



Hudson River Valley Painters

The Dorsky And Boscobel Celebrate
Three Nineteenth Century Talents

By Stephen May

NEW PALTZ, N.Y. — Jervis McEntee (1828–1891), an artist of great sensitivity, intelligence and complexity, was a central figure in the Hudson River School. Although his work has been widely admired for years, he remains one of the least examined of this group of artists. This is in part because over the years so much attention has been paid to his close associations with other Hudson River School painters and as a fixture in the milieu of the storied Tenth Street Studio Building.



“Near Fort Halleck,” 1881. Hawthorne Fine Art, LLC, New York.

Page Above: “Twilight,” 1867. Collection of Richard Sharp.

With laudable ambition, the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art at the State University at New Paltz has organized “Jervis McEntee: Painter-Poet of the Hudson River School,” on view through December 13. Guest curator Lee A. Vedder, assisted by the Dorsky’s curator Daniel Belasco, assembled 80 paintings and oil sketches and a number of historical documents. The exhibition, says Sara J. Pasti, director of the Dorsky, “is the largest public presentation of McEntee’s art since his memorial exhibition in 1891 and is sure to secure McEntee’s place as an important figure in American art.”

The style and all-enveloping yellow of “The Yellow Autumn Woods,” 1884, suggest the influence of Impressionists on McEntee toward the end of his career. Barrie and Deedee Wigmore.





Untitled, undated. Collection of Richard and Marguerite Lease.

Thomas Benjamin Pope Landscapes From Newburgh And Beyond

NEW PALTZ, N.Y. — While some stars of the Hudson River School of painting — Albert Bierstadt, Frederic Church and Sanford Gifford — traveled to far-off lands, depicted exotic places and exhibited widely, other Hudson River School painters stayed close to home, painting familiar scenes they knew best.

Among the latter artists was Thomas Benjamin Pope (1833–1891), who lived in and focused his art on Newburgh, N.Y. He is the subject of a rewarding exhibition, “Thomas Benjamin Pope: Landscapes from Newburgh and Beyond,” curated by Chloe DeRocker, on view at the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art through December 13.

Every Kind Of A Painter: Thomas Prichard Rossiter

GARRISON, N.Y. — So many gifted, well-known painters were associated with the Hudson River School that talented contemporaries are often overlooked. Thomas Prichard Rossiter (1818–1871), for example, produced a solid body of work, but is rarely linked today to the Hudson River School.

Fortunately, Boscobel House and Gardens has organized, in consultation with Bruce Weber, the Museum of the City of New York’s curator of paintings and sculpture, the first major Rossiter exhibition in memory — “Every Kind of a Painter: Thomas Prichard Rossiter (1818–1871),” on view through November 29. As the title suggests, this artist did not limit himself to landscapes, painting instead diverse subjects. Some 25 paintings and works on paper document his skill in creating portraits, genre scenes and history paintings as well.



“A Picnic on the Hudson,” 1863. Collection Julia L. Butterfield Memorial Library, Cold Spring, N.Y. Courtesy Boscobel House and Gardens.



“Summer Hills, Kauterskill Clove,” 1867. Collection of the Birmingham Museum of Art, museum purchase with funds provided by the Friends of American Art.

McEntee was born in Roundout (now Kingston), N.Y., and little is known of his childhood. Yet, as Pasti observes, he was “truly shaped by the culture and landscape of the Hudson Valley.” In 1850, at age 22, McEntee exhibited his first painting at the prestigious National Academy of Design (NAD).

About the same time, McEntee apprenticed with Frederic Church, a successful figure in the American art world; they remained lifelong friends. It was an awkward relationship — Church was a commanding, self-important figure, gifted, outgoing, highly successful, a great self-promoter and committed to the nationalistic ideology of Manifest Destiny. McEntee, on the other hand, was an introspective persona and artist, and had a poetic, emotional temperament. As art historian J. Gray Sweeney has observed, “McEntee characteristically painted intimate scenes



**"Autumn Reverie," 1880.
David and Laura Grey Collection.**



**"Mist Rising Near New Paltz," circa 1861.
Barrie and Deedee Wigmore.**

filled with nostalgia rather than panoramic visions of landscapes stretching to the horizon in magisterial gaze....”

Church and McEntee did agree with “the idea that art was the interpreter of nature; nature was the interpreter of God,” says Sweeney, adding that this “was the core belief ... among the Hudson River School.” McEntee benefited from Church’s technical mastery of the oil sketch depicting landscape forms recorded directly in the field and then reworked in the studio. Church’s special gift for conveying dramatic atmospheric and light effects at twilight and sunset influenced his student in works like “Twilight.”

