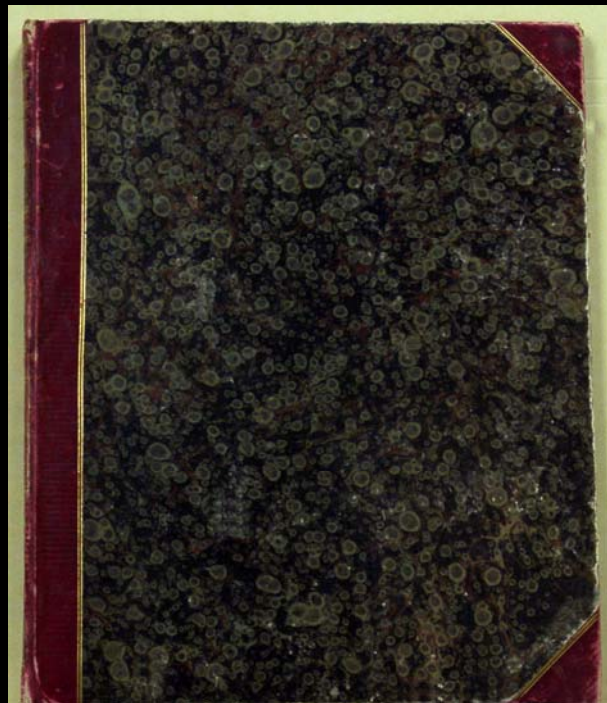


The Vale of Joy
The Vale of Gloom
Morning - Evening - Night - a series
Dead Hemlock

Thomas Cole
New York
1827 -
Thomas Cole



VC 10635
Box 7 Folder 7
Thomas Cole
Sketchbook
1827





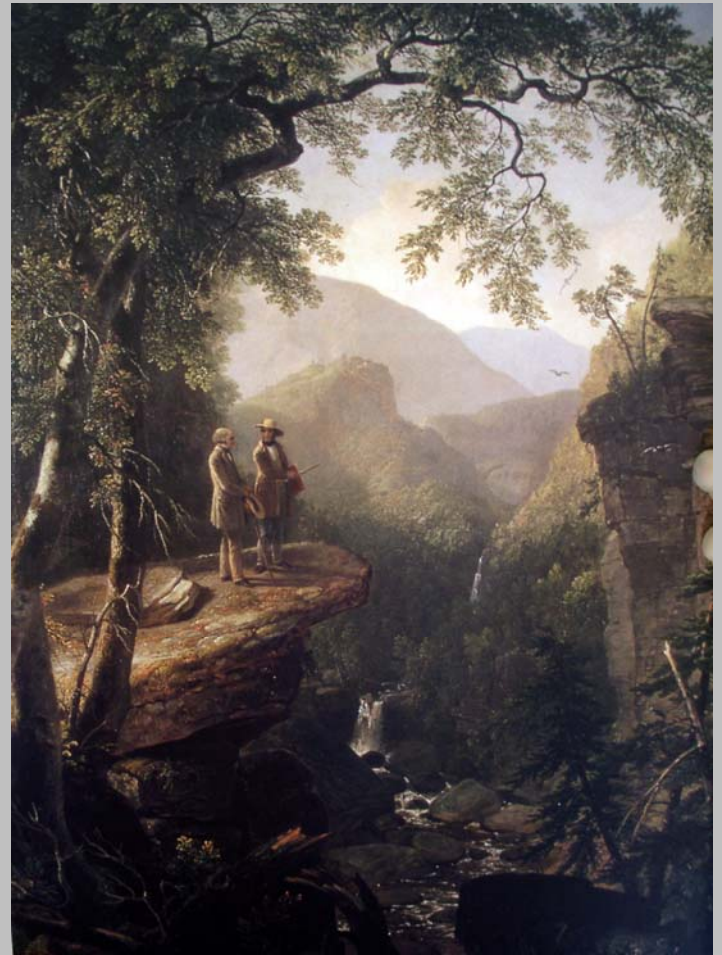
CoLabART ∞ Lynn Small + Dennis Paul

Artist Statement

Voice of the Landscape is a immersive installation that utilizes the new brushes of the digital age to take America's sense of place landscape tradition from its birthplace – Kaaterskill Falls and the Hudson River School – into the 21th century.

This project draws inspiration from Kaaterskill Falls, the Hudson River Valley and the first public lands set aside for future generations – the Catskill Preserve in New York State. Since the early 19th century, this area has served as a wellspring for American painting, literature, philosophy, and environmentalism. We have been stimulated by early America's creative voice in our desire to seek a new hybridity of expression that morphs traditional art forms into the new digital realm.

**A preview of some possibilities
and what's to come...**



At seventeen, Bryant wrote the epic poem *Thanatopsis* at the base of the Falls.



