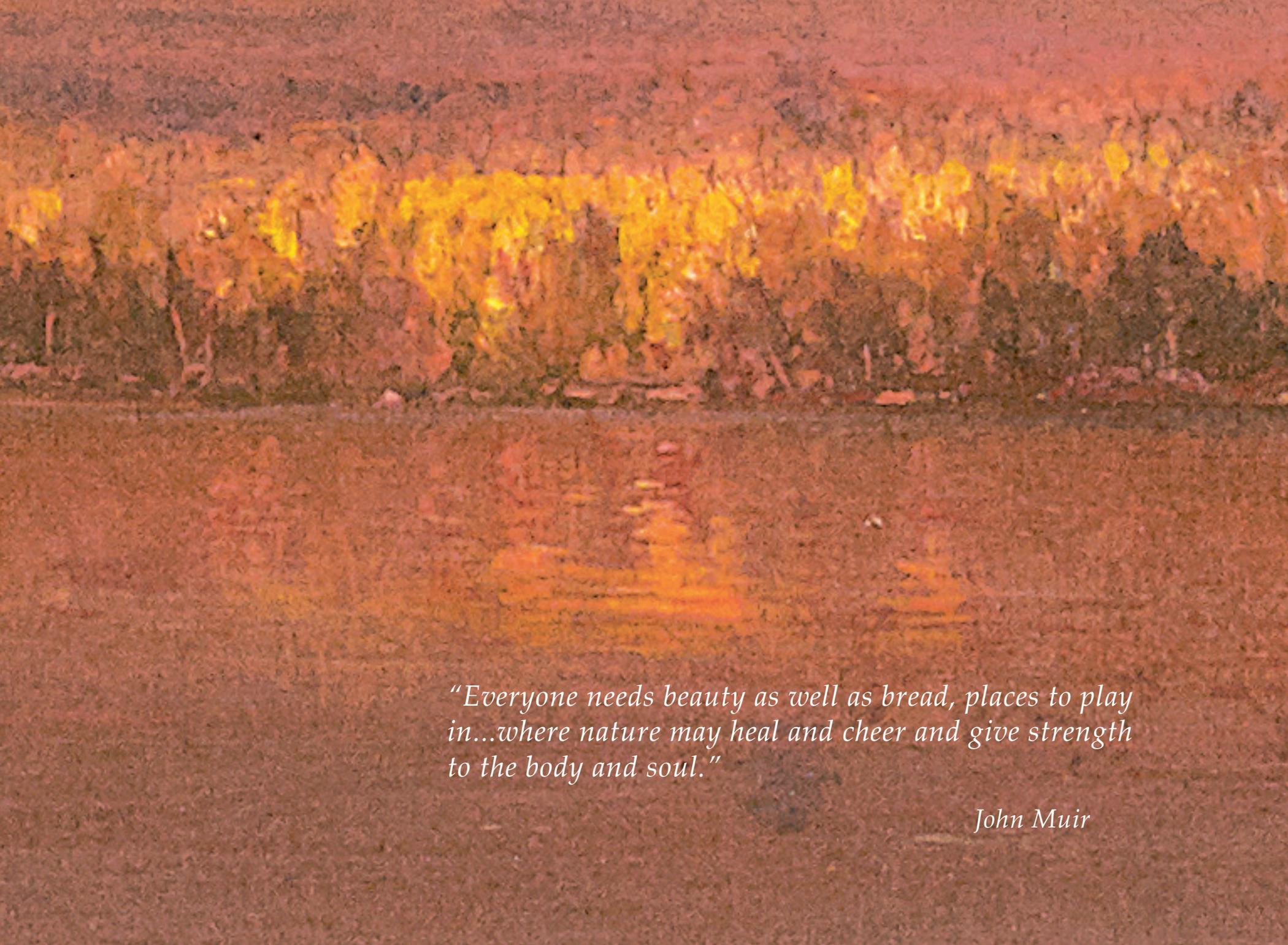


VALUING THE AESTHETICS OF NATURE:
THE ROLE OF THE VISUAL ARTIST IN THE AMERICAN
CONSERVATION MOVEMENT

2017 Symposium Summary





*“Everyone needs beauty as well as bread, places to play
in...where nature may heal and cheer and give strength
to the body and soul.”*

John Muir



VALUING THE AESTHETICS OF NATURE:

THE ROLE OF THE VISUAL ARTIST IN THE AMERICAN CONSERVATION MOVEMENT

Symposium Summary

August 3-4, 2017 Colby College Campus, Waterville, Maine

SYMPOSIUM SPONSORS:

National Park Service

Appalachian Trail Conservancy

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Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust

Charles Tracy
National Park Service

Cover painting: *Mount Katahdin from Millinocket Camp*, 1895, **Frederic Edwin Church** (United States, 1826-1900)
oil on canvas, 26 1/2" x 42 1/4" Portland Museum of Art, Maine. Gift of Owen W. and Anna H. Wells in memory of Elizabeth B. Noyce, 1998.96
© Portland Museum of Art, Maine. Image courtesy Luc Demers

Left: *Bigelow Range from Eustis Ridge*, Eustis, Maine, **John Orcutt**, photographer
SLsu4, from the book "Enduring Heights" (Carrabassett Publishing, 2017) - www.johnorcuttnaturephoto.com

INTRODUCTION

Why did we assemble a group of concerned citizens, distinguished scholars and the National Park Service to explore how and why aesthetics matters to the land conservation movement in the United States? It was difficult to articulate at first, but as the enthusiastic response of our symposium speakers and participants made clear, we realize now that we have only scratched the surface of a deep vein of interrelated topics of vital interest to our audience in Maine in August 2017. In retrospect, that artists and conservationists are kindred spirits should come as no surprise.

We are pleased to share this summary of the symposium's richly-illustrated presentations about the significant roles that visual artists have played in protecting America's most scenic landscapes. We believe that we helped introduce people to new allies and new approaches, such as engaging policymakers through the arts and bringing new rigor to the assessment of scenery. We also hope that the session videos (artlandsymposium2017.org) will encourage further exploration among those who seek to protect and share our nation's scenic beauty with current and future generations.

The presentations of the 2017 Art and Land Conservation Symposium, *Valuing the Aesthetics of Nature: The Role of the Visual Artist in the American Conservation Movement* were organized thematically, drawing together presenters from a diverse array of academic and professional backgrounds. With question and answer sessions following most panels, presenters were able to engage in exciting conversation with each other and with members of the audience in a free-flowing multidisciplinary dialogue.

Organizer **William Plouffe**, Of Counsel at the Portland, Maine law firm of Drummond Woodsum opened the symposium with a greeting and introductory remarks. Laying out the philosophical project of the symposium, he called upon attendees to consider the value, qualities, and our responses to the aesthetics of nature. Highlighting the place of visual artists in the American conservation movement, Plouffe noted artists' roles as "interpreters of, commenters on, and advocates for what is beautiful in nature." With a professional history in environmental law, Plouffe made specific note of the legal ramifications of scenic resource protection (and lack thereof).

“If art is to nourish the roots of our culture, society must set the artist free to follow his vision wherever it takes him... We must never forget that art is not a form of propaganda; it is a form of truth.”

