

BEAUTY & BOUNTY: AMERICAN ART IN AN AGE OF EXPLORATION EDUCATOR RESOURCE GUIDE

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is designed as a resource for educators visiting the exhibition *Beauty & Bounty: American Art in an Age of Exploration* on a self-guided visit (without a SAM Docent). Teachers are encouraged to develop open-ended discussions that ask for a wide range of opinions and expressions from students. The projects in this guide connect to core curriculum subject areas and can be adapted for a variety of grade levels to meet Washington State Common Core Standards of Learning. Related images for each project are included at the end of this guide. If you would like additional assistance modifying these projects to fit your classroom, please email SAM's Wyckoff Teacher Resource Center (TRC) at trc@seattleartmuseum.org.

Additional exhibition information can be found at <http://seattleartmuseum.org/beautybounty>. For more information about bringing a self-guided group to SAM please visit seattleartmuseum.org/educators or email schooltours@seattleartmuseum.org.

INTRODUCTION TO THE EXHIBITION

Through more than 140 works, including an in-depth presentation of the Seattle Art Museum's painting *Puget Sound on the Pacific Coast*, 1870 by Albert Bierstadt, *Beauty and Bounty* surveys great 19th and early 20th-century American landscape paintings and photographs, displaying the responses made by American artists to their encounters with the vastness of natural beauty and nature's bounty in North America. The exhibition presents a rare opportunity to view great works of American art that have rarely—or never—been seen by the greater public.

Painters including Sanford Gifford, Albert Bierstadt and Thomas Moran gave form to landscapes of once unimaginable character, as they crossed the continent on expeditions through the plains and the mountains of the Great West. The paintings and photographs on view demonstrate that it was often these artist-explorers who were raising important questions about humankind's place in the world and how best to respond to a continent that many at the time viewed as a divine blessing of beauty and bounty from nature.

EXHIBITION THEMES & GUIDING QUESTIONS

Nature as Beauty/Nature as Resource:

- What is the relationship between man and nature and how has that changed over time?
- What rights and responsibilities do we have to the land we inhabit?
- How do artists depict the natural world? What examples of this do you see in everyday life?

The Exploration of the American West:

- How has the West been viewed throughout American history?
- How have works of art influenced the way the West is/was viewed? How do works of art continue to shape the way we see the world?
- What is the role of the wilderness in today's culture?

History and Truth:

- How do images tell historical and personal narratives?
- How are historical narratives constructed? Why do historical interpretations change over time?
- What are different ways people tell stories about their heritage? Why are these stories important?

PROJECT UNITS

A SENSE OF PLACE: FOCUS ON LANGUAGE ARTS

Patricia Junker, SAM's Ann M. Barwick Curator of American Art, writes in the introduction to this exhibition that "*Painters and writers took to the American landscape to try to discover man's place in the world.*" **Step 1:** Select from your class readings a section of text that describes an American landscape.

Step 2: Ask students to discuss this section and how the author has depicted this landscape and the inhabitants. **Step 3:** Now prompt students to select a landscape painting or photograph using [ARTstor](#), [SAM's online collection](#), the Reclaimed or Beauty & Bounty exhibition websites or another image resource you have in your classroom. **Step 4:** Ask students to write a short essay comparing the two landscapes and the different relationships between each landscape and its inhabitants. (EARLS: Art 2.1, Arts 4.2, Communications 1.2, Writing 2.2).

CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION: FOCUS ON ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

Both [Beauty and Bounty](#) and the accompanying exhibition of contemporary art *Reclaimed: Nature and Place Through Contemporary Eyes* examine humankind's changing relationship with the environment.

