

'Paintings of the Hudson River School'

Questroyal Fine Art

This impressive annual show pulled together many of the diverse strands of American landscape painting that fed into the Hudson River School. Thomas Cole, the inspirational father of the group, was a British émigré, and a number of the other artists in the school either were born across the Atlantic or spent time there. Those European roots were evident in many of the show's works. Painted in a thick impasto of charred browns and ghostly whites, Cole's *Imaginary Landscape with Towering Outcrop* (ca. 1846–47) seems to have emerged from a Romantic soul's dark night, while the wonderful oil sketch *On the Mountaintop* (n.d.) combines the physical immediacy of J.M.W. Turner with the mysticism of William Blake.

The luminous *Shoreline with Basket and Boats* (1876) by Dutch émigré William Frederick de Haas builds on the traditions of Dutch landscape painting to depict a classic American beach, light shimmering on the wet sand, clouds piling up on the horizon. *Evening Sail* (n.d.) by his brother Mauritz Frederik Hendrik de Haas is an atmospheric harbor scene in browns, reminiscent of Whistler's London nocturnes. Thomas Moran, born in England and raised in Philadelphia, also drew inspiration from Turner, and his *Entrance to the Grand Canal, Venice* (1915) glows with the British master's azures and aquas.



Thomas Cole, *Imaginary Landscape with Towering Outcrop*, ca. 1846–47, oil on canvas, 18½" x 15". Questroyal Fine Art.

John Frederick Kensett was another second-generation Hudson River School artist who traveled to Europe to study painting; he was represented here by several works, including the airy *Beverly, Massachusetts* (1871), a view from gentle, green cliffs to the placid sea. New York-born George Inness began his career by studying Cole's work, and then fell under the spell of Corot and the Barbizon painters during a mid-century trip to Paris. Four fine examples of his resulting Tonalist work, including two American landscapes and two European scenes, emphasized how interwoven the art of both continents had become.

—Mona Molarsky