John F. Kennedy

Right: *Brook under Autumn Haze*, **Alfred T Britcher**, 1870
60cm x 50cm - Oil on canvas
Marsh-Billings Rockefeller National Historical Park, MABI 2815



PRESENTATIONS

J. Barrington Matthews contributed a brief introduction to ecocritical art history, offering an abbreviated historiography of the discipline, and walked the audience through a series of short case studies. Reevaluating several familiar Hudson River School landscape paintings through an ecocritical lens, he suggested an ecocritical approach – one drawing attention to the anthropocentric histories and interpretations of paintings by Thomas Cole, Frederic Edwin Church, George Inness, and others – provides rich opportunities for both the continued enjoyment of 19th century landscape painting while deepening our present-day ties to the nonhuman world.



John Wilmerding, Princeton University's Sarofim Professor of American Art, Emeritus, gave a comprehensive survey of Frederic Edwin Church's paintings of Maine. Placing these works in context of Church's greater oeuvre, Wilmerding showed the painter's deep connections to the Maine landscape, both on Mount Desert Island and its environs, as well as the North Maine Woods. Wilmerding tracked Church's involvement with Maine throughout the course of his career, from his time as student under Thomas Cole, to his later years in the 1870s when he returned to his Katahdin Lake camp in Millinocket. Wilmerding highlighted Church's lasting importance to the history of conservation in Maine, arguing that "Church, above all [other artists]... helped define the Maine landscape, and made possible what is today Acadia National Park".

Left: *Niagara Falls*, **Thomas Cole**, 1829 - 1830, painter
46cm x 30cm - Oil on wood panel
Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historical Park, MABI 1770

In **Rebecca Bedell's** lecture entitled "What's Art Got to Do With It? The Hudson River School, The Picturesque, and the National Park Aesthetic" she traced 19th century American landscape traditions back to their European roots, grounded in the aesthetics of the beautiful, the picturesque, and the sublime. Following developments of the picturesque from 18th century England and the work of the Reverend William Gilpin, through English landscape architecture and estate planning, to the mode's adoption by Frederick Law Olmsted, Bedell shows how a particular landscape aesthetic was incorporated into some of the United States' early public parks, including New York's Central Park, Yosemite, and later Acadia National Park, noting that the "aesthetics of our national parks draw upon a long history of picturesque theory and design," including the impulse to preserve. She also identified contemporary critiques of the picturesque, including its anthropocentric nature, and suggested the need for a multi-sensory way of looking at landscape.

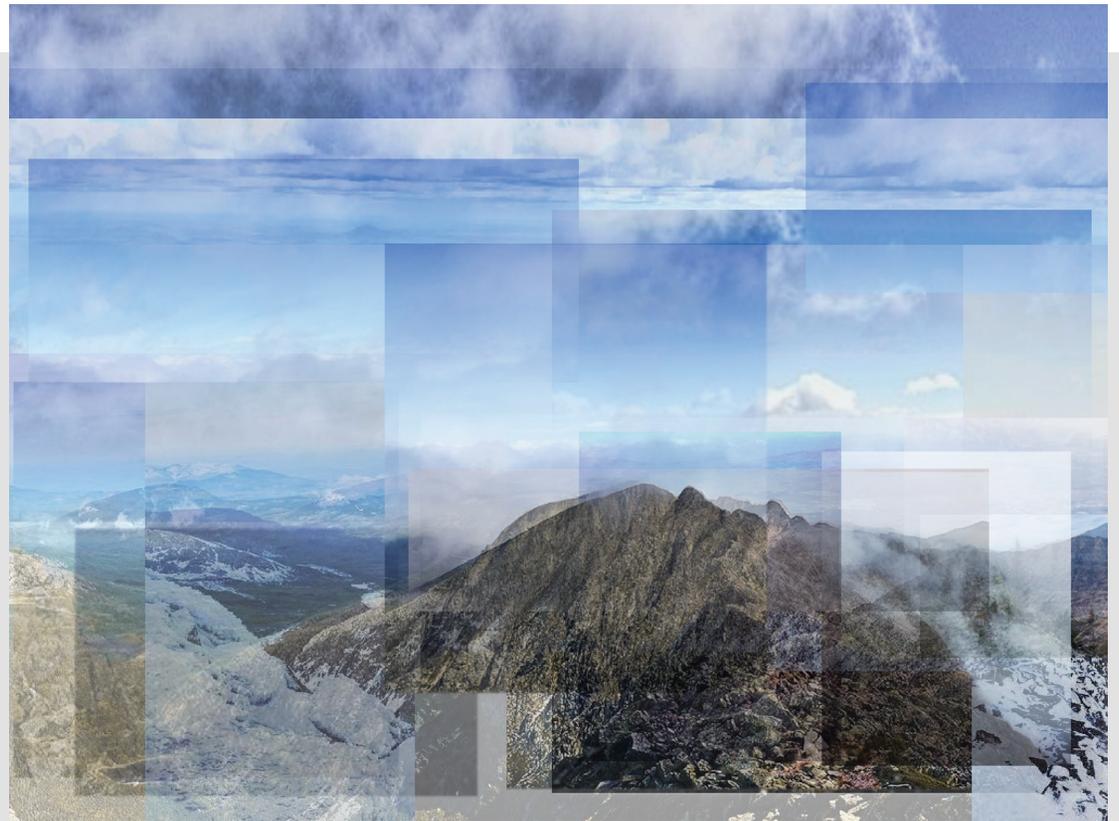
Drawing on research completed for an upcoming book, **Tyler Green** offered a new interpretation of Carleton Watkins' Yosemite photographs and of the movement to create the Yosemite Park. Tying together the writings of Thomas Starr King, Edward Baker, and Ralph Waldo Emerson, Green identifies a call for an anti-slavery, cultural Unionism at the dawn of the Civil War. Arguing that "it was only when Yosemite was attached to a cause, that both Yosemite, and ultimately the conservation idea took off", Green skillfully locates Watkins' photographs - as well as the Yosemite movement writ large - in a complex cultural and political context. One of many fascinating insights, Green situates the first exhibition of Watkins' photographs in a heady, politically charged New York exhibition scene, concurrent with Matthew Brady's exhibition of Antietam photographs, and the display of Frederic Church's *Under Niagara*.

Right: *El Capitan, Yosemite*, 1865-66, **Carleton E. Watkins**, (American photographer 1829-1916)
Albumen silver print from glass negative, The Rogers Fund, 1970



PRESENTATIONS

Barbara Bosworth's presentation "To Be at the Farther Edge: Photographs Along the New England Trail" shared her captivating large-scale photographs taken as part of a project documenting the New England National Scenic Trail. She notes that in her photography, she is "interested in the ways humans and nature interact – my work centers on the idea that we are not separate and removed from the land and nature, we are part of it, we are shaped by the landscape as we shape the land." Her photographs, while capturing impressive panoramic views of the nonhuman world, often include human figures enmeshed and seemingly inseparable from the natural world around them – in her words, their presence "mark our experiences, we were here." Drawing a connection between viewing, experiencing, and protecting an environment, Bosworth states "a trail allows a chance to be in the landscape, to look at the landscape, to fall in love with our landscape. Once we feel connected to a place, once we care about a place, the desire to save and conserve it follows."



