Points of View
Landscapes from the Collections

essays
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Roger Arnold ‘10
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John Taylor Arms
Cobwebs, 1921

The Davis Gallery at Houghton House
Hobart and William Smith Colleges
2011
If one considers the wonders of nature, then painting cannot rival landscape. But if one considers the wonders of brushwork, then landscape cannot equal painting.

Dong Qichang, 1555-1636
Donald Resnick '49
*Tidal Pools, 1900-1999*
A landscape is...a space deliberately created to speed up or slow down the process of nature. As Eliade expressed it, it represents man taking upon himself the role of time.

J.B. Jackson, Discovering the Vernacular Landscape

Throughout its first three hundred years as a concept in the English language, landscape was a cultural practice that explicitly worked to represent human cultures and their integral relationship with the natural world—first as a genre of painting that placed the traditional themes and human subjects of art into a larger environmental context, and then as a practice of shaping “unimproved” nature into picturesque scenery.

Over 25 years ago, the geographer Denis Cosgrove suggested that landscape could be placed within a history of ideas beyond the disciplinary boundaries of geography or art that allowed for the broader study of society and ideology. In his influential book from 1984, Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape, Cosgrove made a strong argument for landscape as a “way of seeing that has its own history.”

Tracing that history back to the bel paesaggio of 15th century Italy and the dawn of the Renaissance, Cosgrove used the social transformations associated with the transition from Feudalism to Capitalism as a theoretical framework for historicizing the emergence of landscape as an idea.

In Cosgrove’s theoretical construction, landscape is a cultural concept that emerged with the advent of modern society in Europe and is inextricably linked to land as a commodity in the Capitalist marketplace. Aspects of the transition from Feudal to Capitalist modes of production created the “need” for a landscape idea. As economies in Western Europe began to diversify and cities became the locus of exchange, an intimate connection to the land was no longer part of everyday life for some social groups. As land diminished as a source of everyday sustenance for these groups and an emerging bourgeoisie settled into urban life, land transformed into something to own, enclose, write poetry about, paint, view, theorize and improve—it became landscape. Thus, landscape became the product of an emerging modern world in the 500 years between 1400 and 1900: the physical manifestation of humanism and a way of seeing land as an outsider rather than a participant. Landscape, an “ideological concept,” Cosgrove emphasized that landscape constituted, “a way in which certain classes of people...signified themselves and their world through their imagined relationship with nature, and through which they...underlined and communicated their own social role and that of others with respect to external nature.”
Coinciding with landscape’s presence in non-representational art and the ascent of scientific rationalism, the late 1800s was a period when landscape fully materialized into an abstraction of its former self. Cosgrove argued that, “At the historical moment when realism was challenged in painting and analogical thinking was challenged in science, the landscape idea atrophied as a moral commentary on social relations with land and with nature, to be adopted as a cold scientific concept in academic geography and public policy.” Looking back on this assertion in 1998, Cosgrove admitted that the demise of the landscape idea was overstated and that it had been a more enduring concept than was portrayed in the original 1984 book. The twentieth century should not be considered a postscript for the landscape idea.

**J.B. Jackson, Landscape, and the Twentieth Century**

The seeds of landscape’s renewed relevance in the twentieth century may be traced to the introduction of a cultural landscape idea. With foundations in the early twentieth century scholarship of Germany, France and Great Britain, the idea of a “cultural” landscape was introduced into American intellectual history in 1925 by human geographers attempting to reassert the agency of culture within debates over the influence of environment in shaping human societies. Historically, the landscape idea had always been inherently cultural, however for human geographers the term cultural landscape emerged at a time when landscape had been drained of many of its cultural associations (as noted by Cosgrove in his history of the concept). Culture needed to be re-centered within debates about the meaning of landscape. The Berkeley geographer Carl Sauer in his 1925 essay, “The Morphology of Landscape”, first introduced the term in the United States. Defining the concept, he wrote, “The cultural landscape is fashioned from the natural landscape by a cultural group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape the result.” While the term had considerable currency in human geography during the 1920’s and 1930’s, by the 1940’s it was languishing in the obscurity of disciplinary squabbles over its meaning and proper role as a subject of inquiry. With a diminished role in geography, it took decades for the cultural landscape idea to diffuse to a larger academic and public discourse.

By the mid-twentieth century, Americans saw the results of a conceptual separation of culture and nature physically manifest in a post-war landscape characterized by either uncontrolled growth or the ill-conceived urban transformations of planners, architects and landscape architects. The socio-political, economic and cultural forces that accepted and acted on this false dichotomy helped to make an American landscape that embodied unresolved conflicting values: ecological communities or human communities; history or progress; vernacular praxis or avant-garde expression. Operating within this context, designers and planners spent much of the twentieth century theorizing ideal spatial relationships, envisioning a succession of abstract prototypes of humans living in proximity to nature rather than as part of nature. At the same time, environmentalists and historic preservationists worked against the dominant forces of landscape change while accepting the intrinsic dualism: segregating valued places, be it an “untouched” wilderness or an historic property,
Landscape, which began in 1951 as a small regional magazine with twenty subscribers, became in its first decade of publication an increasingly influential forum for scholars from across academic disciplines and the design professions. It was in the pages of Landscape that the cultural landscape idea was transformed from its roots in geography into a multidisciplinary concern that was crucial to the twentieth century reinvigoration of landscape as a culturally inscribed medium. During the 1950s and 60s, the magazine served as a platform for writers who questioned the impact a post-war modernist paradigm was having on the quality of the American built and natural environment. The contributing scholars, designers and public intellectuals were united in their resistance to the figurative (and literal) flattening of mid-century landscapes through a common interest in “cultural” landscapes.

Though small in circulation, the earliest issues of Landscape made their way into the hands of a select few influential individuals who were eager for just such a dialogue. Many were initially drawn to J.B. Jackson’s unique voice; his earliest essays in the magazine used the term ‘landscape’ in a way that was not common outside of the field of human geography. Here landscape didn’t describe a picturesque or painterly scene, nor did it describe a process of beautification. Jackson wrote of landscapes that seemed somewhat prosaic—the everyday, ordinary environments of city streets, rural farms, individual dwellings, highways and the commercial strip. During a period when much of the academy was under pressure to quantify the results of their research, this humanistic approach to studying the everyday environment struck a nerve with some scholars. At the same time, many design professionals and critics of the built environment were drawn to the sometimes-explicit critique of post-war planning and design—a critique waged at the apogee of modernism’s influence.

In this context, Landscape became a locus for intellectual exchange—a gathering place for a community of scholars from different disciplines. This platform for cross-disciplinary voices encouraged overlapping and contradictory ideas about the built environment to coexist in the pages of Landscape simultaneously, a capacity that makes it an exemplary locale in which to examine shifts in the debates surrounding post-war American environments.

Abstract Landscapes

The new landscape, seen at a rapid, sometimes even terrifying pace, is composed of rushing air, shifting lights, clouds, waves, a constantly moving, changing horizon...The view is no longer static; it is a revolving, uninterrupted panorama of 360 degrees. In short, the traditional perspective, the traditional way of seeing and experiencing the world is abandoned; in its stead we become active participants, the shifting focus of a moving, abstract world; our nerves and muscles are all of them brought into play. To the perceptive individual, there can be an almost mystical quality to the experience; his

in a desperate homage to a fleeting past.

John Brinckerhoff Jackson’s important journal Landscape, which began in 1951 as a small regional magazine with twenty subscribers, became in its first decade of publication an increasingly influential forum for scholars from across academic disciplines and the design professions. It was in the pages of Landscape that the cultural landscape idea was transformed from its roots in geography into a multidisciplinary concern that was crucial to the twentieth century reinvigoration of landscape as a culturally inscribed medium. During the 1950s and 60s, the magazine served as a platform for writers who questioned the impact a post-war modernist paradigm was having on the quality of the American built and natural environment. The contributing scholars, designers and public intellectuals were united in their resistance to the figurative (and literal) flattening of mid-century landscapes through a common interest in “cultural” landscapes.

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identity seems for the moment to be transmuted. J.B. Jackson, “The Abstract World of the Hot-Rodder”

The Italian Futurists of the early twentieth century were part of a generation of artists, designers, filmmakers and writers who sought to articulate and represent the increasing motion and speed of modernity. With the 19th century in living memory for many of them, these artists embraced—even celebrated—the temporal and existential experience of twentieth century modernity’s accelerating pace. Their philosophy was embodied in Marinetti’s “Manifesto of Futurism” when he stated, “We declare that the splendor of the world has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed.”

Almost forty years later J.B. Jackson—in one of his most iconic essays “The Abstract World of the Hot Rodder”—brought his critical eye to how mobility and speed were transforming the way Americans viewed the landscape. Eschewing either a celebratory or a scorning tone, Jackson illustrated how everyday Americans were finding little satisfaction in the quiet contemplation of picturesque and natural scenery and were instead seeking out dynamic new forms of adventure and recreational activities that propelled them through the landscape, often at great speed. The popularization of recreational devices that encouraged “individual means of locomotion,” prior to the wider affordability of automobile and plane travel—skis, sailboats, canoes (“faltboots”), bicycles, motorcycles—marked “the dawn of a new era” and a move away from passive forms of nature appreciation. Dating this new era as beginning “about 30 years ago” (approximately the late 1920’s), Jackson described ambivalence to the passing of the old relationship to nature:

The layman’s former relationship to nature...was largely determined by a kind of classic perspective and by awe. A genuine sense of worship precluded any desecration but it also precluded any desire for participation, any intuition that man also belonged. The experience was genuine enough, but it was filtered and humanized; it was rarely immediate.