Thanatopsis



" . . . She has a voice of gladness . . . "

To him who in the love of Nature holds
Communion with her visible forms, she speaks

A various language; 🌿 for his gayer hours

She has a voice of gladness, and a smile

And eloquence of beauty, 🍊 and she glides

Into his darker musings, with a mild

And healing sympathy, that steals away

Their sharpness, ere he is aware. 🌸🌸🌸



Twilight of a storm in the distance. The sky was extremely beautiful, & the horizon
 a golden yellow with the higher clouds in a beautiful purple. The sky was green
 higher the clouds were reddish and purple. On the horizon a
 row of dark clouds of darkness in purple — the beauty of
 nature in the last light on the horizon from the distance

The Storm

VC 10635
 Box 7 Folder 7
 Thomas Cole
 Sketchbook
 1827

**This is the first musings
on the American Landscape...**

Essay on American Scenery



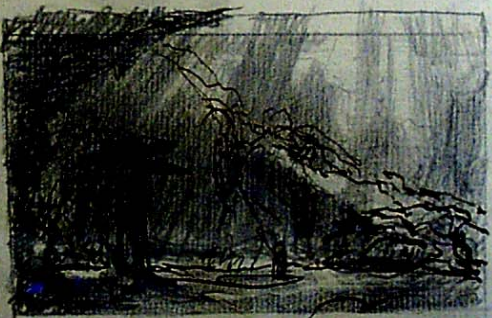
My Essay on American Scenery

The subject ~~which I have~~ chosen for the essay that I ~~now~~ ^{now} offer you is ^{a great one} American Scenery and in taking it I shall ~~perhaps have~~ ^{draw} more confidence in its ~~importance~~ ^{merits} than in my ~~own~~ capacity for ~~treating~~ ^{treating} it

in a worthy & interesting manner - ~~But before~~
~~I enter into it~~ Before entering fully into the subject I would say ~~something~~ ^{on the importance of} ~~studying the~~ ^{studying the} ~~importance of~~ ^{the} ~~cultivated taste for scenery~~ ^{beauty, & a true by beauty & what I} ~~is~~ ^{is} ~~nothing~~ ^{nothing} ~~in spite of all~~ ^{in spite of all} ~~flattering~~ ^{flattering} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~before~~ ^{before} ~~entering~~ ^{entering} ~~more~~ ^{more} ~~fully~~ ^{fully} into the principle subject of my essay. I would say something - on the importance of cultivated taste for scenery. In despite of our ~~superior~~ ^{superior} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~intellectual~~ ^{intellectual} ~~and~~ ^{and} ~~moral & religious~~ ^{moral & religious} ~~superiority~~ ^{superiority} - our society is far from being truly refined -

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11









Washington Irving

Enched by Jas. D. Smillie

After a Sketch from life by F. O. C. Darley

at Sunnyside July 1848



***Rip falls asleep at
the foot of the Falls...***

By degrees, Rip's awe and apprehension subsided. He even ventured, when no eye was fixed upon him, to taste the beverage, which he found had much of the flavor of excellent Hollands. He was naturally a thirsty soul, and was soon tempted to repeat the draught. One taste provoked another, and he reiterated his visits to the flagon so often, that at length his senses were overpowered, his eyes swam in his head, his head gradually declined, and he fell into a deep sleep.

On awaking, he found himself on the green knoll from whence he had first seen the old man of the glen. He rubbed his eyes—it was a bright sunny morning. The birds were hopping and twittering among the bushes, and the eagle was wheeling aloft and breasting the pure mountain breeze. 'Surely,' thought Rip, 'I have not slept here all night.' He recalled the occurrences before he fell asleep. The strange man with a keg of liquor—the mountain ravine—the wild retreat among the rocks—the woe-begone party at ninepins—the flagon—'Oh! that flagon! that wicked flagon!' thought Rip...



*But the place I mean is next to the river,
where one of the ridges juts out
a little from the rest,
and where the rocks fall
for the best part of a thousand feet,
so much up and down,
that a man standing on their edges
is fool enough to think
he can jump from top to bottom.
‘What see you when you get there?’
asked Edwards.
‘Creation!’ said Natty,
dropping the end of his rod into the water,
and sweeping one hand around him in a circle
- ‘all creation, lad’...*

James Fenimore Cooper, from *The Pioneers*







Sketch of the mouth of the San Juan
which is a quiet lake. The water may be
decalated - a little water may be
its source the quantity of the elements
from the great basin of the
the stillness of the great basin of the

Lecture on Art.