Above: *Mt. Katahdin* via Instagram, 2017, **William Van Beckum**
30 x 40 inch archival pigment print - www.williamvanbeckum.com

William Van Beckum's "Community Connections: Appalachian and New England National Scenic Trails" details the artist's photographic installations at major trailheads along the New England Scenic Trail. Gathering images of specific scenic vistas from social media, Van Beckum creates digital montages from a large number of images taken at the same location. These collages create a "visualized record" of the local community's lived experiences along the trails – they are then printed out along with trail information and placed at trailheads, encouraging visitors to upload their own trail images with a specific hashtag. Van Beckum intends his project to "harness the power of scenic imagery in celebration of the New England Trail and encourage community members to share their landscape experience through social media."

Right: *The Tetons and the Snake River*, Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming, 1942, **Ansel Adams**, photographer
National Archives and Records Administration, Records of the National Park Service. (79-AAG-1)



David Schuyler, the Arthur and Katherine Shadek Professor of the Humanities and American Studies at Franklin & Marshall College, provided a brief history of Frederick Law Olmsted's involvement with the preservation of Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Big Tree Grove. Schuyler followed Olmsted's advocacy for Yosemite from his time as the chair of the Yosemite Commission beginning in 1864, to his behind the scenes support of Robert Underwood Johnson and John Muir, who advocated for federal protections for the valley after commercial interests intruded into Yosemite in the 1880s. Although centered on Olmsted's efforts in the west, Schuyler made note of Olmsted's legacy in the creation of other national and state parks, including at Acadia and Niagara Falls, as well as connecting the challenges faced by Olmsted in the nineteenth century to those still addressing the Park Service today.

In a discussion on 20th century nature photography, **Ron Tipton**, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, offered a number of personal recollections based on his experiences with famed landscape photographer Ansel Adams, including interactions with Adams late in his career.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Artist and writer **David Little** and curator **Elizabeth Finch** shared a panel on Modernist painters working in Maine. Recalling his own experiences as a painter, Little notes that in the moments of creation artists are “embraced by the view... in the act of painting a place, landscape painters are in effect preserving it, at least for the record.” Little traces the history of involvement of artists in the project to preserve Mount Desert Island as a national park, as well as later artist-in-residency programs at Acadia National Park and elsewhere. Demonstrating a wide breadth of knowledge, Little connects the lives of artists working Maine with figures from worlds of politics and government. Interestingly, Little also offers up several brief examples of non-visual artists, such as composer Alan Hovhaness, who drew inspiration from Maine’s landscape – leaving the audience to ponder the possibilities of a non-visual landscape.



Drawing on elements of the Colby College Museum of Art’s exhibition Marsden Hartley’s *Maine*, curator Elizabeth Finch shares the history of the Modernist Hartley - “The Painter From Maine.” She details Hartley’s early aspirations to be an “American Individualist,” and his later return to Maine and his unique claim of nativeness not shared by other painters in his circle. Much like earlier generations of landscape painters, Hartley found a unique source of “Americanness” in the scenery of the north-east. Showing examples of Hartley paintings of both Katahdin and the Maine coast, Finch identifies Hartley’s engagement with both the nonhuman world – primordial nature – as well as the human logging industry.

Left: *Katahdin*, 2006, **David Little**, painter
oil on canvas, 24 x 36 inches, Private collection - dlittle75@earthlink.net



Above: 2013 Artist in Residence **Kathy Hodge** sets up her easel just off the Widforss Trail on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon. The trail is named for Gunnar Widforss, a Swedish artist who worked in the Grand Canyon in the early 20th century. Photo courtesy of Kathy Hodge.

“.....the scenic view was defined as comprising three components: the viewpoint, the viewed landscape, and the viewers.”

Discussion on Visual Resource Management

In a session addressed particularly to National Park Service personnel, but with fascinating insight for park employees and visitors alike, **Mark Meyer** and **Jim Von Haden** of the National Park Service, along with **Robert Sullivan** of Argonne National Laboratory, introduced the agency’s Visual Resource Management model. Meyer, Von Haden and Sullivan described a wide range of research - in fields as diverse as ecology, psychology, and visual aesthetics - that might be used to generate a codifiable definition of a scenic view. Building from this research, the new Visual Resource Management initiative is an attempt to identify, inventory, and preserve scenic views within National Park Service units, grounded on their formal aesthetic properties - in other words, the visual composition of individual views.

The described approach also incorporates not just what the viewer sees, but also the contextual, cultural, or historic importance of inventoried viewpoints, allowing for a holistic approach to perceiving the landscape (or cityscape, in many instances!). In a concise and insightful description, the scenic view was defined as comprising three components: the viewpoint, the viewed landscape, and the viewers. This holistic view – might we even call it ecological? - of considering landscapes might be a valuable tool in our continued interpretation of the artistic renderings discussed elsewhere in the symposium. In total, the new Visual Resource Management seems like a nuanced approach to addressing one of the Park Service’s foundational mandates, the conservation of scenery.

