The Olana Partnership Year-End Review 2010

For The Olana Partnership 2010 was a year of cautious optimism. Although we continued to feel the impact of the sluggish economy, the support of our loyal members, donors, and partner organizations continued to drive our success in newly ventured areas. Thank you for standing by us to ensure that Olana continues to remain a thriving international cultural destination.

Our efforts to restore the Olana landscape were a focal point last year, beginning with hiring our first landscape curator. We had the exciting opportunity to enter into a three-way agreement with Scenic Hudson and Open Space Institute to purchase an easement for Pleroma Farm, a biodynamic farm and therapeutic retreat abutting Olana to the southeast. The permanent protection of this property will preserve the critical views from Olana that were so fundamental to Church’s landscape design. The Olana Partnership enlisted the services of Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA, FAAR, the founder and president of The Cultural Landscape Foundation, to help us develop new ways of looking at the landscape in a national context. We also took the first steps to restore the views on Crown Hill and continued to monitor the proposal to build a communications tower on Blue Hill, a view the Church frequently painted, to ensure that the proper reviews are conducted.

Our curatorial staff achieved a major milestone in 2010 with the opening of the Churches’ suite of bedrooms on the second floor to the public for the first time. The installation of replica wallpapers in those rooms has had a dramatic impact. The second exhibition in the Evelyn and Maurice Sharp Gallery, Fern Hunting among These Picturesque Mountains: Frederic Edwin Church in Jamaica, opened to great acclaim. In addition, we repaired and repainted the interior of the Coachman’s House for visitors to view its first changing contemporary exhibition, In the Footsteps of Frederic Church: Photos by Larry Lederman. Many other curatorial projects are under way for 2011, including the exhibition Rally ‘round the Flag: Frederic Edwin Church and the Civil War and the conservation of many Olana collections for reinstallation in the house.

Last year, programs in the Wagon House Education Center expanded by over 13 percent compared to 2009, offering more opportunities for children and adults throughout the year.

Our momentum in all areas largely depends on your support of our annual fund. The annual fund provides a solid foundation of unrestricted funds which are so crucial to our sustainability. If you believe in the work that we are doing and wish to partner with us, please consider making a gift. Your support, no matter what size, is appreciated. We have provided an envelope for your convenience. Please send your gift today!

Sincerely,

Sara J. Griffen
Washburn S. and Susan M. Oberwager
President

The following projects were accomplished in 2010 through the combined efforts of the board and staff of The Olana Partnership (TOP) and our New York State partners:

Landscape Restoration: The Olana Partnership received a $250,000 Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) grant for landscape restoration. A $20,000 grant from the Burpee Foundation was awarded to restore a portion of the house environs, including the historic fern bed. With those funds, five species of trees were planted and a planting plan for the fern bed was completed. The proposed communication tower on Blue Hill remains a concern. Our goal is to ensure that there is a thorough environmental review process. The Partnership entered into a commitment with Scenic Hudson and Open Space Institute (OSI) to purchase an easement for Pleroma Farm, a biodynamic farm directly to the southeast of Olana.

House, Outbuilding Restoration, and Exhibitions: The interior of the Coachman’s House was repaired and repainted to house its first contemporary exhibition, In the Footsteps of Frederic Church: Photos by Larry Lederman. A chair in the Court Hall was completely conserved and another is in the process of being restored. The Churches’ bedroom and dressing room opened to the public for the first time with replica wallpaper and the Church bedroom suite of furniture. Several paintings were conserved as part of Olana’s third exhibition in the Evelyn and Maurice Sharp Gallery, Fern Hunting among These Picturesque Mountains: Frederic Edwin Church in Jamaica. More than 17,000 people viewed the show. The curatorial department continued its work with numerous researchers and scholars.

Education: The Wagon House Education Center offered new educational programming in arts, nature, gardening, and landscape for all age groups. The number of visitors who attended events increased by more than 10 percent from 2009 to 2,068, and the number of programs offered increased by 13 percent to 233. Web site offerings of educational material were expanded through new teacher and family guides.