The desire for an immediate, active engagement with the environment broke with romantic scenic notions of nature appreciation: landscape had become something to be appreciated kinesthetically. Contemporary historians have argued that Americans’ love affair with their automobiles was at least partially responsible for the spread of the interstate highway system and the suburbs, but what of their affair with mobility in general? After World War II Jackson observed the increasing growth of new sports like “skin-diving, parachute-jumping, surf-riding, outboard moterboating, hot-rod racing, spelunking” as well as water skiing. There were even sports like drag racing in desert salt flats, that simplified the experience of movement to its most essential and stripped down abstraction; a destination no longer required. The participants in this form of “abstract travel,” Jackson argued, had much in common with the modern artist and architect seeking to simplify their use of materials and streamline their rendering of space.
This trend, which only intensified throughout the twentieth century, could be directly implicated in how poorly Americans treated their environment. Indeed, how could someone learn to care for a landscape that they pass by at 60 miles per hour? But Jackson suggested an underlying motivation to participate in the landscape, not just observe or stroll through a beautiful scene (“Certainly no more pretty parks or carefully preserved rural landscapes or classical perspectives”). In many of these outdoor activities participants were swept away by a full sensory and physical experience that engaged them more directly with their own natures. Ironically, while the singular fascination with abstract space became a common denominator across the arts, design professions and the sciences, this approach suggested a renewed and invigorated relationship to the environment for everyday Americans. Abstract, yes; but it also suggested a new poetics of movement. For Jackson, these new adventurers would

...eventually enrich our understanding of ourselves with a new poetry and a new nature mysticism. I would not go so far as to say that the Wordsworth of the second half of the twentieth Century must be a graduate of the drag-strip, or that a motorcycle is a necessary adjunct to an modern “Excursion”; but I earnestly believe that whoever he is and whenever he appears he will have to express some of the uncommunicated but intensely felt joys of that part of American culture if he is to interpret completely our relationship to the world around us.8

In early September 1957, only a few months before Jackson’s essay appeared in the Winter 1957-1958 issue of Landscape, Jack Kerouac’s On the Road was published to enthusiastic reviews, most importantly in the New York Times.9 On the Road may not have been what Jackson had in mind (although, it seems unlikely that he would have been unaware of its publication at the time), but it certainly captured the sense of the search for a deeply felt connection to the American landscape through the romantically aimless travel of its protagonists: “We were all delighted, we all realized we were leaving confusion and nonsense behind and performing our one noble function of the time, move. And we moved!”10

On the Road poetically captured the cultural phenomena Jackson was documenting. Both Jackson and Kerouac wove descriptive scenes of everyday America. Yet while Jackson’s purpose was purely documentary, he could still turn out passages that rivaled the prose of an American road novel. In his essay “The Stranger’s Path,” published in the Autumn 1957 issue of Landscape—almost simultaneously with On the Road—Jackson wrote of the liminal spaces of small cities where strangers (like Kerouac) arrived by train or bus:

Exchange is taking place everywhere you look: exchange of goods for cash, exchange of labor for cash (or the promise of cash) in the employment agencies with their opportunities scrawled in chalk on blackboards; exchange of talk and drink and
opinion in a dozen bars and beer parlors and lunch counters; exchange of mandolins and foreign pistols and diamond rings against cash—to be exchanged in turn for an hour or so with a girl…the Path, for all its stench of beer and burning grease, its bleary eyes and uncertain clutching of doorjams, its bedlam of jukeboxes and radios and barkers, is still dedicated to good times.\footnote{11}

In this passage, there is a quality of rambling, stream-of-consciousness that Jackson employed to convey an imagery of everyday life similar to Kerouac and other mid-century authors like Norman Mailer, Tom Wolfe who were practitioners of the “New Journalism.” The visual corollary of these documentary and literary portrayals of everyday America was in the photography of Robert Frank and his younger contemporary Edward Ruscha. Jack Kerouac was a friend of Frank’s and wrote the introduction to his collection of photographs The Americans from 1958:

The humor, the sadness, the EVERYTHING-ness and American-ness of these pictures!...As American a picture—the faces don’t editorialize or criticize or say anything but “This is the way we are in real life and if you don’t like it I don’t know anything about it ‘cause I’m living my own life my way and may God bless us al, mebbe”…”if we deserve it”\footnote{12}

The photographs were of everyday people, places, things and situations: cowboys and waitresses, gas stations and diners, funerals and parades, all with similar backdrops such as abandoned roads that disappeared over an infinite horizon or back alley urban scenes. These literary and visual representations were revolutionary in their purpose to first recognize, and then describe America’s vast otherness. For Robert Frank this otherness was located on the open road or in depressed small towns—in parts of America that received little media attention unless it was to illustrate their backward ways—but also in the understudied alleys and barber shops of a much grittier urban America. What all of these critics, poets, and artists shared was a belief that the real America could be found out on the road, traveling in pursuit of what might be called an anthropology of the everyday. There was no need to go to exotic locations half a world away when there was so much to be found out on the highway strip.

The titles of the artist Ed Ruscha’s books, Twentysix Gasoline Stations (1963) and Every Building on the Sunset Strip (1966), precisely described their content. As art critic Lucy Lippard has observed about works like Ruscha’s, they “created a curious genre that reflects a totally neutralized stance toward place, balancing fondness and scorn, ideology and ignorance…vernacular naiveté becomes stylelessness becomes an artworld style. Local sites are catalogued in an antisentimental, antinostalgic manner.”\footnote{13} In effect, the sleek abstractions of high modernism were giving way to an almost radical everydayness.
Ruscha’s images would be highly influential on Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown’s approach to documenting the city in 1972’s Learning from Las Vegas, however it is fascinating to compare them to the very similar cover imagery of Landscape magazine throughout the 50’s and 60’s. Many of Landscape’s covers—as well as the photography accompanying feature articles and various other illustrated marginalia—featured such “antisentimental, antinostalgic” images of grain silos, intensively managed agricultural fields, cemeteries, and Main Streets. The sources for many of the early images in Landscape were often from the collections of the Soil Conservation Service, the Farm Security Administration or the Standard Oil Company, which all undertook photo documentary projects during the depression. However, these images were not wielded in the mannerist style of the artist; rather, Jackson’s editorial point always seemed to be that these various American places were also landscape.

During the late 1950’s and early 1960’s in America, imagery of the material culture of everyday life became pervasive in the media. Post-war affluence had trickled down to the masses and popular culture began to draw attention away from elite tastemakers. Modernity for many had come to mean the conveniences of consumer culture: television, processed foods, timesaving appliances. Madison Avenue worked to spin these new products into the very fabric of American life. Modernism was losing its radical edge and was increasingly associated with sterile conformity. Ironically, the sheer pervasiveness of the material conveniences of modernity had transformed modern places (office buildings, suburban homes) and products (cereal, TVs) into the banal context of everyday life. As a result, the line between the modern and the everyday broke down revealing a more complex narrative.

“Culture is Ordinary”
In 1952, Alfred Kroeber—the eminent anthropologist so influential to Sauer and the Berkeley School of geographers—published his book Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions in which he found 164 definitions of the term grouped in seven categories. The book marked the evolution of the idea of culture up to the mid-twentieth century. Human geographers had been studying and describing landscapes as cultural artifacts for decades, but their scholarship had stagnated around Kroeber’s earlier, limited “superorganic” definition of culture that treated human groups as monolithic entities and scientific subjects. In order for the landscape idea to transform again into a meaningful concept by the end of the century it would require a less abstract and more critical view of culture that acknowledged the complex social processes playing out in the physical environment. Instead of the usual geographic descriptions of common landscapes as indicative of larger metanarratives of national identity and cultural (often racial) cohesion, Jackson would proffer landscape as a site of everyday lived experience.

J.B. Jackson’s perspective on culture more closely paralleled the ideas of Raymond Williams, the
Welsh critic, novelist and progenitor of the field of cultural studies. Although Williams’s scholarship explored Marxist themes and became influential to the emerging New Left—decidedly not within Jackson’s oeuvre—his important mid-century definition of culture as “ordinary” complimented Jackson’s interest in vernacular landscapes. Written in 1958, Williams’s essay “Culture is Ordinary” came along when ideas about culture—for all of the variety Kroeber found in the term’s use—had solidified into two mutually ambivalent perspectives: the elite culture of artists and academics and the ways-of-life culture described by anthropologists since Franz Boas. Williams insistence that both definitions of culture—as both the best of human achievement and the common experiences of daily life—were important and that they were interrelated opened up many new fields of inquiry:

Culture is ordinary: that is the first fact. Every human society has its own shape, its own purposes, its own meanings. Every human society expresses these, in institutions, and in arts and learning. The making of a society is the finding of common meanings and directions, and its growth is an active debate and amendment under the pressures of experience, contact, and discovery, writing themselves into the land...These are the ordinary processes of human societies and human minds, and we see through them the nature of a culture: that it is always both traditional and creative; that it is both the most ordinary common meanings and the finest individual meanings. We use the word culture in these two senses: to mean a whole way of life—the common meanings; to mean the arts and learning—the special processes of discovery and creative effort. Some writers reserve the word for one or other of these senses; I insist on both, and on the significance of their conjunction. The questions I ask about our culture are questions about deep personal meanings. Culture is ordinary, in every society and in every mind.\footnote{15}

In effect his conceptual re-orientation suggested scholars study the ordinary social processes that influenced the creation of art while also considering the art of practicing everyday life. Culture, in effect, should no longer be treated as the rarified domain of “angry young men.”\footnote{16} If culture was ordinary it was something that was practiced by every human and was therefore always responding to the stimuli of everyday life. Culture was understood as happening both on the scale of the larger society or nation and in the minds of individuals, both “writing themselves into the land.”\footnote{17}

What was being written into the land in the 1950’s and 1960’s was easy enough for all to see—nobody in America could avoid noticing the changes to the physical environment happening all around them—but to critically engage with those changes required one to see how social and cultural forces manifested in the visible landscape. Although the phrase “social construction” would not come into vogue in critical theory until the 1980’s and 1990’s (and would never by adopted by Jackson), its theoretical argument—that many of the things people consider in a normative or essentialist light are in reality artifacts of human social processes—had its precedent in the writing
Rudy Burckhart
*Times Square, Dusk, 1973*
of mid-century cultural critics like Jackson and Williams, if not to the degree of later theorists.