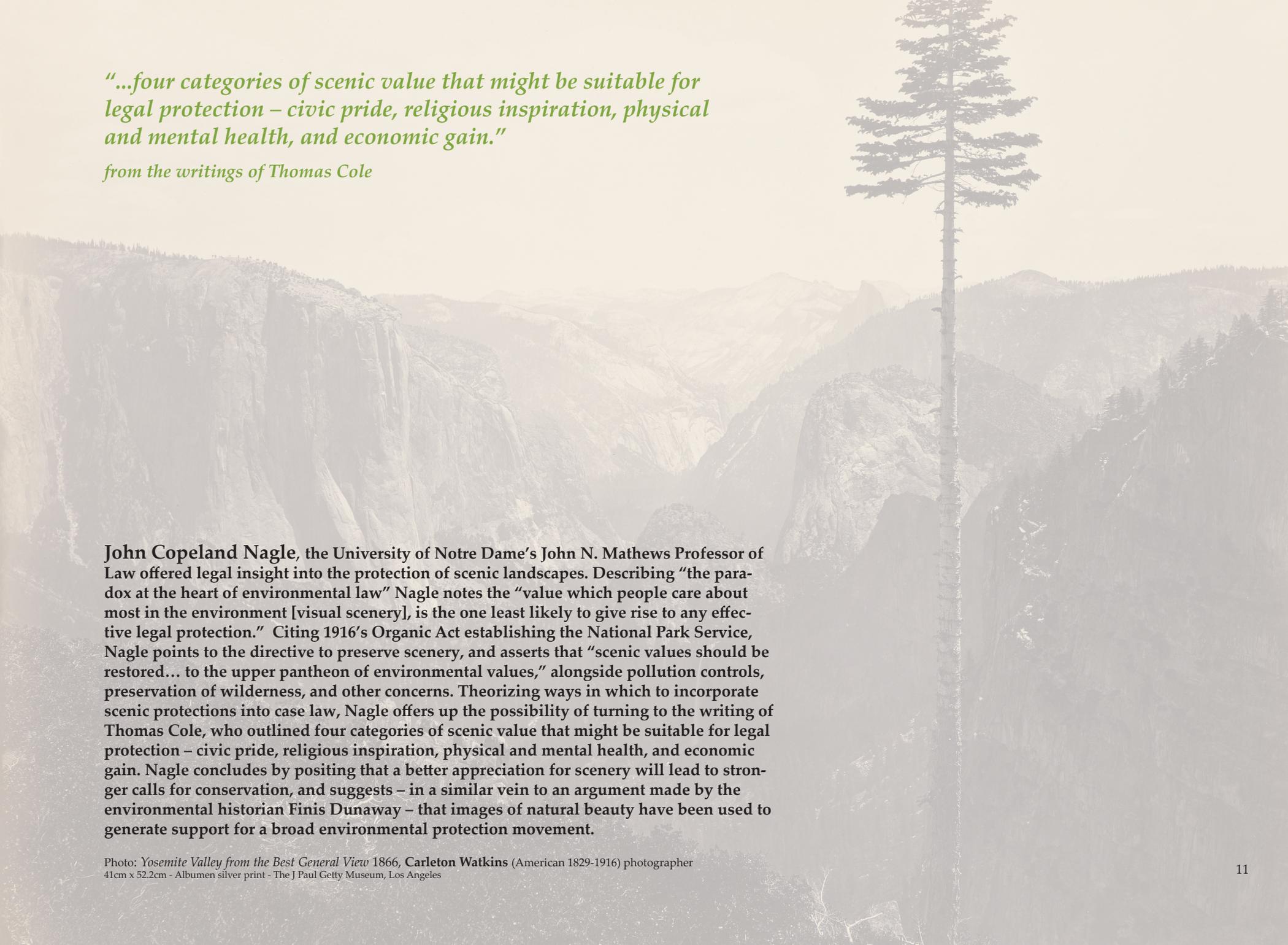
PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Turning toward the psychological impacts of experience with the natural aesthetic, the founder and executive director of Warrior Expeditions, **Sean Gobin**, detailed the work of his organization in facilitating long-distance expeditions for returning veterans. A former Marine Corps Captain and combat veteran, Gobin completed a thru-hike of the Appalachian Trail on his separation from the Marine Corps, finding the experience invaluable in readjusting to life after war. Following in the footsteps of Earl Shaffer, a veteran of the second World War and first thru-hiker of the Appalachian Trail, who set out on his endeavor to “walk off the war.” Citing historical precedent and contemporary research, Gobin, along with **Dr. Shauna Joye** share their findings on the positive impact of long distance hikes, bicycle tours, and kayaking trips on returning veterans. In interviews with Warrior Expedition alumni, Dr. Joye finds participants found benefits in both their wilderness surroundings, as well as the human companionship they found on the trails.



Above: *Grandeur*, (Katahdin) **Evelyn Dunphy**, painter
30 x 38 inches, framed, plein air painting from Frederic Church camps on Millinocket Lake, Maine - www.evelyndunphy.com

A panel combining National Park Service personnel with a National Park visiting artist highlighted the connections present day park leadership is making with working artists. Acadia National Park’s **John Kelly** offered an introduction to Maine’s Acadia, the first National Park east of the Mississippi River. Of particular note was a discussion of the problem of park overcrowding during peak season – an issue certainly well known to National Park employees, but one that is increasingly entering the public consciousness. In her talk “Introducing Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument” **Julie Isbill** gave an overview of one of the most recent additions to the national park system, Katahdin Woods and Waters. Like Acadia before it, Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument has its origins in private stewardship and gift to the federal government. Isbill discussed the delicate negotiations involved in the creation of the monument, and the unique accommodations for multiple use the site has adopted.



“...four categories of scenic value that might be suitable for legal protection – civic pride, religious inspiration, physical and mental health, and economic gain.”

from the writings of Thomas Cole

John Copeland Nagle, the University of Notre Dame’s John N. Mathews Professor of Law offered legal insight into the protection of scenic landscapes. Describing “the paradox at the heart of environmental law” Nagle notes the “value which people care about most in the environment [visual scenery], is the one least likely to give rise to any effective legal protection.” Citing 1916’s Organic Act establishing the National Park Service, Nagle points to the directive to preserve scenery, and asserts that “scenic values should be restored... to the upper pantheon of environmental values,” alongside pollution controls, preservation of wilderness, and other concerns. Theorizing ways in which to incorporate scenic protections into case law, Nagle offers up the possibility of turning to the writing of Thomas Cole, who outlined four categories of scenic value that might be suitable for legal protection – civic pride, religious inspiration, physical and mental health, and economic gain. Nagle concludes by positing that a better appreciation for scenery will lead to stronger calls for conservation, and suggests – in a similar vein to an argument made by the environmental historian Finis Dunaway – that images of natural beauty have been used to generate support for a broad environmental protection movement.

Photo: Yosemite Valley from the Best General View 1866, Carleton Watkins (American 1829-1916) photographer
41cm x 52.2cm - Albumen silver print - The J Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles



J. Alden Voss
Brack Hill

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Leadership from three National Park sites centered on American artists gathered in a panel discussing their parks' history and interpretive strategies. **Ryan Polk**, curator of art at the Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller National Historic Park and Saint Gaudens National Historic Site, describes the impressive collection of Hudson River School (as well as more recent) paintings at Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller, noting they are able to use the artwork as an "interpreter... We use the collection to translate the history of the conservation movement, and its philosophical underpinnings." With a collection that includes Cole, Church, and Kensett paintings - as well as photographs by Carleton Watkins - Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller's collection illustrates the deep ties of interconnectedness between visual artists and leaders in the American conservation movement that was discussed in some of the symposium's other panels. In addition to their collections of historical works of art, both Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller as well as Saint Gaudens offer residencies to contemporary artists, including starting the National Park Service's first sculptor-in-residence program at Saint Gaudens National Historic Site.

Betsy Jacks, executive director of Thomas Cole National Historic Site, shared recent developments at that site, including the completion of a reconstructed "new studio" that Cole originally designed and built on his property in 1846 (and which was later demolished). Jacks described a suite of interpretive tools mixing high- and low-tech, including a state of the art facility suitable for housing museum loans and staging exhibitions of artwork, digital display screens which recreated the home's historic viewshed, and a scenic view trail through the surrounding Catskills, leading visitors to historic painting sites.

Linda Cook, superintendent of Weir Farm National Historic Site describes her effort to create "a national park for the arts" which interprets the life of J. Alden Weir and other American impressionists. Working within the National Park Service's established framework, Cook details their efforts to catalog and preserve the site's "painters' light," or historic lightshed. In addition to interpreting the differing affects of light, and what might have attracted artists to this site, Weir Farm works with the National Register of Historic Places to identify documented painting sites for preservation. Cook's work seems to offer an inventive approach to managing a difficult to quantify cultural resource.

Left: *Upland Pasture*, **J. Alden Weir**, painter, ca. 1905
Oil on canvas, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Gift of William T. Evans

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Four contemporary artists came together to share their experiences capturing images of the American landscape.

