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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Image:

Frederic Edwin Church, *The After Glow*, c. 1867, Oil on canvas, 31 ¼ x 48 ¾ inches

New York State Office of Parks Recreation and Historic Preservation, Olana State Historic Site, OL.1981.48.a

Frederic Church's Rarely Seen Memorial Landscape Paintings Debut at Olana State Historic Site in New Exhibition, *Afterglow*

Afterglow Considers How Landscapes Provide Reflection and Healing

HUDSON, NY – The Olana Partnership announced today that this season's special exhibition *Afterglow: Frederic Church and the Landscape of Memory* will open May 12 in the Sharp Family Gallery at Olana State Historic Site. *Afterglow* brings together for the first time a series of intimate memorial landscapes painted by Church, 19th-century America's foremost landscape painter, and highly personal family artifacts – never before exhibited -- from Olana's collections.. The theme of landscape as a vehicle for personal reflection and healing continues outdoors at Olana with *Memories in the Landscape*, a self-guided tour of Olana's dedicated rustic benches that bring to life the stories and memories around loved ones.

The centerpiece of *Afterglow* is *To the Memory of Cole* (1848), the painting that Frederic Church painted and exhibited three months after the sudden death of his mentor, Thomas Cole. This and *The Evening Star* (1858) are on loan from private collections. This exhibition marks the first time this significant memorial painting will be on public view in the region which includes the homes and studios of artists Thomas Cole and Frederic Church. The exhibition is accompanied by a full-color catalogue.

"I'm thrilled to share many of Frederic Church's rarely seen memorial paintings with our visitors this year," said Allegra Davis, The Olana Partnership's Associate Curator. "By bringing these pieces together, we'll be able to shed light on not only an overlooked theme of Church's career as an artist, but also the wider role of landscape in grief, remembrance, and healing in the nineteenth century and today."

While Church is best known for his monumental, panoramic paintings of natural wonders, he also created smaller, intimate works full of personal symbolism for a primary audience of friends and family. As he experienced personal losses, Church expressed grief through his paintings and immersed himself in the natural world to heal, gaining a reputation as a maker of memorial art. These landscapes are key documents of nineteenth-century America's search for spirituality in nature as a source of comfort, health, and spiritual well-being.

"Afterglow promises to be a fascinating exhibition examining a little-known but very important element of Frederic Church's career as a painter. The Olana Partnership is also planning dynamic programs that will engage all visitors in his masterwork, Olana's living landscape," said Sean Sawyer, Washburn and Susan Oberwager President of The Olana Partnership.

Programs will be presented in connection with both *Afterglow* and the Centennial of New York State Parks, including a series of wellness walks and workshops in the landscape focusing on topics like forest bathing, agricultural mindfulness, and art and wilderness therapy; a series of artmaking; and webinars focused on public parks and rural cemeteries.

The Olana Partnership is very grateful to the generous lenders and funders who have made *Afterglow* possible, including the Asbjorn Lunde Foundation and the Felicia Fund. General support for The Olana Partnership's programs is provided by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

The exhibition will open May 12 and run through October 29. For more information and to purchase tickets visit, OLANA.org/Afterglow.

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About Olana and The Olana Partnership: Olana is the greatest masterwork of Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900), the most famous American landscape artist of the mid-19th century 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 five miles of carriage roads and a Persian-inspired house at its summit embraces unrivaled panoramic views of the Hudson Valley and Catskill Mountains and welcomes more than 170,000 visitors annually. The landscape is open for guided touring, and reservations are highly recommended. The landscape is open daily 8 AM-sunset.

Olana State Historic Site, administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, is a designated National Historic Landmark and one of the most visited sites in the state. The Olana Partnership is the 501(c)(3) not-for-profit cooperative partner of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation at Olana State Historic Site.