Jackson’s intellectual independence from any one discipline allowed him to read and interpret the many works of sophisticated cultural criticism that appeared during the period. Much of the popular press in the 1950’s was ripe for further discussion due to an ambitious agenda similar to Landscape’s desire to appeal to the “intelligent layman.” After World War II, intelligent books and articles that documented the American experience found an eager audience, first as confirmation of American exceptionalism, then as an anxious reflection of concern for the fragility or illusion of that exceptionalism. As more Americans found themselves moving up a latter whose rungs demarcated social class, many became obsessed with acquiring the requisite level of taste, manners and possessions to indicate their position. Russell Lynes’ tongue-in-cheek “Highbrow, Lowbrow, Middlebrow” and The Tastemakers, provided Americans with a parlor game of sorts, placing themselves within such categorizations. Of course, certain intellectuals would meet anxieties over social position among the middle class with concern over homogenous mass conformity. For those intellectuals, the physical manifestation of that conformity could be found in the American suburbs and the stretches of undifferentiated highway strip. J.B. Jackson entered this conversation by documenting those emerging American landscapes that he believed should be understood before being dismissed.

For example, in Jackson’s essay “Other-Directed Houses” from the Winter 1956-57 issue of Landscape he employs yet another literary reference, this time co-opting David Riesman’s pivotal sociological deconstruction of the American character from 1950, The Lonely Crowd. Riesman and his co-authors base their observations on “our experiences of living in America—the people we have met, the jobs we have held, the books we have read, the movies we have seen, and the landscape.” Central to Riesman’s argument is his historical construction of three phases of American character that he terms the tradition-directed, the inner-directed and the other-directed. “Tradition-directed” described a pre-modern, community-based American character before the forces of rapid progress required the cultivation of an “inner-directed,” somewhat isolated, American individual working toward advancement. Reisman described “Outer-directedness” as the result of “reaching a point at which resources become plentiful enough or are utilized effectively enough to permit a rapid accumulation of capital,” at which moment Americans became more concerned with outward expressions of self and conforming to the cues broadcast by peer groups and the media. Perhaps assuming that Riesman’s work was well know by any educated reader, Jackson extended his concept of the transition from inner-directedness to other-directedness by describing a new American landscape struggling for attention:

I am inclined to believe, however, that we have become entirely too fastidious, too conformist, in architectural matters. In our recently acquired awareness of architectural values we have somehow lost sight of the fact that there is still such a thing as a popular
taste in art quite distinct from the educated taste, and that popular taste often evolves 
in its own way...In all those streamlined facades, in all those flamboyant entrances 
and deliberately bizarre decorative effects, those cheerfully self-assertive masses of 
color and light and movement that clash so roughly with the old and traditional there 
are, I believe, certain underlying characteristics which suggest that we are confronted 
not by a debased and cheapened art, but by a kind of folk art in mid-XX Century 
garb...Here every business has to woo the public—a public, moreover, which passes 
by at forty miles or more an hour—if it is to survive. The result is an other-directed 
arquitecture...  

It is interesting to note that Jackson’s reading of Riesman’s argument did not adhere to the prevalent 
critical response to the book that saw it as an unequivocal indictment of consumer culture and 
conformity. In Riesman’s Preface to the 1969 edition, he went to great pains to defend against this 
over-simplification and instead emphasized how other-directedness was really about a society that 
had become inextricably interconnected, in many ways for the better: 

The Lonely Crowd advocates the morally and practically difficult enterprise of living 
at once on two-levels: that of ideals and even utopian visions and that of day-to-day 
existence. Our daily life and our idealism must nourish and speak to each other... 
the best hope for change in the direction of our ideals does not lie in efforts at total 
 improvement in oneself and in society but in patient work toward incremental changes 
in the light of a tentative sense of many possible futures.

It is easy to see a shared pragmatism between Riesman’s view of American society and Jackson’s 
view of the American landscape. In fact, “Other-Directed Houses” was not the first time Jackson 
employed Riesman’s tripartite historical narrative of the American character. In 1953’s “The 
described (again without directly acknowledging Riesman’s book) a similar transformation of the 
American family’s relationship to the land in the 1650’s, 1850’s and 1950’s. Corresponding with 
Riesman’s description of the traditional-directed American character, Jackson described how the 
colonists of the 1650’s created the “domestic village with its established hierarchy and its working 
together on common tasks” as a shelter from “an unredeemed wilderness inhabited by savages.” 
By the 1850’s, the village-dwellers of earlier generations had moved west and created a dispersed 
landscape that expressed an independence and ambition for personal and economic (inner-directed) 
improvement. Jackson illustrated the latest stage of family life and its relationship to the land by 
relating the story of Ray, the descendant of the first two families. “Ray’s identity like the identity 
of the land, has become alarmingly mobile and subject to rapid change.” Both identities could be 
described by Riesman as outer-directed, where the family’s relationship to the farm was abstracted 
by technology and the connection to global markets. To Ray, the farm was “an instrument for the
prompt and efficient conversion of natural energy in the form of chemical fertilizers or water or tractor fuel or man hours or whatever into energy in the form of cash or further credit—into economic energy, in a word.” 25

Perhaps Jackson’s importance in shaping the way we understood the changing landscape of the middle part of the twentieth century (and understand it today) was in his ability to translate the zeitgeist of cultural criticism found in works like Riesman’s The Lonely Crowd into an equally critical perspective on the American landscape.
Michael Kessler

_Cadmia_, 2003

John Raimondi Collection
Everyday Nature

The more the city expands and absorbs us, the firmer the belief in a rural paradise becomes... And the result is a popular image of rural America which bears a decreasing resemblance to reality. We see it as a pleasant, drowsy region where old fashioned people are engaged in a kind of work less essential and less profitable with every passing year, but where life has an elemental simplicity and truth. On a more sophisticated (though no better informed) level the countryside is seen as a vast wildlife preserve resounding with birdsong, threaded by sparkling streams—ideal for recreation and something environmental designers like to label “open space.” However we look at it, this hinterland is held to be the great antidote, spiritual as well as physical, to the evils of the city. As long as it survives unchanged we ourselves can hope to survive; urban existence is a kind of purgatory. J.B. Jackson, “An Engineered Environment”

While most Americans at mid-century—regardless of their familiarity with the forces shaping their environment—could easily identify the city as modern, few urban dwellers contemplated the countryside in such terms. The dualisms of the modern era required equal and opposite forces to play out against each other. According to this logic the opposite of the city was the countryside, and the countryside was for many the same as landscape. If the city was a representation of the progressive future, landscape represented a romantic past; if the city was an intensively constructed man-made environment, landscape was a (mostly) natural green oasis. The long history of the landscape idea as the embodiment of humans interacting with their natural environment had been maintained in its representational opposition to modernization. The landscape idea did not die at the end of the 19th century; it froze in time and ceased to develop. The early twentieth century saw both the Arts and Crafts movement and interwar regionalism hold up a primarily rural landscape imagery as part of their utopian ideas for a reemergence of folkways. Both of those movements had passed by mid-century, but the romantic association of landscape with rural charm and a simpler way of life maintained an indelible hold on the American consciousness.

The stunted development of the landscape idea is implicated in the environmental confusion of the twentieth century. If landscape was no longer an evolving critical commentary on the relationship between humans and their natural environment, then it could not provide credible alternatives to the dominance of human environments other than those devised prior to the twentieth century. For many Americans at mid-century landscape was still a painted or created scene; one that had stagnated as a form of picturesqueness stripped of its earlier theoretical complexities. As a result, landscape could only be understood as a palliative to the realities of the modern environment, a green softening of the hard edges of rationalism. The only solution provided by landscape was to be the antithesis of everything that people found disagreeable about their environment. Landscape was not allowed to be modern and therefore had little rhetorical weight when faced with the social and economic engines of modernity. For those few who did see landscape as a modern medium—
primarily landscape architects, architects and planners—the concept had been so abstracted and transformed into discussions of space that it no longer carried much critical weight.

One of the themes J.B. Jackson returned to repeatedly was how modern the entire American landscape had become. Modernity had not confined itself to the obvious locations of urban centers and industrial zones. In fact, Jackson argued in numerous commentaries that some of the most remote and least populated landscapes in the United States were sites of rampant modernization:

It so happens that the American rural landscape is composed not only of forests and lakes and mountains, but of farms and feedlots and irrigation ditches and orchards and tractor agencies and rangeland. It is a place of work, and because it is a place of work, hard and not always rewarding, it is at present undergoing a revolution in its way as radical as the revolution in the urban environment. Moreover this revolution is taking place entirely without help from environmental designers.  

The reality of America’s rural locations—rather than representing stability and unchanging values—was one of declining population, technological innovation and radical environmental transformation, without the benefit of much in the way of planning. In other words, the countryside was not the antithesis of the city; it was responding to many of the same forces of modernization, only at a different density and scale. Jackson goes on to suggest that signs of the passing of the 19th century working landscape (especially in the northeast) such as the abandoned and dilapidated small family farm, one room school house or general store, helped reinforce a picturesque image of rural quietude; but he provoked his readers by asking “how will we take the abandoned, more or less modern, high school with monster gymnasium? The abandoned drive-in movie with rows of empty stanchions emerging from the weeds, the abandoned shopping center?” This image of a faster and less romantic form of decay would prove prophetic.

