

A Call to the Wild

Questroyal Fine Art presents more than 125 19th-century landscapes during its annual Hudson River School exhibition

March 8-30

Questroyal Fine Art

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The enchantment of the landscape has lured artists to put brush to canvas for centuries. In their unique interpretations of the natural world, artists display everything from the sweeping mountains to the wide-open oceans rippling with waves. In the 19th century a collective of landscape painters—many influenced by romanticism, the Barbizon School and luminism—began painting the Hudson River Valley and its surrounding areas. The movement, identified for its themes of naturalism and nationalism, became known as the Hudson River School, with Thomas Cole acknowledged as its founder.

For two decades, Questroyal Fine Art in New York City has hosted a comprehensive exhibition and sale dedicated to these important American landscapes. This year's show, *A Call to the Wild: Important Hudson River School Landscapes*, will feature more than 125 examples by both recognized names and artists who are often overlooked.

"We're trying to show some of the best work by artists who are a little bit lesser known and some of the premier examples by the more established artists," says gallery owner Louis Salerno. "We have really found over the years there are a lot of wonderful artists who are represented in the museums who are



Thomas Cole (1801-1848), *Reclining Figure in a Mountain Landscape*. Oil on panel, 10½ x 8½ in.

a notch or two less famous and don't get the attention that they deserve."

One of the most pivotal artists in the exhibition is Cole, whose painting *Reclining Figure in a Mountain Landscape* is an American scene that depicts a small figure at the bottom left taking in the grandeur of a lakeside landscape. "It's hard and very rare to find an

American example of his work," says Salerno of the painting, adding, "It's nicely done and it's intriguing."

Thomas Moran, who is mostly widely sought-after for his Western landscapes, will have several examples of his paintings in the show. Included is a scene from the West, as well as multiple paintings from the eastern end of Long



Thomas Moran (1837-1926), *Evening Clouds*, 1902. Oil on canvas, 14 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 20 in., monogrammed, inscribed and dated lower left: 'TMORAN / N.A. /1902'.

Island. Among them is *Evening Clouds*, a work that shows the darkening sky as the sun is beginning to set. “What we find [with his East Coast scenes] is you get the very genius of his work, but they’re not as valuable or they don’t cost as much as his Western work,” Salerno shares. “Our collectors find it intriguing that they can see striking work by a painter as famous as Thomas Moran, but since the subject is eastern and not Western, it’s a much more affordable price point.”

Similar to Moran, Albert Bierstadt is primarily recognized for his landscapes of the West. In this show is his painting *Autumn Landscape*, which depicts a sprawling hillside filled with the colors of fall. This work, Salerno explains, is likely an eastern scene, making it more affordable but still filled with the quality and techniques that are hallmarks of his work.

Jasper Francis Cropsey’s 1871

painting *Autumn Landscape with a Footbridge* is another work that gets to the heart of what the artist is most recognized for, but the scale is much more intimate at just over 5 by 9 inches. “It’s a pristine example of his very best work,” Salerno shares. “You can hold it up against masterpieces

in museums, and it becomes more affordable because of its size.”

Moran’s brother Edward Moran’s seascape painting *Sunset* will also appear in the exhibition. “Thomas Moran always credited Edward with being a great teacher and one of the reasons why he became such a talented artist,”



Jasper Francis Cropsey (1823-1900), *Autumn Landscape with a Footbridge*, 1871. Oil on panel, 5 x 9 $\frac{1}{8}$ in., signed and dated lower right: 'J. F. Cropsey 1871'.



John Frederick Kensett (1816-1872), *Beverly, Massachusetts*, 1871. Oil on panel, 18 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 14 $\frac{11}{16}$ in., monogrammed and dated lower right: 'JFK '71'.



Edward Moran (1829-1901), *Sunset*. Oil on canvas, 14 x 20 in., signed lower left: 'E Moran'.

explains Salerno. “Edward is more of a specialist of marine paintings and doesn’t get the attention he deserves. This is a nice example.”

Another seascape artist represented in the exhibition is William Trost Richards, and along with several of his works in that genre, one of his landscapes, *Woodland Autumn*, will be available. Also in the exhibition are five paintings by John Frederick Kensett, including *Beverly, Massachusetts*, from 1871. Salerno says the artist’s luminist paintings are highly sought-after and it’s rare to find this many in one show. Other artists represented in the show include Asher B. Durand, William Mason Brown, Samuel Colman, Hermann Herzog and Francis Augustus Silva.

A Call of the Wild: Important Hudson River School Landscapes will be on view March 8 through 30. ■



Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902), *Autumn Landscape*. Oil on paper laid down on board, 13⁷/₈ x 18³/₄ in., signed lower left: 'ABierstadt'.