THOMAS COLE
American, 1801–1848

Study for the Voyage of Life, circa 1840
Oil on canvas
On loan from The Owens Foundation

Thomas Cole was a founding member of the Hudson River School, a group of painters that sought to infuse detailed representations of American landscapes with romantic meaning. Cole prepared this study for Youth, the second painting in his Voyage of Life series. This series of four large-scale paintings depicts a guardian angel guiding a man through a sequence of dramatic landscapes, allegorizing the journey of life through Christian themes of death and resurrection.