At the same time, McEntee was not one to “embrace Church’s penchant for large panoramic landscapes and grand atmospheric spectacle. Rather, quiet meditation on the autumn season and the thoughts and moods of a landscape interested [McEntee] more as a painter,” says curator Vedder.

In this photograph of McEntee by Napoleon Sarony, circa 1867, the 39-year-old artist presents himself as a successful figure with perhaps some wariness in his expression. The Century Association, New York.

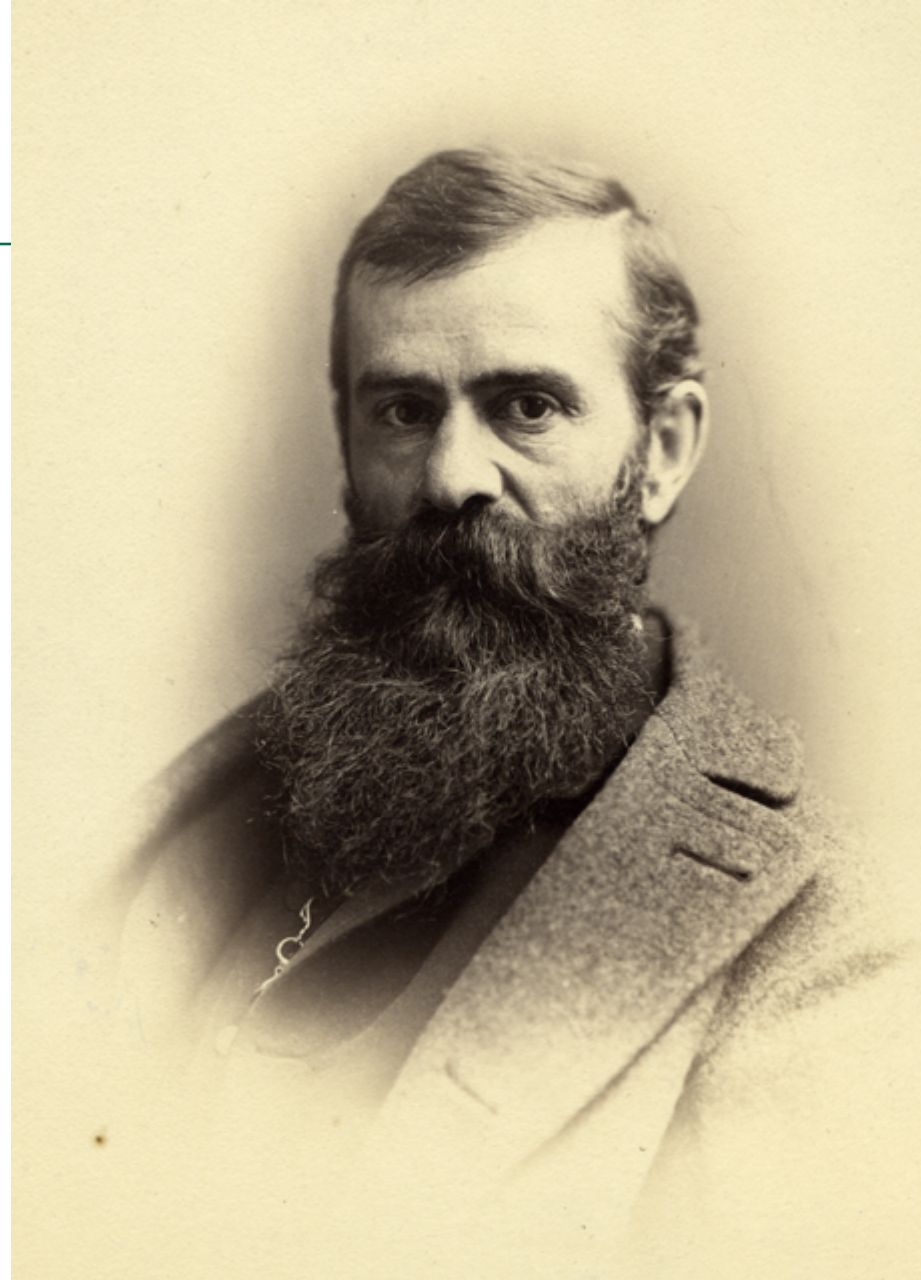
Soon, McEntee took up the annual routine of New York professional landscape painters, spending fall and winter in his city studio and spring and summer at his home/studio in Roundout.

Following the Civil War, McEntee sought inspiration abroad, visiting the art capitals of London, Paris and Rome, which exposed him to contemporary European landscape styles that influenced his output in the 1870s and 1880s.

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