

THROUGH AMERICAN EYES

FREDERIC CHURCH AND THE
LANDSCAPE OIL SKETCH



6 February – 28 April 2013

Room 1

Admission free

TERRA
FOUNDATION FOR AMERICAN ART

Frederic Edwin Church, *Sunrise*, October-December
1862 © New York State Office of Parks, Recreation
and Historic Preservation. Olana State Historic Site

Majestic scenes and striking colouration dramatise the works on display in The National Gallery's exhibition *Through American Eyes: Frederic Church and the Landscape Oil Sketch*. The spring exhibition explores the remarkably fresh and spontaneous oil sketches of Frederic Church (1826–1900), considered by many to be the greatest American exponent of the landscape oil sketch.

Church's oil sketches reveal the freshness of his work and the spontaneity of his style as he captured scenes out of doors, some of which he elaborated later in the studio. Regarded as one of the most ambitious of the Hudson River School landscape painters, his works reveal his voracious appetite for travel to locations as distant as Ecuador, *Distant View of the Sangay Volcano, Ecuador* (1857); Jordan, *Ed Deir, Petra* (1868); Jamaica, *Ridges in the Blue Mountains, Jamaica* (1865); Germany, *Königssee, Bavaria* (1868); and the waters off Labrador where he studied icebergs.

The exhibition also includes works executed closer to Church's home on the Hudson in Upstate New York including *Winter Twilight from Olana* (about 1871-2) and *Hudson, New York at Sunset* (1867) which reflect his interest in the American landscape and his exploration of the effect of light.

This exhibition, the first opportunity to examine Church's oil sketch achievement in depth on this side of the Atlantic, is organised with and through major support from the Terra Foundation for American Art. The show unites some 30 oil sketches and includes loans from Olana, Church's rural estate along the Hudson River and now a New York State Historic Site, and the collections of the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, New York. Church's completed oil painting *Niagara Falls, from the American Side* (1867), an impressive canvas of over two metres square on loan from the National Galleries of Scotland, is included in the exhibition to illustrate the journey from sketch to completed oil painting. The exhibition will actually travel in summer 2013 to the Scottish National Gallery.

The exhibition follows the 2011 exhibition, *An American Experiment: George Bellows and the Ashcan Painters*. It complements the impressive Gere Collection of landscape oil sketches on long-term loan to the Gallery and oil sketches in the Gallery's own collection.

Through American Eyes: Frederic Church and the Landscape Oil Sketch is co-curated by Christopher Riopelle, Curator of Post-1800 Paintings at the National Gallery and Katherine Bourguignon, Associate Curator at the Terra Foundation for American Art. The exhibition travels to The Scottish National Gallery from 11 May to 8 September 2013. The exhibition is organised by The National Gallery in partnership with, and through major support from, the Terra Foundation for American Art. Additional support comes from The Olana Partnership and generous loans from Olana and Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, Smithsonian Institution.

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Organisation

The National Gallery and the Terra Foundation for American Art are collaborating to bring historical masterworks from the United States to audiences in London through a series of focused exhibitions, of which this is the second.

About the Terra Foundation

Established in 1978, the Terra Foundation for American Art is dedicated to fostering the exploration, understanding, and enjoyment of the visual arts of the United States. With financial resources of more than \$250 million and an exceptional collection of American art from the colonial era to 1945, it is one of the leading foundations focused on American art, and devotes approximately \$12 million annually in support of American art exhibitions, projects, and research worldwide. For information on initiatives and opportunities for support, please visit www.terraamericanart.org.

Publication

Frederic Church and the Landscape Oil Sketch

By Andrew Wilton, formerly Keeper and Senior Research Fellow of the British Collection at Tate Britain and author of *American Sublime: Landscape Painting in the United States 1820–1880*, with Christopher Riopelle, Curator of Post-1800 Paintings at The National Gallery, London and Katherine Bourguignon, Associate Curator at Terra Foundation for American Art.

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Open daily 10am–6pm, Friday until 9pm

Admission

Free

Images

Publicity images for *Through American Eyes: Frederic Church and the Landscape Oil Sketch* can be obtained from <http://press.ng-london.org.uk>. To obtain a username please contact The National Gallery Press Office on 020 7747 2865 or e-mail press@ng-london.org.uk.

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