The reasons for this transformation were based in the same capitalist logic guiding the rapid change of urban environments. Specifically, technological innovation was encouraging a profitable corporate form of agriculture to overtake older models. The result was (and is) a landscape every bit as modern as the metropolis. “Does all of this sound like an up-to-date version of the factory in the fields?” Jackson asked. While the rural landscape was not being covered with skyscrapers and expressways, it was being literally reshaped into new topographies to allow the latest farm machinery to more efficiently cultivate large tracts of land with fewer laborers. The flatter and more topographically consistent the land, the better it was for maneuvering large tractors or organizing intricate irrigation systems:

The kind of modification which the modern farmer undertakes is…to create an entirely new and artificial setting for his work. The ultimate aim is a man-made topography, a
man-made soil, a man-made crop, all part of a new production process.²⁹

West of the Mississippi the irony of this new landscape was more pronounced: radical changes to the physical environment paralleled by rapid declines in population. This lack of visible populations and creation of even more “open space,” continued to encourage a belief that the countryside (and the West in general) remained an antidote to urban existence. No matter how modern, the rural landscape still seemed a simpler, more homogenous, less crowded place for a certain class of urban dweller who had not previously escaped rural environments of back-breaking labor, poverty and/or racial intolerance.

Romantic ideas about a timeless rural scene or untouched wilderness encouraged the myths of the American landscape, especially in the West. Frederick Jackson Turner’s themes of American exceptionalism and the frontier were repeatedly reinforced by popular media representations in movies, television, novels and advertisements at mid-century. However, when Jackson’s Landscape magazine with its early focus on the American Southwest was first published in 1951, Turner’s frontier thesis had been under attack by historians for over a quarter century.³⁰ Although the critiques were diverse, they generally argued over if Turner’s main thesis that the frontier had in fact shaped American character. While this focus on an over-arching American identity was still part of the scholarly debate in American history, Jackson’s view of the West was significantly more circumspect and oriented around fluid notions of individual identity. Rugged individuals testing themselves against unforgiving environments may have once populated the West, but the new West of the mid-twentieth century had put many of them out of work.

In many of his essays and comments, Jackson warned of the consequences to the environment if Americans continued to maintain uncritical, yet highly value-laden and morally infused notions of nature, still informed by 18th and 19th century Romanticism. Nature for most Americans was related to specific visual cues that spanned from the imagery of apparently untouched wilderness to the rural countryside. As opposed to the early Colonial fear of a chaotic and threatening environment, nature had come to represent a universal good. However, at the same time the framework for understanding culture began to focus on the social processes that create culture, romantic notions of nature as immutable and constant were challenged by a process-oriented science of ecology.

Ecology had emerged in the early twentieth century as a controversial biological concept that suggested the interrelationship between organisms forming “communities” and evolving toward increasingly more complex systems. For ecologists, as well as for those seeking a more scientific geography, the concept of nature was too imprecise to be of any use. As a result, ecological science—like the spatial science of geography—was couched in highly abstract, apparently value-free language where nature was replaced by the neutral environment.³¹
The controversy over ecology as a proper science was due mostly to the fact that it required an interdisciplinary cooperative effort at a time when scientific disciplines were becoming more specialized. A biologist specializing in a particular type of flora rarely wanted to consider that plant as a member of a dependent ecology. One exception to this narrowly focused approach was the plant geneticist Edgar Anderson who was the most frequent contributor to Landscape during Jackson’s tenure. After his popular book Plants, Man, and Life was positively reviewed in the Spring 1953 issue of Landscape, he contacted J.B. Jackson who, “with a piquant combination of sharp criticism and flattering appreciation,” proceeded to convince Anderson to begin submitting essays and book reviews that were written in a similarly accessible manner.32

Anderson’s career was built on researching hybridization techniques for Iris species, but he was the rare scientist who loved to weave his highly specific work into fascinating narratives of the relationship between plants and humans. He became Landscape’s primary connection to, and translator of, the botanical world. He was also second only to Jackson in championing the notion that humans are part of the natural world and that nature belongs in cities. In his essay “The City is a Garden,” from the Winter 1957-58 issue, he blames the dying core of urban America on “the amateur Thoreaus and professional naturalists.”

They have in the United States raised the appreciation of nature to a mass phenomena, almost to a mass religion; yet at the same time they have refused to accept man as part of nature...They are one of the chief ultimate sources of our unwritten axiom, that cities are something to flee from, that the harmonious interaction of man and other organisms can only be achieved out in the country, that the average man is too noisy, too ugly, and too vile to be accepted as a close neighbor.33

J.B. Jackson and Edgar Anderson—along with the ecologist Paul Shepard34 whose copious contributions to the magazine paralleled Anderson’s—were talking about nature at mid-century when it was either anathema to scientific inquiry or uncritically accepted as an ill-defined idea perpetually in conflict with the human-occupied world. Landscape magazine was one of the few places where the concept of nature was recognized for its complex ecological associations and for its cultural meaning, both historically and as a still-evolving contemporary idea. The landscape idea, as interpreted through the magazine, would begin to reference both a process-driven ecology and a culturally constructed “everyday” nature, avoiding the dilemma posed by Jean Baudrillard: “To speak of ecology is to attest to the death and total abstraction of nature...”35 For Jackson and his like-minded contributors, there was no such contradiction; problems emerged when environment or nature were denied their place as cultural constructs.

David Lowenthal, the influential twentieth century historian and geographer and student of Sauer,
wrote his first piece for Landscape, “Nature and the American Creed of Virtue,” and amplified themes in Anderson’s “The City is a Garden” when he wrote: “In emphasizing wilderness preservation...some conservationists perpetuate a false dichotomy between man and nature.” With the publication of Rachel Carson’s Silent Spring two years away, mid-century proponents of conservation would become the late twentieth century environmentalists. Both Jackson and Lowenthal spent much of the 1960’s challenging the assumed virtue of conservation as a means to turn back the clock on modernity. For Lowenthal, conservationists shouldn’t “retire into the wilderness, or pretend that we can give the country back to the animals.” As the landscape idea in America suffered from an uncritical association with wilderness or pastoralism, Leo Marx added shape to Lowenthal’s and Jackson’s observations in The Machine in the Garden (1964). Marx wrote that:

...this impulse gives rise to a symbolic motion away from centers of civilization toward their opposite, nature, away from sophistication toward simplicity, or to introduce the cardinal metaphor of the literary mode, away from the city toward the country. When this impulse is unchecked, the result is a simpleminded wishfulness, a romantic perversion of thought and feeling.

**Evolving Landscapes**

The existential landscape, without absolutes, without prototypes, devoted to change and mobility and the free confrontation of men, is already taking form around us. It has vitality but it is neither physically beautiful nor socially just. Our own American past has an invaluable lesson to teach us: a coherent, workable landscape evolves when there is a coherent definition not of man but of man’s relation to the world and to his fellow men.

J.B. Jackson, “Jefferson, Thoreau and After”

By challenging the ubiquitous abstractions of landscape, the representation of everyday landscapes provided an important counterpoint to the mythic idealizations of modernism. If nature was an everyday world that humans were part of, and culture was ordinary it made both concepts accessible to everyone. Everyday landscape had meaning. But that meaning was always a representation of cultural or natural processes that took place in the recent or distant past. Even looking at the most recent addition to an urban skyline, true understanding only happened through recognition of the historical forces shaping the contemporary environment.

J.B. Jackson’s concern that conservation ideology often perpetuated a static conception of isolated nature where humans only belonged as visitors also extended to historic preservation. For Jackson, history was important because it helped explain the present and perhaps indicate future directions;
therefore, he would consistently take issue with preservationists who sought to take certain landscapes out of the flow of time, by freezing them at a particular period of significance.

For many Americans looking for respite from the ugliness and disorder of the contemporary environment, landscapes of the past held a nostalgic allure. After World War II the euphoria of victory and the afterglow of economic prosperity propelled the United States into a period of unparalleled optimism. The present and future of America seemed promising; however, the country’s relationship with its past became increasingly complicated as the 1950’s unfolded into the 1960’s and 1970’s. Numerous historians have documented the increased interest by Americans in issues of history, heritage and genealogy during and after World War II that only grew more intense as the nation approached its bicentennial. Many cultural historians have suggested a direct connection between post-war anxieties (the bomb, communism, a culture of conformity) and an increased desire to reconnect with the past. One anxiety in particular—the increasing concern for the rapidly changing physical environment of the United States—was implicated in an American fascination with past landscapes that ultimately led to passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

When J.B. Jackson wrote “The Necessity for Ruins” in 1980 he was summarizing a train of thought that he had followed in numerous essays since the 1960’s when his concern over conservation policies developed into a parallel concern over historic preservation policies. For Jackson, landscapes had meaning, especially as a visible artifact of human history. To appreciate Jackson’s ambivalence with most preservation efforts, its important to understand his complex perspective on culture, nature and history.