Evelyn Dunphy is a Maine-based watercolorist, who has lent her considerable talents to contemporary conservation movements. Dunphy, along with other artists, worked with the Trust for Public Land to raise funds for the purchase and preservation of Katahdin Lake, a parcel of land just outside Baxter State Park.

John Orcutt, a Maine-based nature photographer dedicated to the preservation of wild spaces, shared some images from a recently released book project highlighting the High Peaks of Maine.



Xiomáro, a frequent artist-in-residence and visiting artist at numerous National Park sites, shared examples of his park photography. Beginning his association with the parks through an artist residency at Weir Farm, Xiomáro's photographs often focus on minute details rather than grand vistas, capturing moments that might be lost by taking a broader vantage point. In a symposium often filled with images of wide, panoramic nature, Xiomáro's images are a captivating change of pace, which remind us of the complex, diverse, often hidden ecological whole.

Eric Koepfel works in the romantic tradition of the Hudson River School artists, with a close attention to detail and natural fidelity, and often focusing on familiar New England terrain. His popularity speaks to the continued power the aesthetic of the 19th century holds, and how closely some continue to associate the Hudson River School style with an ideal nature.

Closing remarks were offered by **Robert Ratcliffe**, National Park Service, Chief, Conservation and Outdoor Recreation. Bringing the symposium to a close, Ratcliffe shared examples from a long career spent incorporating art and artists into national parks and public lands. Highlighting examples of intersection between art and natural space, Ratcliffe described moments of inspiration, creation, and invention.

Left: *Cloud Burst viewed from Goat Peak Tower*, Easthampton, Massachusetts
Xiomáro, photographer - © 2017 Xiomaro.com

Right: *Mount Washington Among the Clouds*, **Erik Koepfel**
oil on canvas, 22 x 36 inches, Collection of the Jackson Historical Society (New Hampshire)
www.erikkoepfel.com







CONCLUSIONS

In the question and answer session following Ratcliffe's remarks, a comment was made about art's creative, even subversive potential in parks, and in the months following the conference this thought stuck with me the most insistently. If we are to acknowledge the problematic histories of some of our landscape traditions – perhaps not just their representations (as in a 19th century painting celebrating Manifest Destiny), but the physical landscapes themselves – what place is there for the appreciation of these now-challenging modes of representation? In a recent article for American Art (“Ecology > Landscape”, Summer 2017), Alan Braddock raises questions about the utility of this older style of landscape, images that, in his words might seem “quaint, static, selective, and politically regressive.” Nonetheless, as attendees of this symposium observed, there is a continued fascination with, and appreciation for, this “natural aesthetic,” and as some in the environmental movement have argued, images of the natural world - presented as entirely distinct from the world of human development - are still powerful motivators in generating support for the environmentalist cause. As I continue to reflect on the symposium, and my own experiences as a lover of wilderness spaces (all the while keenly aware of their man-made boundaries), and as a student of nineteenth century landscape traditions, I wonder if we might work to find opportunities for a little creative subversion in our landscape art, both in execution (as in the tweaking of familiar images by artists like Kent Monkman and Valerie Hegarty) and in interpretation. Returning to Jared Farmer's concept of a perceptual landscape overlaid on top of the geographic, how might we reconfigure our lived experiences with the nonhuman world – both culturally and physically, whether out on the trail or on a city sidewalk – to foster a more just and equitable relationship with our nonhuman partners? Put another way, can we acknowledge the limitations of historical modes of perceiving our environment – the quaint, the static, the selective – and build a more responsive, a more creative, ecological aesthetic?

It is worth noting that in all of the beautiful, captivating images of American scenery we experienced at the symposium, perhaps what gets lost the easiest - despite our frequent attention paid to the artists and their biographies - is how these images, through their mere creation, point toward a human connection to the environment. As we continue to explore the themes and ideas shared at the Art and Land Conservation Symposium, I hope that this realization - that even in images of the most wild, most “natural” scenery, there exists a link to human beings - brings a new vigor to our impulse to experience, to document, and to protect our shared planet.

J. Barrington Matthews

March, 2018

Left: 2015 “Crossing”, 2015, BANDALOO founder Amelia Rudolph on Dana Pillar
Photo by Braden Mayfield

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to the generous sponsors and organizers of the 2017 Art and Land Conservation Symposium. Our sponsors include the **National Park Service**, the **Appalachian Trail Conservancy**, the **Maine Arts Commission**, **Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy**, **Drummond Woodsum** and the **Appalachian Mountain Club**.



Thank you to our long list of presenters who journeyed from near and far to share their work with us. Our post-symposium field trips were welcome returns to nature after two days in university lecture halls; thank you to Evelyn Dunphy, Michael Furnari, and Sarah Peskin for their leadership in the field. Cynthia Orcutt designed an attractive and informative symposium program and summary report.

Last, but certainly not least, thank you to the attendees of the symposium, whose engagement with presenters and their ideas extended our conversations and debate beyond the panel discussions – into the weekend and beyond - ensuring that the gathering was a creative, generative experience for us all.

Right: *Mount Katahdin (Maine) Autumn #2*

Marsden Hartley, 1939

Oil on canvas, 30 1/4 x 40 1/4 in. (76.8 x 102.2 cm).

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Edith and Milton Lowenthal Collection, Bequest of Edith Abrahamson Lowenthal

BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS

The biographies in this summary were excerpted from more complete statements that can be found online at: www.ArtLandSymposium2017.org.



REBECCA BEDELL - PROFESSOR OF ART
WELLESLEY COLLEGE

Bedell's research focuses on the relationship between art and science, and the place of sentimentalism in American art. Her first book, *The Anatomy of Nature: Geology and American Landscape Painting, 1825-1875* (Princeton University Press, 2002), explores the ways that a number of prominent landscape artists, including Frederic Church and Thomas Moran, were engaged with the then fashionable science of geology.



LINDA COOK - NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WEIR FARM NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Cook began her career with the National Park Service in 1989 and has been the superintendent at Weir Farm NHS since 2005. The park preserves the legacy of American Impressionism. In Alaska, she was superintendent at the Aleutian WWII National Historic Area, Inupiat Heritage Center, and Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park. Cook taught preservation planning and theory at the college level and worked on numerous international archaeological and historic restoration projects.



BARBARA BOSWORTH - PHOTOGRAPHY PROFESSOR
MASSACHUSETTS COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN

Bosworth's large-format images explore both overt and subtle relationships between humans and the rest of the natural world. Her work has been widely exhibited, notably in recent retrospectives at the Denver Art Museum and the Smithsonian American Art Museum. She has published several books, most recently *The Meadow* (Radius Books, 2015). www.BarbaraBosworth.com.



EVELYN DUNPHY - ARTIST - WEST BATH, MAINE

Dunphy's paintings have been exhibited and given awards in many national and international watercolor exhibitions. She is recognized in Maine for her paintings of Mount Katahdin and being the first visiting artist in the history of Baxter State Park. She is the first artist to receive the Natural Resource Council of Maine's Choice Award for her contribution to conservation. She conducts workshops in her studio in West Bath, as well as at the site of Frederic Church's camp on the shore of Lake Millinocket. In recognition of Church's association with Maine, Dunphy was invited to teach at Olana State Historic Site in Hudson, New York.