Step 1: Begin with a class discussion of the two Darius Kinsey photographs included in this guide. What might these images be saying about the environment? **Step 2:** Next, divide students into two groups and assign them to either preservation (keeping the wilderness untouched or wild) or conservation (managing the wilderness as a natural resource). **Step 3:** While at the museum or using [ARTstor](#) in your classroom, ask students to select an image that represents their assigned point of view and create a visual presentation that communicates their position. **Step 4:** Following this, choose a local environment such as a park, forest or river and ask students to debate how this area should be developed, based on their assigned perspectives. (EARLS: Communications 1.2, Science 3.1, Science 3.2, Social Studies 5.3)

A PORTRAIT OF A PLACE: FOCUS ON VISUAL ARTS

Albert Bierstadt's *Puget Sound on the Pacific Coast* has been described as a portrait of a place.

Bierstadt used artifacts, props and his on-site sketches to create an image that was both imagined and accurate. **Step 1:** Begin by discussing Bierstadt's painting using the image included in this guide. **Step 2:** As homework, ask students to create a portrait or sketch of their backyard or street. **Step 3:** Following this, ask students to bring one object that were included in their drawing to school. **Step 4:** Pair students and ask them to trade objects. **Step 5:** Have each student do a series of investigative drawings of their new object and then to imagine and draw a space where this object might exist. **Step 6:** To conclude, have student share and discuss their sketches of the real and imagined spaces. (EARLS: Arts 1.1, Arts 1.3, Arts 2.1, Communications 3.3)

BEFORE AND AFTER: FOCUS ON HISTORY

Our local landscape has changed dramatically in the last two hundred years. **Step 1:** Ask students to begin by discussing the photograph by Carleton Watkins included in this guide. What might this place look like today? How has this landscape changed and how has it remained the same? **Step 2:** Using online resources such as [ARTstor](#), photographs from the [UW Special Collections](#) or the [Washington State Historical Society](#), select a local place and create a timeline using images, photographs and writing to describe how it has developed from 1811 until 2011. (EARLS: Social Studies 3.2, Social Studies 4.1, Social Studies 4.2, Social Studies 5.2)

RESOURCES

Featured Artists in SAM's online collection:

- [Frederick Church](#)
- [Albert Bierstadt](#)
- [Stanford Gifford](#)

Related resources available at the Wyckoff Teacher Resource Center:

Books for Students:

... **If You Lived with the Indians of the Northwest Coast** by Kamma, Anne and Johnson, Pamela. New York: Scholastic, 2002. Describes the daily life of the Northwest Coast peoples before European contact, including their clothing, food, games and customs. E 78 N78 K36

Through Artists' Eyes: Landscape and the Environment by Bingham, Jane. Chicago: Raintree, 2006. This book explores the universal themes of landscape and the environment as depicted by artists. N 8213 B56

Resources for Educators:

Albert Bierstadt: Puget Sound on the Pacific Coast: A Superb Vision of a Dreamland by Junker, Patricia A. Seattle: Seattle Art Museum, 2011. This book reveals the fact within the fiction of artist-explorer Albert Bierstadt's spectacular, eight-foot-wide view of Puget Sound, which he painted but never visited. ND 237 B5 J96

American Sublime: Landscape Painting in the United States, 1820–1880 by Wilton, Andrew and Barringer, Tim. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002. Catalogue of an exhibition organized by the Tate Gallery, London about American landscape paintings made during the years of exploration and development. ND 1351.5 W565

Art of the American West by Crystal Productions. Glenview, IL: Crystal Productions, 1994. Reproductions of paintings and prints from the 1850s through the 1940s. 12 posters. PRINT NX 653 W47 C79

Crossing the Frontier: Photographs of the Developing West, 1849 to the Present by Phillips, Sandra S., et. al. San Francisco: San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Chronicle Books, 1996. Catalogue for an exhibition of photographs at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. TR 660 F79

Digital Landscape Photography: In the Footsteps of Ansel Adams and the Great Masters by Frye, Michael. Boston: Focal Press, 2010. Explains how the techniques used by landscape photographers Ansel Adams, Edward Weston and Eliot Porter can be adapted by digital photographers to improve their work. TR 660 F79