The thrust of his argument in “The Necessity for Ruins” was that the narratives of history no longer required monuments and official remembrances of heroes and political figures in order to connect with the American public. Jackson believed that, starting with the dedication of the Gettysburg battlefield, American history had become progressively more associated with the lives and times of everyday people. The preservation of Gettysburg battlefield as a monument was the first time an everyday landscape became the touchstone for national memory. The landscape as a site with particular visible artifacts of the past or with monuments built later to indicate the spot where some notable event occurred was being replaced by landscape as historical milieu. Jackson argued that Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address was meant to instruct the American people on what should be learned from such an event; however, the site itself was meant purely to evoke a feeling of history. Jackson points to this as a transitional event that would translate in the twentieth century into a fascination with historical environments—whether “authentic” or recreated—that spoke of times long enough in the past that they had developed into an American mythology:

The best explanation I can find for the nation-wide popularity of these environments
is that they appeal to a radically new concept of history and of the meaning of history, and that they represent a radically new concept of the monument...I think this kind of monument is celebrating a different past, not the past which history books describe, but a vernacular past, a golden age where there are no dates or names, simply a sense of the way it used to be, history as the chronicle of everyday existence.\textsuperscript{39}

But if there was a shift in the American historical consciousness toward an appreciation of the history of everyday Americans—and by extension everyday landscapes—this new historical awareness was still a modern abstraction of the past. Nostalgic longings for a mythical past translated into the desire to visually consume representations of historic landscapes. The same problematics resulting in Americans idealizing wilderness and countryside as a perfected natural order that could only exist outside of everyday human experience, and that also constructed culture as either exotically foreign or unattainably highbrow, could also explain an idealized American past. As a result, the expectations for visible history expressed as landscape were similar to the purely scenic notions attached to nature appreciation. Landscape as a stage set for a morality play about how much better the past was from the present.

David Lowenthal’s academic agenda from when he received his doctorate from Wisconsin in 1950 had progressed from a biographical concern with George Perkins Marsh, to a theoretical examination of environmental perception, to his above-mentioned challenge to the dogma of the 1960’s conservationists. By the late 1960’s he began to change his focus to questions of heritage and memory that would occupy him for over thirty years. Like Jackson, Lowenthal saw the danger of an uncritical preoccupation with past environments that resulted in unproductive or deeply problematic oversimplifications of history. However, following Jackson and Lowenthal’s lead, what for many Americans was a fascination with artificial historical tableaus had become for many historians a new area of research into everyday environments and their relationship to memory. In the 1970’s and 1980’s, fields such as public history, material culture studies and vernacular architecture and landscape studies would help redefine how the landscape was understood as an artifact and repository of memory.

As Ben Highmore stated in reference to the study of everyday life, “If it is to do its job it will need to find those moments in disciplinary fields and outside them, when the everyday casts any disciplinary enterprise into doubt.”\textsuperscript{40} The Mid-twentieth century reflection on, and representation
of, everyday landscapes would indeed cast many disciplinary enterprises into doubt. From the perspective of the early 21st century, however, the landscape idea has regained and expanded on much of its original meaning: it is a given that places are shaped by the diversity of people who inhabit them, that a city is a site of social identity, that landscapes reflect human cultures expressing their place in nature over time. Out of the ashes of a dead ideology something has been recovered and something has been renewed.

Camille Corot
Souvenir of Ostia, 1855
Notes
1 Denis Cosgrove, Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), 1.
2 Ibid.
3 Ibid., 262.
7 Ibid., 24.
8 Ibid., 27.
16 Ibid., 93.
17 Ibid., 91-100.
22 Ibid., 19.
28 Ibid., 17.
29 Ibid., 18.
(September 1947), 70-83.
When less than four years old I was standing with my nurse, Mary Ward, watching the shadows on the wall from branches of an elm behind which the moon had risen. I have never forgotten those shadows and am often trying to paint them.

Samuel Palmer, 1805-81
Ando Hiroshige
Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji:
15, Villages of Noge and Yokohama, 1858
Perceiving Modern Landscapes of the East:
A discussion of Chinese and Japanese Landscape Painting in the Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries
Holly Roussell ’10

In ancient Eastern societies, nature was a force beyond the comprehension of man revered to hold secrets about his existence, and determine the quality of such. The earliest peoples in China believed in the worship of their ancestors, and this practice was omnipresent in the society, up to the emperor himself. Yet, even the emperor’s validity was held or lost in respect to nature, and if the crops did not flourish or the rivers dried out, he was believed to have lost the “Mandate of Heaven,” and was to be replaced. In Japan, another tradition called Shintoism was indigenous the ancient spiritual practice that connected humans, and living organisms representative of the sacred energies in the universe. The religions of Daoism and Buddhism also drew upon nature as the inspiration for their philosophies by which one could go beyond a common human existence to another, eternal and enlightened state. Buddhism traveled from India to China during years of warring in the Northern and Southern dynasties and was passed on to Japan soon after—one of many exchanges between the two cultures. For these Eastern societies nature was ever-present, ever changing, and both the object of veneration as well as a means in which to achieve greater ethereal consciousness. Out of this, an extensive literary and artistic tradition developed that reflected upon and appropriated the idyllic natural surroundings in China, the landscape, as a tool for greater intellectual and spiritual understanding. From the ancient times in China, nature was the subject of artistic exploration in landscape painting. And very dependent on Chinese culture from early times, traditional Chinese and Japanese depictions of the landscape share many traits.

This essay aims to introduce for the Western audience a traditional approach to viewing the Eastern landscape. Then, with an understanding of the very different Eastern canon, compare and contrast Japanese and Chinese landscape painting in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. I will refer to the social and political situations of China and Japan during these years as inspirations for the aesthetic choices made by print innovators Hokusai and Hiroshige, and as influences on modern Chinese artists during these years.
Katsushika Hokusai

Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji

A partial view of the Mitsui stores at Surugacho in Edo, 1830
Looking at Eastern Landscapes

Ancient religions instilled intellectual reverence for nature in Asia different from those in the West, and were the driving influences that to this day define the Eastern ideal of beauty and aesthetic tastes. With a different perception of nature, Eastern societies are inclined to belief systems of Confucianism, Daoism, Shinto and Buddhism. These religions or philosophies teach about the interconnectedness of all living things including those things immortal. They demand a sense of respect from each individual for authority and for the natural world—something beyond mankind’s comprehension. These ideas of nature are very different from the Judeo-Christian teachings that conceptually dominate many Westerners thoughts on the natural world. The Old Testament tells how God creates the world and then man in his image to rule over the plants, insects and animals. This story sets man as superior to nature rather than in reverence of it, which is a major difference from Eastern thought. In the traditions of China and Japan the natural world and all its living things are considered intrinsically valuable and deserving of respect. This respect derives from the belief in the natural essence of living things that one can contemplate, and in landscape painting aspire to capture with different visual choices.

One unusual feature in Eastern Painting for Western viewers is the apparent disregard for perspective or “accurate” representation of the physical world. When one first examines an Asian landscape, whether it be a monumental Song landscape or a Japanese bamboo grove, there is a definite lack of Western order or perspective. Is this because perspective had not been discovered in Asia as in Europe during the Renaissance? Absolutely not. In both Chinese and Japanese painting, the aesthetic priorities value often an artist’s ability to capture features of the landscape for the viewer to best experience it in the work. In monumental landscape paintings the viewer’s perspective is intended to wander through the long winding pathways, as if experiencing them climbing the mountain. This experience is meant to be an enlightening one and has roots in both Buddhism and the Dao. Another feature valued in the Eastern depiction of landscape is the quality of the artist’s brushstroke. Painting on either silk or paper scrolls was most traditional in China and Japan and the liveliness or beauty of an artist’s use of the brush was another factor to determine worth of an image, this trait is shared by some western artists as well, but with less focus on calligraphy. It is these cultural aesthetic differences that make traditional Eastern landscapes so challenging for viewers of a Western audience.

In the study of art history another important issue that will inevitably arise is that of context. In some cases, as in ancient sculpture or unsigned, ambiguous oil paintings, historians must work with what they have to understand the work—and this may be limited and unreliable information. In other cases, art historians may have a tremendous amount of information on the artist and era, but rely too much on this context, and try to impose meaning upon small artistic decisions for the sake of a particular argument or angle on a work. For a basic discussion of nineteenth and twentieth century Eastern landscape imagery it will be relevant to note some major political and social changes influencing the developments in Chinese and Japanese landscapes. It is most important to understand that during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Japan and China were experiencing modernizing changes and intercultural exchange (more independently from one another than in earlier times) in different ways.
Although from the beginning the countries were evolving in their own ways, we should also note that both countries were entering periods where traditional values were being questioned and western ideas infiltrated their field of view.

Chinese, Japanese, European and American artistic communities shared in communication and exchange of ideas in the early nineteenth century. Artists of the late Edo-period in Japan (1603-1868) flourished; and then, with the collapse of the shogunate in 1868 Japan entered a period of restoration, siding with Great Britain in the fighting of World War I. In China, the nineteenth century was marked by the weakening of the Qing dynasty (1644-1912) through European domination of the seas in trade-pushing China from its historic seat of power in the Eastern market. In the early twentieth century, the Opium Wars with Great Britain and ultimately the fall of the imperial Chinese government in 1912 left the country in turmoil and weakness. With the onset of World War II, tension mounted around the world, and Japan and China would come out of the fighting with very different plans for the future. As Japan was eventually to be reorganized, after 14 years of fighting, into a parliamentary-state by the occupying United States forces, China fell into a civil war of which the outcome would be the appointment of Chairman Mao as leader of a new communist vision; the countries were set on different paths for the future. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as the relationship between China and Japan and the Western world went through drastic changes, the Eastern landscape painting tradition would as well.
Ando Hiroshige
*Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*
32, Inume Pass in Kai Province, 1858
Looking at a Nineteenth Century and Twentieth Century Japanese Landscape Prints

Images of snowcapped Mt. Fuji, the bridges of the Tōkaidō, bright-faced actors, pale beauties and crowded cityscapes have become iconic representations of Japan for the West; but at the time these images were not traditional, they were very innovative. In Japan, toward the end of the Edo period, these images, referred to as those of the floating world began to combine Eastern and Western influence for the first time on a large scale. Historically Chinese and Japanese landscape painting would represent a famous religious or cultural site like Mount Hua (a famous Daoist mountain) or Mount Lu (a Buddhist site identifiable by its large waterfall) in a symbolic way, often without the artists ever visiting the actual location. This practice did not halt completely, but “Hiroshige was one of the first artists [in the Edo period] to start depicting existing places, adapting them according to his own artistic responses.” These new landscapes were scenes of the everyday, not solely famous sites because the cultural relevance associated with these areas carried great significance for the artist.