ALAN C. BRADDOCK - RALPH H. WARK ASSOCIATE
PROFESSOR OF ART HISTORY & AMERICAN STUDIES - THE
COLLEGE OF WILLIAM & MARY - SPECIAL SYMPOSIUM ADVISOR

Braddock is the author of *Thomas Eakins and the Cultures of Modernity* (California, 2009) and the co-editor of: *A Keener Perception: Ecocritical Studies in American Art History*, with Christoph Irmscher (Alabama, 2009) and, most recently *A Greene Country Towne: Philadelphia's Ecology in the Cultural Imagination*, with Laura Turner Igoe (Penn State, 2016). Braddock's current work includes an exhibition titled *Nature's Nation: American Art and Environment*, opening at the Princeton University Art Museum in 2018.



ELIZABETH FINCH - LUNDER CURATOR OF AMERICAN ART
COLBY COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART

Finch joined the Colby Museum in 2008, where she co-curated *Art at Colby*, a comprehensive installation of the collection to mark the museum's fiftieth anniversary. In addition to her work with Colby Museum's collection, she has organized numerous exhibitions, including projects dedicated to the work of Anna Jermolaewa, Terry Winters, Bern Porter, Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Sharon Lockhart, Hiraki Sawa, and Will Barnet, among other artists. Finch is the co-curator of *Marsden Hartley's Maine*.



SEAN GOBIN - FOUNDER & EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
WARRIOR EXPEDITIONS

U.S. Marine Corps Captain Gobin enlisted in 1994 as an infantry rifleman and received his commission upon graduating from the University of Mississippi in 2001. As an armor officer, Gobin served as a platoon commander in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003 and 2005. In 2011, he trained the Afghan National Security Forces in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. After separating from the USMC and hiking the Appalachian Trail, Gobin founded Warrior Expeditions, for which he was recognized as a CNN Hero in 2015. www.WarriorExpeditions.org.

TYLER GREEN- INDEPENDENT HISTORIAN & AUTHOR
THE MODERN ART NOTES PODCAST

Green is the producer and host of the award-winning Modern Art Notes Podcast, America's most-listened-to audio program on art. His book about 19th century artist and photographer Carleton Watkins will detail the leading role Watkins played in making the West American, and will be published by University of California Press in the fall of 2018. www.MANPodcast.com.



SHAUNA JOYE - PROFESSOR OF CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY
GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

Joye examines clinical interventions to enhance self-control, including empirical research in mindfulness. She also works with Warrior Expeditions to determine the impact of therapeutic wilderness experiences on wellness among combat veterans. Joye maintains a private practice where she works as a child and adolescent therapist. Her association memberships include the American Psychological Association, Society for Teaching of Psychology, Wilderness Medical Society, and Association for Psychological Science.



JOHN KELLY- NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
ACADIA NATIONAL PARK

Kelly began his thirty-year career with the National Park Service as a park ranger in Yellowstone National Park. He then worked as a park ranger at Sagamore Hill National Historic Site and Fire Island National Seashore in New York before moving to the NPS Washington office as an outdoor recreation planner. Kelly joined the staff at Acadia National Park in 2000 as park planner and became the park's management assistant in 2015.



JULIE ISBILL - NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
KATAHDIN WOODS & WATERS NATIONAL MONUMENT (2017)

Since 1994, Isbill has provided assistance across Maine to communities working on trails, greenways, parks, and outdoor recreation, through the Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program of the National Park Service. During the summer of 2017, Julie lived in Patten, Maine where she was on a four-month detail as a community planner for the Katahdin Woods and Waters National Monument.



ERIK KOEPPEL- ARTIST - JACKSON, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Koepfel is a landscape painter who has become a leader in the revival of the techniques and philosophy of the Hudson River school. He studied extensively in museums, and in nature to arrive at the determination that the powerful methods of the masters are in fact an urgently needed voice in contemporary culture. In mastering these techniques, this assertion has been proven by the extensive success his work has found nationwide, in the form of awards, publications, academic recognition, exhibitions, and collectability. His highly naturalistic paintings are created without the use of photography. www.ErikKoepfel.com.



ELIZABETH JACKS- EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
THOMAS COLE NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

Jacks has been the executive director of the Thomas Cole NHS, the home and studios of the founder of the Hudson River school of landscape painting, since 2003. During this time, she raised over \$12 million for the historic site and oversaw the production of fourteen thematic exhibitions of major Hudson River school paintings, a new film about Thomas Cole, a hiking trail to the places that Cole painted, the restoration of Cole's 1839 studio, the reconstruction of Cole's 1846 studio, and the creation of innovative audio-visual installations in Cole's home.



DAVID LITTLE - AUTHOR & ARTIST - PORTLAND, MAINE

Little's plein air painting is represented in many private collections around the country. He co-curated three exhibitions in Maine on the subject of the arts of Mount Katahdin, and received multiple fellowships, including at the Carina House residency on Monhegan Island. Little's first book *Art of Katahdin* (Down East Books, 2013) won an award from the *Boston Globe* and was a finalist for the John N. Cole Literary Award. His second book *Art of Acadia* (Down East, 2016) was created for the centennial celebration of Acadia National Park and the National Park Service. He is currently at work on a new art book project *Paintings of Portland* (Down East, 2018).



JOHN COPELAND NAGLE - JOHN N MATHEWS
PROFESSOR OF LAW - UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

Nagle is the author of *Law's Environment: How the Law Affects the Environment* (Yale University Press, 2010). His latest two books projects are *America the Beautiful: The Scenic Value of Our National Parks*, and *Making Environmental Law Humble: The Relationship Between God's Creation and Our Laws*. His other writings have explored such topics as the the scope of congressional power to protect endangered species; the relationship between environmental pollution, cultural pollution, and other kinds of "pollution"; and alternative approaches to campaign finance reform.



RYAN POLK - NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
MARSH-BILLINGS-ROCKEFELLER NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

Polk is the curator at Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP, home to one of the most intact, best documented collections in the National Park Service, as well as one of the finest collections of Hudson River school art. He is interested in expanding audiences, connecting people to collections, and finding creative ways to share our cultural resources while ensuring their preservation. Polk has spent most of his career working all over the national park system helping parks improve museum collection stewardship.



JOHN ORCUTT - PHOTOGRAPHER
KINGFIELD & PORTLAND, MAINE

Orcutt is a fine art nature photographer and an avid outdoor enthusiast. Following a distinguished career as an architect, he pursued his interest in creating an awareness of the necessity for active preservation of fragile places. Orcutt's work has been exhibited widely and is in many public and private collections. He and his wife and long-time collaborator, Cynthia Orcutt, a landscape architect, have recently published a book, *Enduring Heights* (Carrabassett Publishing, 2017) featuring the natural landscape of Maine's High Peaks. www.johnorcuttnaturephoto.com.