Land and Landscape: Views of America's History and Culture by Strang, Garrett, et. al. Washington, DC: National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1996. Educator curriculum with two guides, fifteen prints and one DVD (27 min.). CURR GD ND 1351 S87

Landscape Painting Inside and Out by Macpherson, Kevin D. Cincinnati, OH: North Light Books, 2006. With a combination of indoor and outdoor painting, Kevin Macpherson shows an artist how to create personal, poetic landscapes that capture the feeling of being there. ND 1342 M33

Made in America: Exploring American History Through Art by the Seattle Art Museum; 2009. Explore American landscape painting and photography, using replicas of works of art and cultural items students can touch. Includes an educator resource guide, a CD of related images from SAM's collection and suggestions for hands-on art activities. SUITCASE AMERICA

The Pacific Northwest Landscape: A Painted History by Harmon, Kitty and Raban, Jonathan. Seattle: Sasquatch Books, 2001. 140 paintings all take account of the water, sky, mountains, air and light of the Pacific Northwest. ND 230 W3 H27

Online Resources:

Center for the Study of the Pacific Northwest: Curriculum Materials by the University of Washington. Designed to supplement textbooks and other means of instruction, the packets focus on key issues in Northwest history.
www.washington.edu/uwired/outreach/cspn/Website/Classroom%20Materials/Curriculum%20Packets/Curriculum%20Packets.html

Early American Landscape Photography of the American West by New York Public Library. Over 200 large prints from the 1860s and 1870s of American Western landscape.
http://digitalgallery.nypl.org/nypldigital/explore/dgexplore.cfm?col_id=200

Images of the West by PBS – The West. This lesson explores several of the themes in the PBS video *The West* by comparing the works of artists and photographers who documented and interpreted its vast, uncharted landscapes and its native and emigrant inhabitants during much of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. www.pbs.org/weta/thewest/lesson_plans/lesson05.htm

Landscape Painting: Artists Who Loved the Land by Smithsonian Education. Lesson plan that discusses the techniques of four landscape artists George Catlin, Thomas Moran, Albert Bierstadt and Winslow Homer. www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/lesson_plans/landscape_painting/index.html



Image from Beauty & Bounty: American Art in an Age of Exploration
Puget Sound on the Pacific Coast, 1870, Albert Bierstadt, born Solingen, Prussia, 1830; died New York City, 1902. Oil on canvas, Gift of the Friends of American Art at the Seattle Art Museum, with additional funds from the General Acquisition Fund.

