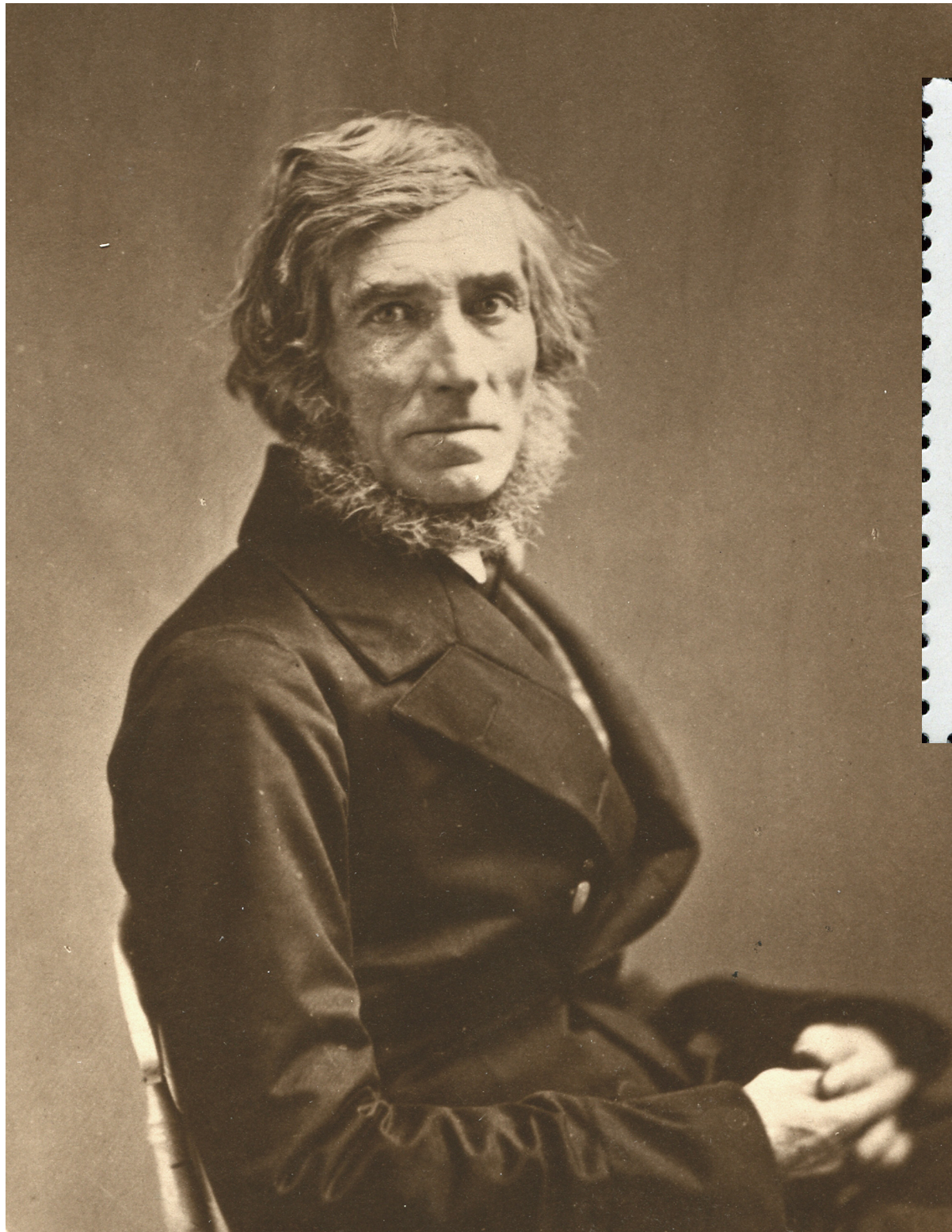


Asher B. Durand

Artist (1796 - 1886)



Durand, one of the founders of the Century Club, was born in and eventually died in Maplewood, New Jersey. He lived in what is now known as the Durand-Hedden House, now designated as a historic landmark.

Durand was apprenticed to an engraver from 1812 to 1817, later entering into a partnership with the owner of the firm. He engraved the Declaration of Independence for John Trumbull in 1823, which established Durand's reputation as one of the country's finest engravers. Durand helped organize the New York Drawing Association in 1825, which later became the National Academy of Design; he would serve the organization as president from 1845 to 1861.

His interest shifted from engraving to oil painting around 1830. In 1837, he accompanied his friend THOMAS COLE on a sketching expedition to Schroon Lake in the Adirondacks and soon after he began to concentrate on landscape painting. He spent summers in the mountains of the Northeast, making hundreds of drawings and oil sketches that were later incorporated into finished pieces, which helped to define the Hudson River School.

Durand is particularly remembered for his detailed portrayals of trees, rocks, and foliage. In 1855, his influential *Letters on Landscape Painting* were published in the *Crayon*, an important art periodical founded by the artist's son, JOHN DURAND.

Durand is noted for his 1849 painting *Kindred Spirits*, which shows THOMAS COLE and poet WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT in a Catskills landscape. This was painted as a tribute to Cole upon his death in 1848. The painting, donated by Bryant's daughter Julia to the New York Public Library in 1904, was sold in May 2005 to Alice Walton for a purported \$35 million.

In 2007, the Brooklyn Museum exhibited nearly 60 of Durand's works, the first exhibition devoted to him in more than 35 years. The Century, which owns five Durand paintings and a drawing, contributed *Kaaterskill Clove* to the show.