

## 5:6a Romanticism in America

### **Cole, *The Oxbow***

- Founder of the Hudson River School of landscape painting
- Painted as reply to Captain Basil Hall's book *Travels in North America*, 1829, in which he alleged that America was indifferent to its natural blessings
- Also alleged that American painters were incompetent and could not capture American scenery
- To Cole, America possesses the sublime and the beautiful in its landscape
- Wildness of landscape on left compared to the domesticated landscape on right
- Cole is seated with an easel between both landscapes, looking at us
- Left: contorted trunk, receding storm, wild mountains, impenetrable forest
- Right: cultivated, orderly, man taming nature, but remaining in harmony with her
- *Oxbow* as a counterstatement to Hall's book

## 5:6b Romanticism in America

### **Church, *Twilight in the Wilderness***

- Cole's only pupil and his successor
- Awe-inspiring view of the sun setting over a majestic landscape
- No trace of humanity
- Idealistic and comforting view
- Affirmation of the divine in nature
- Strong horizontals interrupted by verticals and diagonals
- Color used as spectacle
- Great detail in leaves of trees and feathery clouds
- Is it a symbol of the oncoming Civil War?