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Contacts: Melanie Hasbrook
The Olana Partnership
518-828-1872 x 103
mhasbrook@olana.org

Jennifer Greim
Thomas Cole National Historic Site
518-943-7465 x 6
jgreim@thomascollection.org

THE OLANA PARTNERSHIP AND THE THOMAS COLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE WERE AWARDED A COLLABORATIVE MARKETING GRANT FOR \$225,000 AS PART OF THE 2017 REGIONAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL AWARDS.

The grant was awarded by Empire State Development Corporation as part of their Market NY program. The project will introduce the burgeoning Skywalk region as an internationally-significant destination using an advertising campaign, special exhibitions and regional events.

Catskill and Hudson, NY – December 15, 2017: The Thomas Cole National Historic Site (TCNHS) and The Olana Partnership (TOP) are excited to announce that they have been awarded \$225,000 for a joint marketing grant from New York State through the Regional Economic Development Council Awards, Empire State Development Program. The project will further the transformation of these two historic sites into major economic drivers for the area by working together to promote the Skywalk region as a comprehensive and internationally-significant destination. The initiative will leverage unprecedented international focus in 2018 on Thomas Cole, and Frederic Church to promote the region that gave birth to America's first major art movement, the Hudson River School of landscape painting. 2018 marks the bicentennial anniversary of Thomas Cole's arrival in America from England which coincides with major exhibitions featuring significant works by Thomas Cole and Frederic Church at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, The National Gallery in London, the Reynolda House Museum of American Art in North Carolina, and The Wadsworth Athenaeum in Connecticut.

The Skywalk region including the Thomas Cole National Historic Site and the Olana State Historic Site (OSHS) has become a major tourism destination in large part because of its culture and history correlating directly with its magnificent Hudson River Valley landscapes. America's first major art movement, the Hudson River School of landscape painting, was born right here, endowing the area with regional, national and international significance. The founder of this movement, Thomas Cole, and its most prominent member, Frederic Church, made the region's natural beauty an iconic element of American national identity. Through extensive preservation efforts, not only do the landscapes they celebrated remain largely unchanged, but so do their homes and studios where they lived and worked. These cultural landmarks are vibrant pillars of revitalization and tourism, and sit directly across the Hudson River from each other. Soon, they will be connected for pedestrians by the Skywalk initiative via the Rip Van Winkle Bridge, creating a major cultural destination spanning the Hudson River. In 2018, the Skywalk viewing platforms along the Bridge will offer dramatic 360-degree views of the Hudson River Valley. All the crucial elements will be in place to activate a major tourist destination – culture, history, landscape, programming and accessibility. To leverage these tremendous assets and maximize their audience and impact, the TCNHS and TOP

will launch an integrated marketing campaign in 2018, present special exhibitions at both sites, and new-to-the-state special events including a Skywalk Arts Festival in partnership with the New York State Bridge Authority.

“We are thrilled to be awarded this ESD Market NY grant to give our inspiring community the recognition it deserves. Thomas Cole and Frederic Church were drawn to this area for its dramatic natural scenery that the Hudson River Skywalk will showcase by creating a pedestrian connection between these significant cultural sites that are so closely linked in our nation’s history” said Elizabeth Jacks, Executive Director, Thomas Cole National Historic Site.

“In the very near future the Hudson River Skywalk will be a reality, and this ESD Market NY grant will enable our two organizations to begin to take crucial steps toward marketing what will be an internationally significant destination. Nowhere else in the world are two great artist’s homes linked directly across such a great river surrounded by magnificent landscapes that are fundamental to our national culture and identity” said Sean Sawyer, Washburn and Susan Oberwager President of The Olana Partnership.

About the Thomas Cole National Historic Site

Thomas Cole National Historic Site preserves and interprets the home and studios of Thomas Cole, the founder of the Hudson River School of painting, the nation's first major art movement. Located on 6 acres in the Hudson Valley, the site includes the 1815 Main House, 1839 Old Studio, the newly reconstructed 1846 New Studio, and several other buildings. It is a National Historic Landmark and an affiliated area of the National Park System. Following a restoration of the Main House, the Cole Site opened to the public in 2001. The site’s activities include guided tours, exhibitions, printed publications, extensive online programs, activities for school groups, free community events, lectures, and innovative public programs such as the Hudson River School Art Trail—a map and website that enables visitors to see the nearby views that Cole painted. Each year, the Cole Site organizes a loan exhibition of Hudson River School paintings, providing a first-hand experience with the art movement that Cole founded. The goal of all programs at the 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.

Visit the Thomas Cole National Historic Site

The hours for Thomas Cole’s home, studios, special exhibitions, and grounds vary by month. For details visit: www.thomascole.org and follow us on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

About Olana and The Olana Partnership

Olana is the greatest masterpiece of Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900), the preeminent American artist of the mid-19thC and the most important 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 a Persian-inspired house at its summit embraces unrivaled panoramic views of the Hudson Valley and Catskill Mountains and, today, welcomes more than 170,000 visitors annually.

Olana State Historic Site, a historic site administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Taconic Region, 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 State Historic Site. 2017 marks the 50th

anniversary since Olana opened as a public work of art. To learn more about Olana and The Olana Partnership, please visit www.olana.org

Visit Olana State Historic Site

Start your visit at www.olana.org for tour details and our inspiring public programs and specialty tours all-year and follow us on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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