ROBERT RATCLIFFE - NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
CHIEF, CONSERVATION & OUTDOOR RECREATION

Based in Washington, D.C., Ratcliffe oversees a portfolio that includes the widely recognized Recreation, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program, National Trails, and National Rivers programs, among others. These partner and community-based programs help fulfill the NPS mission in working with partners to extend the benefits of parks, recreation, and conservation to communities across the country. He spent much of the last three decades developing new and progressive national policies enhancing visitor experiences and community engagement while balancing protection of resource.



SARAH PESKIN - NATIONAL PARK SERVICE (RETIRED)
SYMPOSIUM PLANNING COMMITTEE

Peskin retired from the National Park Service after a thirty-year career that included leading the planning and legislative office of the North Atlantic region. She was instrumental in the establishment of new NPS areas including Weir Farm NHS, Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP, and Boston Harbor Islands NRA. She also led the planning effort for the Schoodic section of Acadia National Park. Author of the feasibility studies and legislation for Thomas Cole NHS and Weir Farm NHS, she has enjoyed seeing them come to fruition as the two NPS areas dedicated to preserving and interpreting the work of American painters.



DAVID P. SCHUYLER - ARTHUR & KATHERINE SHADEK
PROFESSOR OF THE HUMANITIES & AMERICAN STUDIES
FRANKLIN & MARSHALL COLLEGE

Schuyler is co-editor of four volumes of the Frederick Law Olmsted Papers. He is the author of multiple books, most recently *Sanctified Landscape: Writers, Artists, and the Hudson River Valley, 1820-1909* (2012). Schuyler is a member of the editorial board of the *Hudson River Valley Review*. He was an editor of the award-winning *Creating the North American Landscape* series at the Johns Hopkins University Press, and has served as chair of the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Board.



WILLIAM PLOUFFE - PRESIDENT, MAINE APPALACHIAN
TRAIL LAND TRUST - SYMPOSIUM PLANNING COMMITTEE

Plouffe is Of Counsel at the Portland, Maine law firm of Drummond Woodsum, where he has practiced land use and environmental law for more the thirty years. He has been involved in legislative efforts to enact laws protecting natural beauty and has represented clients in controversial development projects that threaten scenic values. Plouffe previously served on the boards of the Appalachian Mountain Club and the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.



RON TIPTON - PRESIDENT & CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY

Tipton has spent more than forty years of his career as an advocate for public land preservation and national park protection. He has been involved with the Appalachian Trail since the 1970s and thru-hiked the entire trail in 1978. Since that time, he has been a part of the advocacy and/or management team of four nonprofit national conservation organizations: the Wilderness Society, National Audubon Society, World Wildlife Fund, and the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA).



CHARLES TRACY - NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
SYMPOSIUM PLANNING COMMITTEE

Tracy is a National Park Service landscape architect and currently superintendent of the New England National Scenic Trail. On the national level, he specializes in advancing NPS art partnerships and Artist-in-Residence programs.



XIOMÁRO - ARTIST & PHOTOGRAPHER – NEW YORK CITY

Xiomáro (SEE-oh-MAH-ro) is a visiting artist at Weir Farm NHS where he began as an Artist-in-Residence. Xio recently completed a photographic collection of the New England National Scenic Trail, as the Centennial Artist-in-Residence for the National Park Service, the Appalachian Mountain Club, and the Connecticut Forest and Park Association. Some of his many commissions from the National Park Service include the office of landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, and the farmhouse and studio of Julian Alden Weir, the father of American Impressionist painting. www.Xiomaro.com.



WILLIAM VAN BECKUM - LANDSCAPE ARTIST
BOSTON, MA

Van Beckum is an artist who uses photography, video, and installation to explore the value of landscape art in an age where the effects of climate change are beginning to be felt. His work has been exhibited in Los Angeles, New York City, New Mexico, and at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. He is currently working on a commission for the Connecticut Forest and Park Association and National Park Service investigating how scenic trail systems interact with the communities that they pass through. WilliamVanBeckum.com.



JOHN WILMERDING - SAROFIM PROFESSOR OF
AMERICAN ART, EMERITUS - PRINCETON UNIVERSITY

Wilmerding is a trustee of the Guggenheim Museum, Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, and the Wyeth Foundation for American Art. He was the longest-serving member of the Committee for the Preservation of the White House, a presidential appointment, from 1989 to 2017. He was previously senior curator and deputy director of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., where he later served as a trustee. Wilmerding is the author of many books, including volumes on the work of Fitz Henry Lane, John F. Peto, Winslow Homer, and Thomas Eakins. More recently, he has written books on Richard Estes, Robert Indiana, Tom Wesselmann, and Roy Lichtenstein, and worked on exhibitions of Frederic Church's Maine paintings, Wayne Thiebaud, Pop still life, and Audrey Flack. He is currently completing a book titled *Eyesight and Insight: The Depiction of Eyeglasses in American Art*.

Brochure design and layout by Cynthia Plank Orcutt

Right: *Flagstaff Rocks*, Carrying Place Township, Maine, **John Orcutt**, photographer MHTsu62, from the book "Enduring Heights" (Carrabassett Publishing, 2017) - www.johnorcuttnaturephoto.com



PROGRAM

AUGUST 3, 2017

COLBY COLLEGE, WATERTVILLE, MAINE

8:45-9:00 **Welcome and Introduction:**
William Plouffe, Of Counsel, Drummond Woodsum, Portland ME President, Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust

9:00-9:30 **Morning Keynote: Ecocriticism and American Landscape Artists**
J. Barrington Matthews, Ph.D. student
The College of William and Mary

9:30-10:40 **The Hudson River School: Artists and the American Conservation Movement**
Frederic Church's Landscapes of Maine
John Wilmerding, Sarofim Professor of American Art, Emeritus, Princeton University
What's Art Got To Do With It? The Hudson River School, the Picturesque, and the National Park Aesthetic
Rebecca Bedell, Associate Professor of Art, Wellesley College
Moderator: *Sarah Peskin*

10:50-12:00 **Landscape Photographers: Early & Modern Perspective**
Carleton Watkins: A New History of the Yosemite Idea
Tyler Green, author of *Carleton Watkins* biography (UC Press)
To Be At The Farther Edge: Photographs Along the New England Trail
Barbara Bosworth, Professor of Photography, Massachusetts College of Art and Design
Moderator: *Sarah Peskin*

1:30-3:00

The Modernists: A Changing Expression of Natural Beauty

David Little, Author and Artist, Portland ME
Elizabeth Finch, Lunder Curator of American Art, Colby College Museum of Art and co-curator of "Marsden Hartley's Maine"
Moderator: *David Little*

3:00-4:30

Enjoy The View: Introduction to National Park Service Visual Resource Management

Mark E. Meyer, Renewable Energy Visual Resource Specialist, National Park Service
Robert G. Sullivan, Environmental Scientist, Environmental Science Division EVS/240, Argonne National Laboratory
Jim Von Haden, Integrated Resources Program Manager, Appalachian NST

3:00-4:30

Concurrent Sessions: Art at National Parks, Trails and Historic Sites in New England

Session I: **3:00-3:45: Parks, Monuments and Trails**

Exploring Acadia National Park - *John Kelly*, Management Assistant, Acadia National Park