Apology for the title - my intention only to speak of the
plastic Arts Painting & Sculpture, the others incidental,
& what is said of one art will ^{often} apply to the others.
Influence of Art. Euripides; ~~leaving~~ ^{the} ~~destruction~~ ^{the}
use of Monuments of Art to make a man a lover
of his Country. ~~effect~~ ^{Regarding} the great necessity
for the Cultivation of Art in our Country in order to
humanize ~~antidote~~ to the sordidness of Society.
Seeing its influence in connection with Art on mental
Trainings Scotchman. Necessity of giving character to
flat ~~countries~~. ~~ancient~~ ^{ancient} Painting & Sculpture
~~as preserved in~~ ^{Grand pictures - Frescoes - originality}
Grandness of Style: probably the great painters had
never produced dis. pictures of such grand character
had they not painted Frescoes. Modern Art
No Frescoes or only of late. Small pictures ~~entirely~~
Art to excel must have promise of permanent
durability or it cannot be great American
Art. Strong desire for the beautiful in the American

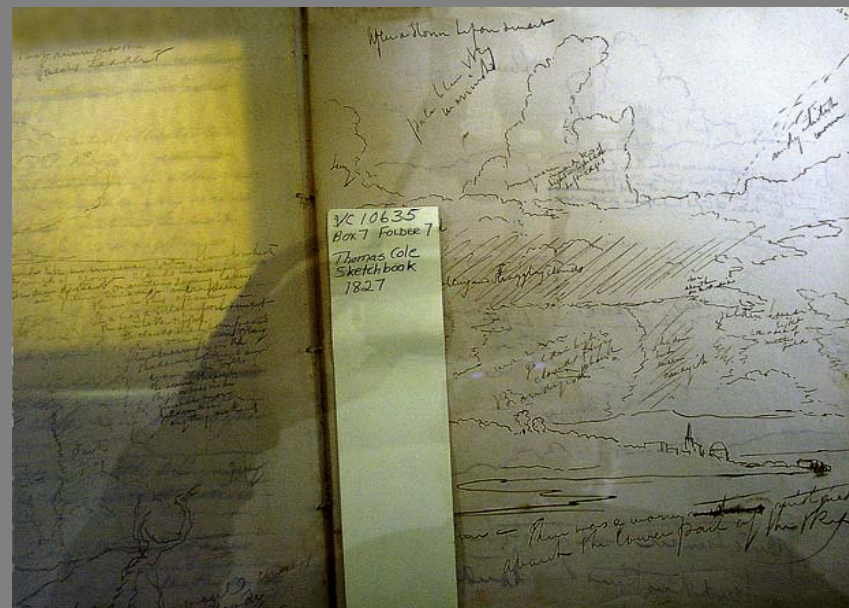


on our water in the

is from the land before them in little boat marked



Twilight effect in Nature. The sky and especially the clouds were the basis
of a full moon at the higher stage in the sketch. The sky was given
higher the clouds were added by and for the water on the horizon as
background there are clouds of softness in contrast to the intensity of
the trees and the light of the sun & the moon from the distance



dup blue

span

greenish with Pale
by the

near any water

Pale blue

The Spirits of the Wilderness a poem —

Seem laid among the ~~dark~~ ^{desolate} ~~solitudes~~ ^{solitudes} of the
Crystal Mountains —

Part 1st

Muse —

He hopes in vain, who hopes in solitude
To disenthral his soul from worldly thought
Or ~~seek~~ ^{find} the ~~haunts~~ ^{haunts} of men to find
~~A healing~~ ^{in the desert} for a wounded heart —