During the Edo period artists broke with that tradition by modeling their images after places they had seen and sketches they had made. They were not concerned so much with the religious significance of sites, but rather with documentation of what they had seen, and of the beauty and tragedy they perceived in nature. They often produced these images as woodblock prints, allowing them to have mass distribution at low costs. The nature of carving images from a wood slab restricted certain levels of detail; however, despite the bold outlines and limited color palette that may lead us to perceive woodblock printing as rudimentary, the images of the floating world were more representative of real nature than any other landscape to date. Their name floating world, or ukiyo-e in Japanese, is “derived from Buddhist religious interpretation that described man’s life on earth as unhappy, a stage to go through along the road to salvation. It came to depict a portrayal of the pleasures of life that helped to relieve the restraints of urban Japanese life.”

They were representative of everyday life scenes of courtesans, entertainment districts, actors and the land this life was lived upon; they were lighthearted and inspirational.

Two of the most famous printmakers of these ukiyo-e images were Hokusai and Hiroshige, their images are reflective of the social changes occurring in Japan at this time. During the Edo period in accordance with the decree of the ruler, the shogun, that all feudal lords (daimyo) would alternate time between Edo and their territories, domestic travel significantly increased in Japan. Five new major highways were created at this time that ran from Edo along the coast till Kyoto, approximately three hundred miles long. Daimyo and common people used these roads, the most famous of which being the Tōkaidō Highway, to traverse the rugged and mostly unexplored countryside. It was traveling this highway that inspired many of Hiroshige’s and Hokusai’s landscape prints.

Both artists were major players at a turn in Japanese landscape style but Hokusai and Hiroshige differ in their approach to these new depictions of nature. The elder of the two artists, Hokusai, arrived on the scene before the young Hiroshige, exhibiting extraordinary talent. Hokusai was a natural with design and composition of prints, but he was a more traditional artist and did not experiment as much with new ideas of perspective and color as Hiroshige did. He is however responsible for one of the most iconic images of Japan, still popular in contemporary society, the color woodcut of The Great
Wave of Kanagawa (1832). Hokusai’s junior by around forty years, Hiroshige began actively producing prints in the mid 1800’s. Hiroshige’s work is noted for its experimental nature: exploring Western perspective, and working with color to more successfully depict the difference between sky and water or rocks and mountains. Hiroshige was also a particularly important figure in the traditional process of depicting Japanese landscapes.

It was common for artists to base their designs on older sources. Painters had never really felt the need to create realistic landscape designs and were often inspired by poems or descriptions. Even when print artists did travel, making sketches along the way, it was often their traditional training and knowledge that inspired the actual print. Hiroshige was one of the first artists to start depicting existing places, adapting them according to his own artistic responses.

The artists developed a fascination and engagement with the seasons, the weather, and the dramatic terrain found on their travels. These natural elements can be found dramatically emphasized in their prints. Hokusai and Hiroshige were very much artists of their time, working for a middle class patronage on mass scale, and the prominence and contemporary popularity of their travel imagery attests to that.

So what happened next to the work of Hokusai and Hiroshige? During the 1860s trade between Europe and Japan re-opened and the ukiyo-e prints became particularly influential with artists of the French Impressionist movement. The French in Paris were enamored with Japanese imports, major exhibitions of Japanese art took place, and a market for collecting Japanese prints emerged. Westerners may also find Japanese inspiration in the works of Vincent Van Gogh, Edgar Degas, Edouard Manet, and Mary Cassatt from this time.

**Looking at Nineteenth Century and Twentieth Century Chinese Landscape Painting**

If we look back from the present day to the beginning of the nineteenth century, with the rise and fall of governments, alliances, and status, China’s economic power within the world has drastically changed and transformed. When we discuss modern Chinese landscape painting, these changes are very important and their effects on artists and artistic depictions are often not consistent or uniform. Julia Andrews, a leading Chinese art historian currently at Ohio State University, has argued it is “the degree to which Chinese artists have chosen to adopt or reject Western conventions” that is key to understanding modern Chinese art. With this in mind, the nineteenth and twentieth centuries must be looked at as centuries of transformation and change in Chinese art: during which traditional views were questioned and mixed with Western ones to create new Chinese landscapes.

The use of brush and ink and the copying of ancient masters was for the most part the norm for Chinese depictions of the natural world until the end of the nineteenth century. In traditional Chinese painting philosophy, visual choices were intended to express spiritual-likeness or essence, understood by those versed in the graphic symbolism of the culture’s art and literature. The characters that make
up the country’s name in Chinese are zhong, meaning middle or central, and guo, meaning country or kingdom; this is significant because for most of its long history China had seen itself as the center of the world, the center around which everything revolved. Even though Chinese artists were exposed to techniques and ideas of Western artists, China still perceived itself to be the oldest and greatest world civilization and the new methods were not initially unanimously adopted, even in the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{10}

It was not until around 1895 that China’s conception of itself changed, and the degrees of foreign influence in art became prominent.\textsuperscript{11} From this point on, painting in ink rather than oil became a conscious choice, one that might have been motivated by personal, ideological, or commercial considerations, but one that would never again be assumed in China as the ‘natural’ way for a Chinese artist to paint.\textsuperscript{12}

This change was tremendous, China was breaking away from a tradition that could be traced back to the Han Dynasty as it entered the twentieth-century. Painting would continue this evolution in the following years: traditional ink painting on silk or scroll would be compartmentalized as one style, guohua, meaning “national painting”\textsuperscript{13}, new media of photography and oil painting would be pursued, and then with the foundation of the People’s Republic of China (PRC) (1948-1976) under Chairman Mao, didactic “soviet realism” inspired prints would become the only acceptable artistic expression. It is entangled in this convoluted modern history that Chinese contemporary landscape art finds itself. To define one style or idea would be impossible because China’s artistic tradition ended its rhythmic evolution from master to student, innovating upon and re-emphasizing tradition at the turn of the twentieth century. The artist’s sphere today is one dictated by the demands of society and of the consumer; concerning this, some artists find Western techniques to be more suitable, while others feel inclined to return to traditional methods, and yet others work in some limbo between the two. It is undeniable that for the sake of context there is a disconnect between the attitudes and intentions of artists working before Mao’s Cultural Revolution and those who became artists after it. In contemporary Chinese art a major theme is the artist’s search for identity within his/her own society. Although many of the earlier artists were precisely concerned with their identity and their art is about that—especially in Yuan (1271-1368) and Qing (1644-1912) landscapes—this is not the same search for spirit or essence of earlier modern works.
Concluding Thoughts
An ancient Chinese proverb says, “bai yang mi, yang bai yang ren,” literally meaning “a hundred kinds of rice nourish a hundred kinds of people”; figuratively “that people differ greatly in their minds and character.” This proverb is one of hundreds from a rich literary history of chengyu (idiom) that was constantly using nature and the land to describe and better understand humankind. Through the difficult times the Chinese and Japanese people have faced in the last two hundred years with the onset of globalization around the world, they have managed to preserve a curiosity for their cultural heritage and a desire to understand it and better understand themselves. With the flourishing of new Western ideas, cultures and ways of life in contemporary eastern societies, traditional motifs such as landscape paintings are explored in new ways by the descendents of the ancient emperors now embracing a global cultural cornucopia that was never previously available. Like the different types of rice nourishing different types of people, the influx of new ideas and lifestyles has allowed the inheritors of Eastern landscape traditions to reinterpret them in ways never imaged by their ancestors.
Toshi Yoshida

Irozaki Bay, 1961

Robert North Collection
Notes

1 Hiroshige pg 2
6 Jansen p.17
10 Andrews pp.2-4
11 Andrews p.4
12 Andrews p. 4
13 Andrews pp.4,8
Of course this is the sort of thing that painters from time immemorial have been trying to do - to show man in relation to his environment. You know that old axiom that “Art is the expression of man,” so here, if this has any art, it’s because an it’s an expression of man.

Arthur Rothstein, 1915-1985
Asher Brown Durand
_Pro Patria_, 1860
L. Thomas Melly Collection
In Search of a Definition: Landscape from the Renaissance to Present
Roger Arnold ’10

Landscape. In reading or hearing the word, perhaps multivalent images come to mind. Conceivably, it may be an image of lush, dark green branches that stem into a pale-blue sky, as Asher Brown Durand renders in Pro Patria’s (1860) scene of particularized locale. Or, instead, it is an image of inner struggle, one that seeks to define humanity in relation to its vast, dense, setting, as depicted in Giorgio de Chirico’s Ritorno d’autunno (1969). More complex than that, perhaps these ideas coalesce into a single coalescence.