Community Connections: Appalachian and New England National Scenic Trails - *William Van Beckum*, Photographer

Introducing Katahdin Woods & Waters National Monument - *Julie Isbill*, Community Planner, Katahdin Woods and Waters NM

Session II: **3:45-4:30: Art-Focused National Historic Sites**

Art & Conservation at Marsh-Billings-Rockefeller NHP & Saint Gaudens NHS - *Ryan Polk*, Curator, Marsh-Billings-Rock. NHP

Cedar Grove: Thomas Cole's Home and Studio - *Betsy Jacks*, Executive Director, Thomas Cole National Historic Site

J. Alden Weir and American Impressionism: Weir Farm National Historic Site - *Linda Cook*, Superintendent, Weir Farm NHS

AUGUST 4, 2017

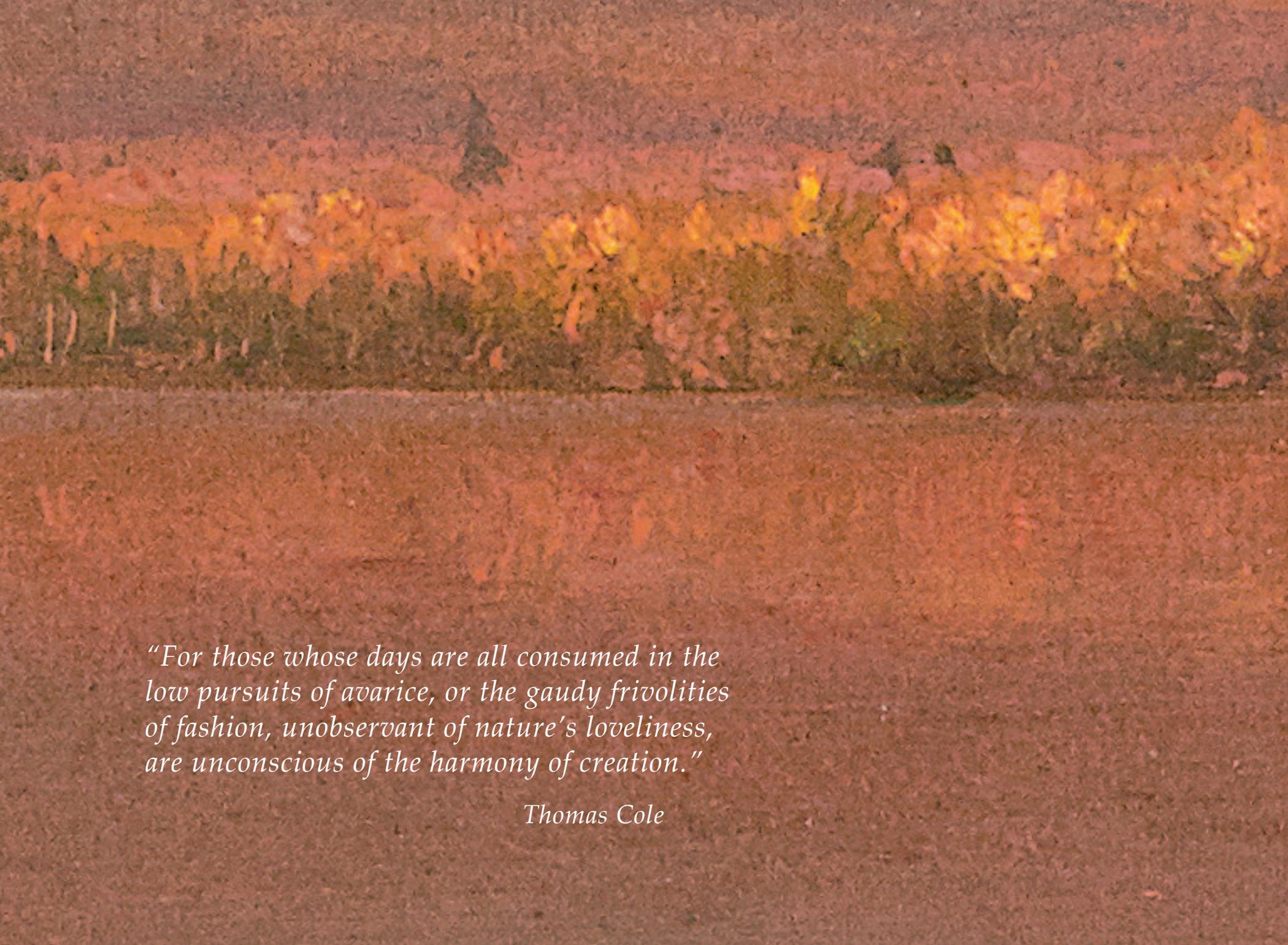
COLBY COLLEGE, WATERVILLE, MAINE

- 9:00-9:30** **Morning Keynote: The Role of the Law in Protecting Scenic Landscapes**
John Copeland Nagle, John N. Matthews Professor of Law, Notre Dame University School of Law
- 9:30-10:00** **Frederick Law Olmsted: The Landscape Architect's Role in Protecting Natural Beauty**
David P. Schuyler, Arthur & Katherine Shadek Professor of the Humanities & American Studies, Franklin and Marshall College
- 10:00-10:15** **Panel Discussion: Nagle and Schuyler**
Moderator: *William Plouffe*
- 10:30-11:00** **20th Century Nature Photography and Environmental Advocacy**
Ron Tipton, ED, Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Tyler Green, author of Carleton Watkins biography
Moderator: *John Orcutt*
- 11:00-Noon** **The Psychology of Natural Beauty**
Sean Gobin, Captain, U.S. Marine Corps; Director, Warrior Expeditions
Shauna Joye, Assistant Professor, Psychology Georgia Southern University
Moderator: *William Plouffe*

- 1:30-3:00** **Learning from Contemporary Visual Artists**
Eric Koepfel, Artist in the Hudson River style
Evelyn Dunphy, Artist of the Katahdin region
Xiomáro, National Park Service artist-in-residence
John Orcutt, Architect and photographer of Maine coast and mountains
Moderator: *Charles Tracy*
- 3:00-4:15** **Plenary Panel Discussion / Concluding Remarks**
Moderator: *Robert Ratcliffe*, Chief, Conservation and Outdoor Recreation, National Park Service
- 6:00** **Photography presentation: "Views from the Maine Woods"**
John and Cynthia Orcutt, Authors "Enduring Heights" (Carrabassett Publishing, 2017)

ART SYMPOSIUM FIELD TRIPS:

- August 5:**
Acadia by boat & land
(Cole and Church)
Leader: *Michael Furnari* Meeting: Northeast Harbor
- August 5-6:**
Katahdin Region
(Church, Hartley, et al)
Leader: *Evelyn Dunphy* Meeting: Millinocket
- August 6:**
Monhegan
(Wyeths, Kent, et al)
Leader: *Sarah Peskin* Meeting: New Harbor



“For those whose days are all consumed in the low pursuits of avarice, or the gaudy frivolities of fashion, unobservant of nature’s loveliness, are unconscious of the harmony of creation.”

Thomas Cole