Programming: The Olana Partnership curator and landscape curator were invited to speak at the Morgan Library & Museum in conjunction with the Romantic Landscapes exhibition. Dr. Katherine E. Manthorne, Elizabeth Mankin Kornhauser, and Dr. David Schuyler lectured in conjunction with the Church in Jamaica exhibition. Dr. Katherine E. Manthorne, Elizabeth Mankin Kornhauser, and Dr. David Schuyler lectured in conjunction with the Church in Jamaica exhibition. Robert M. Toole lectured in conjunction with the launch of the Hudson Valley Greenway’s Historic Landscapes month, to capacity crowds. TOP staff hosted a number of special tour groups from art museums, the Garden Club of America, and the Daughters of the Cincinnati. TOP staff continued to lecture widely to many institutions, including the Philadelphia Decorative Arts Trust, The Driehaus Museum, Bard College, and Yale University.

Government Relations: The Olana Partnership continued to advocate for funding for state parks and to build relations with our federal representatives.

Community Relations: The Olana Partnership hosted a Columbia County Chamber of Commerce Business after Hours event that brought more than 100 local business people to Olana for a sneak preview of the second floor. The Wagon House was used by several local groups, including the Hudson Rotary, Columbia Land Conservancy, Hudson River Estuary, and Trout Unlimited. Collaborations included those with the Morgan Library & Museum,
Visibility: Publications included the hardcover catalogue of Fern Hunting and two issues of The Olana Crayon. The Olana Web site was improved by adding additional content and weekly updates, resulting in a doubling of average sessions to 298,810 and increasing the time per session by 40 percent. Olana received significant press coverage in Art and Antiques, The Columbia Paper, The Round Table, Talk 1300, The Register Star, The Times Union, and Rural Intelligence. The Olana State Historic Site Facebook page was created and is regularly updated by the staff at Olana. It now boasts more than 1,500 fans.

Funding: In addition to the $250,000 Environmental Protection Fund grant, project-focused fundraising continued with gifts for a landscape consultation with Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA, FAAR, founder and president of The Cultural Landscape Foundation, our monitoring of the proposed Blue Hill communications tower, the 2010 Jamaica exhibition, the 2011 exhibition on Church’s involvement in the Civil War, and the purchase of an easement at Pleroma Farm, a biodynamic farm in Olana’s viewshed. TOP staff created new avenues for giving, including the bi-weekly e-blast and Web site.

2011 and Beyond: Olana will open its third exhibition, Rally ‘round the Flag: Frederic Edwin Church and the Civil War in the Sharp Family Gallery. The Ombra Room, a guest room on the second floor, will feature replica historic wallpaper and restored painted stencils when it opens in conjunction with this exhibition. View restoration will continue with the completion of the Ridge Road project and the beginning restoration of the historic meadow on Crown Hill. Planting and restoration of the historic fern bed will proceed, as will the continued maintenance and landscape restoration projects throughout the property. Educational opportunities will continue to expand, as the Wagon House Education Center moves into its third year of operation.

We truly appreciate the individuals, foundations, corporations, and governmental entities that generously support Olana. We are especially grateful to Governor Andrew Cuomo, Parks Commissioner Rose Harvey, Senator Stephen Saldan, Assemblyman Marcus Molinaro, Director and Acting Deputy Commissioner for Historic Preservation Ruth Pierpont, Director of the Bureau of Historic Sites John Lovell, and Acting Taconic Regional Director Garrett Jobson. We particularly wish to thank Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand and Congressman Christopher Gibson, as well as Ron Brown, Chair of the Columbia County Board of Supervisors, for their leadership in support of Olana. We wish to acknowledge our colleagues and friends Linda McLean, Olana’s historic site manager, Carri Milano, Olana

SOURCES OF INCOME 2010

EXPENSE PERCENTAGES 2010

Supporters, Donors and Members
January 1, 2010 – February 28, 2011

IPA, Timothy Dodge, Olana Maintenance Supervisor, and Jack Keller, Olana groundskeeper, for their devotion and partnership. Olana’s dedicated volunteers make a huge difference to the operation of the site and we applaud their generosity of time and energy.