Nature to such may speak but never smiles

Her adamant brow relaxes not

But cold and ^{unsympathizing} uncongenial meet his gaze —

The solemn mountains & the trackless woods

The silent lakes — the dazzling cataract

Cheer not the bosom of the lonely man

~~But cold and ^{unsympathizing} uncongenial meet his gaze~~

But ~~in the~~ make him feel his ^{utter} futility,

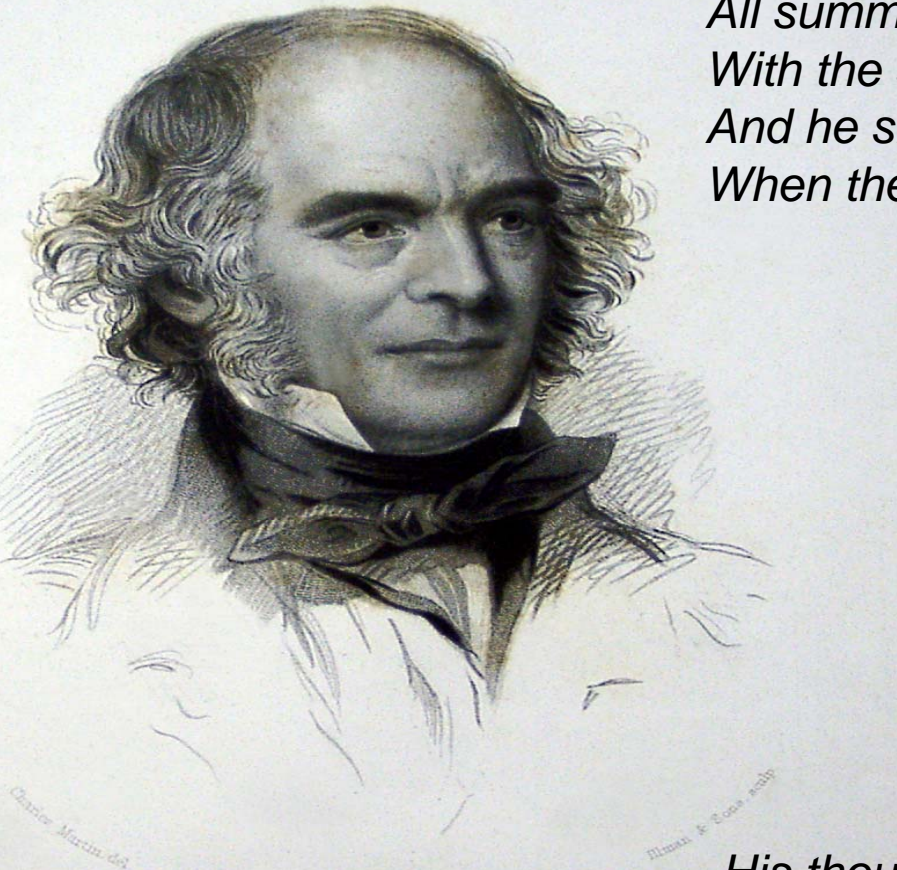
And that without the companion's ^{help} of men

He ^{is left as} liketh a slender reed the scythe

Has left alone — its own weight burdensome

Crush'd to the earth by snow passing breeze

Catterskill Falls



*Midst greens and shades the Catterskill leaps,
From cliffs where the wood-flower clings;
All summer he moistens his verdant steeps
With the sweet light spray of the mountain springs;
And he shakes the woods on the mountain side,
When they drip with the rains of autumn-tide.*

*But when, in the forest bare and old,
The blast of December calls,
He builds, in the starlight clear and cold,
A palace of ice where his torrent falls,
With turret, and arch, and fretwork fair,
And pillars blue as the summer air.*

*His thoughts are alone of those who dwell
In the halls of frost and snow,
Who pass where the crystal domes upswell
From the alabaster floors below,
Where the frost-trees shoot with leaf and spray,
And frost-gems scatter a silvery day.*

*William Follen Bryant
November 15, 1857.*

The Ice Cone of Kaaterskill Falls – from Thomas Cole's notebook of March 1843

*We have often heard that the fall of Caterskill present an interesting spectacle in mid-winter
...winter after winter has passed away
without the accomplishment of our wish, until a few days ago.*

*We left the spot with lingering steps and real regret,
for in all probability we were never to see these wintry glories again.*







There are overhanging rocks, and the dark browed cavern; but where the spangled cataract fell, stands a gigantic tower of ice, reaching from the basin of the waterfall to the very summit of the crags. From the jutting rocks, that form the canopy of which I have spoken, hang festoons of glittering icicles. Not a drop of water, not a gush of spray is to be seen; no sound of many waters strikes the ear, not even as of a gurgling rivulet or trickling rill; all is silent and motionless as death; and did not the curious eye perceive, through two window-like spaces of clear ice, the falling water, one would be lead to believe that all is bound in icy fetters.

Voice of the Landscape is a multi-channel, immersive media installation that has been stimulated by the wellspring of early America's creative voice and our desire to transform the *sense of place* landscape tradition into 21st century modalities.

We seek a new fluidity of expression that morphs traditional art forms into the new century. During our second joint-residency fellowships to Yaddo, Saratoga Springs, NY in Fall 2003, the project was greatly enhanced by utilizing the facilities at Skidmore College's Media Technology Center and the Manuscripts and Special Collections Division of the New York State Library, Albany. We would like to thank those who so kindly assisted us.

Much as photography, film and video have changed the fixed images of painting, the digital domain has radically and forever altered the making of marks. This new palette of tools extends the parameters of the imagination and enables us to create a dialogue among the visual arts, literature, the inspiring sounds of nature, and the experiential world to be.

This installation references the beginnings of a cohesive body of American art that melds digital SoundScapes, video and stills with the more traditional 19th & 20th century painting, drawing, and photography. In fusing these worlds with the new brushes of our time, we endeavor to create a viable model for future cross-disciplinary studies in education, demonstrate a digital solution to manuscripts and archival material as well as create a pointer to the future potential of art in the digital realm.

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