As a term, “landscape” is as vast as the images it evokes. It is a definition that lends itself to modification based on different contexts, geographies, and uses; it is hardly a monolithic consideration. Indeed, it is most accurate to consider “landscape” a complex notion, inflationary and omnipresent, existing as a physical fact, a cultural representation, an aesthetic construction, and a political category. In Art and Illusion (1960), historian E.H Gombrich goes so far as to imply that landscape is nothing more than what one sees, that a given painting or print is formed merely from a viewer’s construction.¹ In considering a history of the “landscape,” one is in turn considering a history of perceiving the land. Art historian Malcolm Andrews, in a process he calls “creating art into landscape,”² believes that landscape is a process of selecting, modifying, and editing said land in accordance to the conventionalized ideas of beauty at history’s given moment. Landscape art, then, is rooted in tradition, change dependent on the cultural setting it is a part of. Indeed, Western landscape painting “marks the stages in our conception of nature,”³ is locked in an animated relationship dependent on “that portion of the world visible by an observer from a specific position.”⁴

In the introduction to his edited volume Landscape and Power, W.J.T Mitchell comments on how scholars often study landscape in an attempt to either “narrativize the history of landscape painting as a progressive movement towards purification of the visual field” or as “an allegory of psychological or ideological themes.”⁵ Mitchell counterpoises these two established ideas and asks “not just what landscape ‘is’ or ‘means’ but what it does.”⁶ With such words in mind, it is the goal of this essay to hold landscape painting to an art historical reading of changing styles, practices, and schools of thought, yet, to answer Mitchell’s protest that an interpretation of landscape should not stop at a pure visual interpretation, landscape will also be considered as a means of cultural expression. All explications aim for a more nuanced understanding of its historical representation in the Western world. Though a progression can be charted by beginning with the Italian Renaissance and ending with the twentieth century’s abstract representations of shape and rhythm, landscape painting is treated here not chronologically, but rather in the spirit of stocktaking.
Jean-Baptiste Pater
*The Bird Trap*, 1700-1799
H. A. Metzger Collection
Of Solitude and Pastoral: Renaissance Understandings of Landscape

In fifteenth century Renaissance landscape paintings, nature had a supporting role to play, as it occupied a low status in a hierarchy dominated by the human or divine presence. The figure was often represented as bestowing dignity and significance on the natural setting, with depictions of nature serving as background that gave contextual substance and “corroborative metaphorical force to the human or divine subject and narrative.” It was a rare phenomenon in the early period of the Italian Renaissance for paintings to not have a human subject. Indeed, in such paintings, landscape is habitually marginalized, sometimes appearing alone in watercolor sketches and pen and ink drawings, but seldom ever in the more recognized forms of oil painting or frescos. Similarly, they occupy small areas in great altarpieces and other compositional structures, the most prominent form of artistic expression during this era.

Portrayals of nature in Renaissance painting reveal how landscape was caught in ideological tensions between Christian attitudes and secular humanist thought, reminding us that landscape painting is part of a larger context. Images that depicted figures in acts of solitude were believed to be in a “vexed predicament” of this tension; landscape was dually understood as both an escape from civilization’s distractions as well as a device of dangerous isolation. Giovanni Bellini’s St Francis in the Desert of 1480 is perhaps the most iconic image of solitude in these dual religious and allegorical contexts. The oil painting depicts a scene of exaltation, in a posture that “expands out of all personal confines…in the morning of a friendly landscape.” In rendering this act of contemplation, Bellini employed soft colors, choosing to contrast earth tones of the distant town with the gray-blue of the rocks. In addition to the light of the sun, there is a sense in which the entire composition is engulfed in a unified, bright atmosphere; nature is conceived as a “spirit of simple clarity.” Bellini’s immersion of St. Francis in the landscape, though “imbued with the supernatural,” stresses the figure’s moral resonance.

The landscape is both arid and fertile, tamed yet wild, “an analogue for solitude and spiritual purity.” But, ultimately, it is background for the greater action, namely the Saint’s exalted gesture towards God. Though there are readings of the symbolic within the landscape depicted in St. Francis, nature does not acquire the autonomy of standing on its own. This would have also been the case for landscapes contemporaneous to Bellini’s. Compositions of landscape paintings at the height of the Renaissance conferred to a single-viewpoint; a scene was represented as if perceived as a whole from one point in space at one moment of time under one set of atmospheric lighting conditions.

In the sixteenth century, landscape gained more credibility as an independent entity, in part due to the rise of urban areas and the concept of the Italian villa. Generally understood as a retreat for members of the papal court as well as the upper-classes, the Italian villa became reflective of the greater interest in the expansive countryside, an interest that served to advance and “encourage the pictorializing of the landscape.” A mix of the wild and the cultivated, rural retreats to courtly villa
life saw a linkage to a renewed interest in classical genres from literary traditions, namely Virgilian pastoral celebrations of retirement in the country. The literary milieux associated with villa life in the Renaissance encouraged the blending of revived genres with both “a vernacular inflection and a relish for natural scenery afforded by local settings.”

Mediations on sacred and profane love were revived and venerated in poetry, and sought after in reality. Giorgione’s ambiguous Le Concert Champetre, with its lush middle ground and its tableau of figures engaged in the recitation of poetry and production of musical fanfare, is perhaps indicative of landscape’s increased prominence from the fifteenth to sixteenth centuries. Both the painting and the passage of the shepherds within its frame illustrate the blend of the poetic pastoral with contemporary Renaissance setting. Villa culture was a site of active sponsorship for such depictions; it encouraged literary visions of the pastoral. This shows that scenery, and the aesthetic appraisal of it, was beginning to be understood as a cultural activity, and therefore worthy of being an independent topos.

**Tensions on “Real” and “Heroic:” The Seventeenth Century Landscape**

The pastoral paintings of the Renaissance did not chronicle the real life experience of rural life and work, nor were they particularized in a way that would suggest sites as portraits of real places. In fact, pastoral scenes created an enduring illusion of natural grace and innocence surrounding rural life and work. The popularity of poetry and a literary tradition was due largely to the way ideals issued from, and played variations on, the sense of profound difference between rural and urban, or courtly, ways of life. The seventeenth century landscapes painted in Rome by French painters Nicolas Poussin and Claude Lorrain produced idealized pastoral landscapes, held in contrast to the landscape paintings seen from the Dutch artists. Dutch landscape paintings coordinated city with countryside, serving to dramatize their strong interdependency; such a notion “implies something larger about the vigour and prosperity of the nation as a whole.” In Roman pastoral landscapes of the same period, the city, if it appears at all, is pushed far into the distance as a huddle of vague, generalized architectural forms. Separating the two worlds of urbanization and countryside perhaps explains how the pastoral was able to thrive into the next century.

Seventeenth century Roman pastoral paintings tried to elevate landscape according to ideological principles, and in doing so, are made distant from the Dutch landscape tradition, which are often conceptualized as portraits of localized rural scenery of the new republic. As Michael Kitson observes, “landscape was a genre in which the artist was assumed to use his imagination; he was not expected to depict real views from nature or views that looked as if they might be transcripts of actual countryside.”

Such a distinction of high and low forms of landscape meant that nature had the capacity to be “heroic, “classical” and “ideal,” evoking emotional feeling “to conduct [the viewer] into classical and ro-
mantic ground.” For Nicolas Poussin and Claude Lorrain, the staple artists of this tradition, nature was depicted how it ought to be rather than how it was to be seen, reflecting an ideal from Biblical or classical literary tradition and serving a poetic function. These artists found in nature intellectual pleasure of the kind prescribed by the ancient thinker Aristotle, and believed that landscape was meant to instill philosophical truths. Epic and tragic modes of thought was reserved for the genre of history painting, but it was universally granted that nature held a restorative power when idealized.

Landscapes of this era were populated by small-scale figures formally balanced with staged recessions of sylvan groves, flowing streams, and abandoned Ionic and Corinthian temples, evoking poetic understandings of untroubled peace and pastoral ease. Building on an inherited tradition from Bellini, ideal landscape paintings were depicted as nature unplundered, with a greater attempt to understand landscape in its more plastic forms of “clearly defined volumes, reflections and shadows.”

The pastoral quality similarly owes itself to the Giorgione countryside, in which landscape suggests a kind of mood, “a dream of classical innocence and warm perfection,” perhaps recalling the image of the Roman Campagne, but never intending to convey it. And hardly that of decoration, landscape was in part dependent on filters of drama and rhetoric, a setting “for human fate, emotions and actions,” not without tension and potential violence. This is successfully demonstrated in Nicolas Poussin’s Landscape with Pyramus and Thisbe (1650), where “management of the storm and its impact upon the scattered humans and animals is that of primary interest.” Human emotions of fright, fear, and terror are conducted on the classical myth, where Pyramus kills himself after believing his lover, Thisbe, is murdered by a lion. Elements of the composition are communicated in tensions from the recessed land, the turbulent wind in the center of the composition contrasting with the static pose in the background. Such a construction, whereby a “spatial landscape is rendered as [a] subtle invitation to imaginary journeys” was crucial for the pictorial composition of Poussin and Claude Lorrain, his contemporary.

Poussin conceived landscape in a harmonious balance of horizontal and vertical. Kenneth Clark, in Landscape Into Art writes: “he recognized that the spacing of horizontals and their rhythmic relation to one another could have an effect exactly like the…harmonic devices of architecture; and in fact, he often disposed them accordingly.” Poussin utilized architecture to carry geometry into his compositions, in order to create verticals in otherwise pastoral horizontals. Poussin’s landscapes account for both frontality, but with angles that would lead the eye back into the distance, also penetration into recessed space. An overwhelming amount of Poussin’s landscapes “turn back in on itself some two-thirds of the distance into the picture.”

Claude Lorrain, like Poussin, similarly conformed to a single underlying scheme of composition, not vastly different from Pyramus and Thisbe. His tableaus typically comprised of a dark set of staged scenery, a middle plane or horizon with a large central feature, and two horizons, one behind the
other, the latter no doubt a luminous, distant cloud. Various objects, such as bridges or cattle fording streams, were painted to lead the eye from one plane to the next, although these were less important that “his sense of tone which allowed him to achieve an effect of recession even in pictures where every plane was parallel.”

