

Congressman Secured Funding from Congress for Popular Exhibit

New Paltz, NY - The Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art today held a reception to celebrate the tremendous success of its Hudson River School exhibit and to honor Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) who secured \$143,449 in funding from Congress for the display.

"I am delighted that the Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art has received such an influx of visitors who want to see the Hudson River School pieces and learn about this remarkable period in art history," Hinchey said. "This kind of accessibility to such stunning pieces of art is exactly what we had in mind when we set forth to secure federal funding for this exhibit. I hope and expect that the museum will continue to see a steady flow of visitors and I am excited about all the educational opportunities that this exhibit will provide to students at SUNY New Paltz and other schools in the region."

The Samuel Dorsky Museum of Art is using the funding that Hinchey secured for a major exhibition of Hudson River School paintings that includes a large educational component for area schools, a symposium that brings in national scholars, and a publication. Funds are also being used for the conservation of the paintings. Prior to the exhibit opening last month, the museum had approximately 20 visitors each day. The museum now has 80-100 visitors per day.

The museum is a major cultural resource in the Hudson Valley, serving a broad-based constituency from both on and beyond the New Paltz campus. The museum has a special commitment to collecting and exhibiting important works of art created by artists who have lived and worked in the Hudson Valley and Catskill regions. The Hudson River School, which flourished between 1825 and 1875, is a movement that celebrated the vast natural resources of the American landscape just prior to the industrialization that forever changed that landscape. The movement is the first truly American school of painting.

The collection includes works by the movement's founder, Thomas Cole, and other well-known artists of the movement, including Frederick Edwin Church, Albert Bierstadt, Jasper Francis Cropsey, Asher B. Durand, as well as women members Laura Woodward and Edith Wilkinson Cook. The paintings come to the museum from the New York Historical Society. Because the college's Art and Art History Departments have faculty members whose research specialty is the Hudson River School movement, opportunities abound for education programs for

schoolchildren, college students from institutions throughout the region as well as general art lovers and visitors. The collection could be displayed at New Paltz and throughout the region in collaboration with other organizations and institutions.

Hinchey obtained the funds for the museum as part of the fiscal year 2008 federal budget.