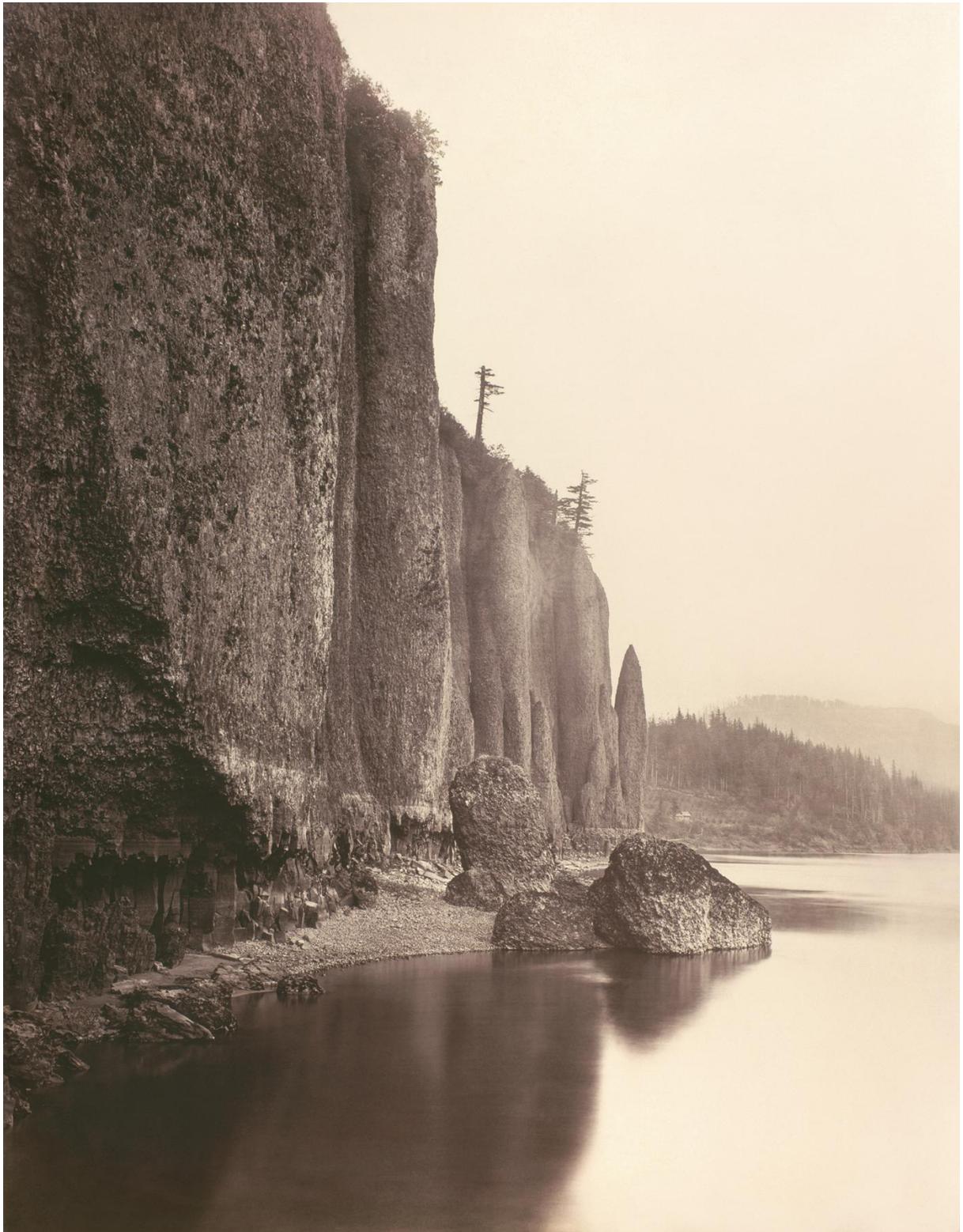


Image from Beauty & Bounty: American Art in an Age of Exploration

Cape Horn, Columbia River. 1868. Carleton E. Watkins, born Oneonta, New York 1829; died Napa, California, 1916, Albumen silver print, 19 1/4 x 14 1/2 in. (48.9 x 36.8 cm), Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Joseph and Elaine Monsen Photography Collection, gift of Joseph and Elaine Monsen and The Boeing Company, 97.

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Image from Beauty & Bounty: American Art in an Age of Exploration

Three loggers falling a cedar with crosscut saw and felling axes, Washington, 1906; inscribed: Felling [sic] a cedar 76 ft. in circumference, measured 1 1/2 ft. from ground. Supposed to have been the largest tree in Wash. K14. ©1906 by Darius Kinsey, 1906. Darius Kinsey, born Maryville, Missouri, 1869; died Sedro-Woolley, Washington, 1945. Gelatin silver print, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, D. Kinsey K14, T2011.68



Image from Beauty & Bounty: American Art in an Age of Exploration

Stand of western hemlock, Washington, 1937; inscribed: 8K, Forest Western Hemlock. ©1937 Timber Views Co., 1937. Darius Kinsey, born Maryville, Missouri, 1869; died Sedro-Woolley, Washington, 1945. Gelatin silver print, University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, D. Kinsey 8K, T2011.87