Ideal landscapes were informed by a logic that nature was perceived on how it ought to be, and this is reflected in Poussin’s rhythmic fluidity between horizontal and vertical, and Lorrain’s framed recessions. The actions and gestures in the figures of Pyramus and Thisbe are imbued with a sense of contemplation and stillness; they are to be read as much as perceived. Nature operates in the paintings of this period as a dominant motif over the narrative action. Figures are reduced in size and “are marginalized as if they give way to the landscape” and scenes of everyday life, such as work and play, became seductive views of warmth and heroism with the complicated treatment of nature.

**Sublime, Picturesque, and Political**

Landscape painting in the eighteenth century was understood as a site for human experience via painted composition. Influenced by Italian and Dutch ideas concerning light and atmosphere, these sites of human experience were painted under the larger cultural milieu that sought after a new kind of aesthetic beauty from the idealized version put forth by Lorrain and Poussin in the century previous. For painters such as John Constable and JMW Turner, beauty was understood as vast and powerful; nature as beauty was meant to inspire terror and shock. Indeed, landscape paintings were to be created as awe-inspiring. No longer was the countryside used a background nor setting as in the Renaissance, but as a worthy artistic subject in and of itself, enabling the canvas to “become a locus for interpretation where discussions on nature, individuality, politics, God and country could be framed.”

British statesman Edmund Burke was first to raise consciousness surrounding visual experiences as awe-inspiring. This he referred to as the sublime, a model which

> produces a sort of internal elevation and expansion. It raises the mind above its ordinary state; and fills it with wonder and astonishment, which is certainly delightful; but it is altogether of a serious kind; a degree of awfulness and solemnity…

Evoked via topographical views, and panoramic vistas of skies and clouds, philosophy provided the context and theoretical framework for the sublime; a pictorial model was created only thereafter. Sublimity, “exhilarating terror inspired by rushing torrents, roaring waterfalls, precipitous crags, [and] unattainable mountain peaks,” often translated into images of shipwrecks and representations of human struggle against the power of nature. As Denis Cosgrove points to in Social Formation and
the Symbolic Landscape, the sublime was meant to evoke notions of self-preservation and survival, a focus on an individual’s communion with natural forms.\textsuperscript{35}

\textbf{En Plein Air: Landscape as Painting and Process}

Though sketching or drawing nature from life had been an established technique since the early seventeenth centuries, it began to characterize the artist’s training during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The development of paint in a tube allowed for easier transportability for artist’s to paint outside. Where many artists such as Lorrain had taken their sketches from nature back to the studio and turned them into pastoral visions without a reference to a particular place, French painters such as Camille Corot painted oil paintings of particular views at specific moments. Plein air painting, or painting outdoors, resulted in a more natural vision of nature, and developed landscape painting as process.

Even in a blurred pencil drawing, a viewer can glean how the stately trees of Camille Corot’s Souvenir d’Ostie (1855) occupy a place of prominence within the composition. Silhouetted against the sky, and set on top of an elevated territory, the architecture dwarfs beneath the canopy that shelters it; the range of trees are indeed the drawing’s subject. This drawing typifies the landscape work of the Barbizon school, a small network of artists who worked and thrived during the nineteenth century. Their school, named for the area of France in which they painted, sought to paint realistic landscapes that were decidedly non-urban. Often spending hours contemplating wooded scenery and rural life, the Barbizon school’s members desired for their art to be reflections of direct experience form nature. It was through effects of light and atmosphere that a subjectivity of the artist was employed.

The Barbizon school marked a period of major innovations in landscape art, especially in the way in which the compositions of their paintings were depicted in transitory configurations suggestive of movement rather than permanence. Treatment of color likewise emphasized the evanescent aspect of scenes. As a group of artists who abandoned the urban sprawl for the retreat of the countryside, the emergence of the Barbizon school also reflects a larger cultural shift in understanding surroundings. France’s modern cities brought new ease of mobility, by train and later by car, and with such, nature became available to artists in new conceptions. Among other reasons, retreat and recreation became a part of the conception of landscape as a means to counter the industrialization and urbanization that was occurring throughout France and Europe.

Art historians often hold artists of the Barbizon school as the bridge to Impressionism, the nineteenth century’s most popular style.\textsuperscript{36} Impressionists were interested in the reduction of subjective interpolation of the moods of the individual onto nature’s surroundings, in eliminating the reflection of human feelings in nature seen in the works of the Barbizon painters. The significant difference in the work of the Impressionist’s predecessors is perhaps the degree of objectivity they attempted to
bring with their paintings from canvas to nature.

Impressionism was a term first coined in 1874 by an art critic, as a way to attack the self-reflective notions of immediate perception in Claude Monet’s title “Impression: Sunrise.” Monet, in a line most famous, proclaimed the entire world outside his window to be his studio. Painting in nature, from his impressions, Monet perhaps best typifies the Impressionistic stance on direct observation, speed, and spontaneity. Impressionists often tried to capture the look of changing weather, seasons, and times of day, Monet’s concern in particular being the problem of creating on the canvas the proper color relationships that would reflect the visual sensations he had experienced when observing nature. Small, fragmented brushstrokes and intense color became the technical means to express the on-sight rendering.

With Impressionism and landscape painting, a new conception of “the subject” emerged, no longer being considered as mere “material” to be copied or as a scene to be “articulated,” but as the starting point for a more autonomous use of pictorial means. Color and brush stroke in particular were used to construct space, relief and volumes, soliciting active participation of the viewer in the interpretation of the artwork.

Abstraction as Landscape, Landscape as Abstraction
Abstraction and landscape painting can be seen in an animated relationship with one another. With the decline in naturalistic landscape, painters searched for artistic forms which would communicated similar values. Though the Impressionist movement is perhaps the period in which one can see landscape not only treated as a recognized genre, but made central, its reception surrounding perception served to trivialize it.

In the late works of Vincent Van Gogh and Paul Cezanne, landscape painting became a kind of salvage operation, rescuing the traditional qualities of nature by salvaging them in the more abstracted language of aesthetic form increasingly geared toward itself. Grandly eloquent landscapes could still be painted but increasingly nature’s eloquence would be transferred to grandly structured paint, as in Cezanne, or visionary whirls of emotionally rich color, as in Van Gogh. In this more abstractly painted world, nature could be freed from everything which had plagued it since the late eighteenth century: from modern industrialization, and political, social, and economic divisions.

The process of abstracting and that of abstract art emerged out of landscape perhaps because it was the logical extension for of the late nineteenth century landscapist’s search for an unsullied nature and a “primitive” emotion. In moving to non-representational abstraction, artists were in turn seeking to bring out nature’s truth.
Giorgio de Chirico

*Ritorno d’Autunno*, 1969

Robert North Collection
Notes

2 Andrews, Malcolm. Landscape and Western Art. (New York: UP of Oxford, 1999), 2. This is no doubt a spin off of Kenneth Clark’s Landscape into Art, the pioneering study of landscape painting.
3 Clark, 1.
6 Ibid.
7 Andrews, 4
8 Ibid, 31
9 ibid, 33
10 Malcolm Andrews writes that this tension is best communicated with the example of the poet Petrarch: “Petrarch presses hard and eloquently on this relationship between solitude, integrity, spiritual purity, and natural surroundings.” (34).
11 Turner, Richard. The Vision of Landscape in Renaissance Italy (Princeton: UP of Princeton, 1966), 59
12 Ibid, 62
13 Ibid 65
14 Andrews, 34.
15 Andrews, 56
16 Ibid, 63
17 Giorgione’s Le Concert, is often shared attribution with Titian, a contemporary Venetian painter, who resumed work on the painting after Giorgione’s death. For the purposes of this essay, attribution will be given to Giorgione, as is often the practice by art historians who view the composition to be his mark.
19 Ibid, 93
20 The idea that much of Dutch landscape painting should be treated as “mere topography” is, as Malcolm Andrews points out in Landscape and Western Art, “an old and enduring prejudice” (91). Andrews elucidates the importance of mapmaking as inspiration for Dutch landscapes, and states that modern scholarship has “obscured or suppressed affinities between mapping and landscape painting that the early Dutch School would happily have acknowledged” (91). In holding Dutch landscape as the foil for the Roman landscape painters, I do not mean to perpetuate such a problem. Dutch landscape is, instead, offered as a foil for the seventeenth century’s very real tension between “real” and heroic” landscapes.
23 Lagerlof, 19
25 Ibid, 17
26 Andrews, 94
28 Clark, 128
29 Clark, 129-130
30 Jakle, 121
31 Andrews, 99.
34 Honour, 57
35 Caspar David Friedrich’s The Monk by the Sea (1809) takes up such an idea when emptiness is employed as the painting’s essential motif. With no props or objects to indicate the experience, a viewer is perhaps left in horror by the amount of negative space.
Arthur Dove
*Stuyvesant Square, 1907*
What do we call ‘America’ outside of painting? Inventiveness, restlessness, speed, change. Well, a painter may put all these qualities in a still life or an abstraction, and be going more native than another who sits quietly copying a skyscraper.

Arthur Dove, 1880-1946
Ando Hiroshige (1797-1858) was a Japanese ukiyo-e artist born in the Yayosu barracks east of Tokyo. Hiroshige’s father, dō Gen’emon, was a hereditary retainer samurai of the shogun and when he turned twelve; the position was passed down to him. As a firefighter, he protected the barracks in which he lived. Hiroshige was tutored by another fireman painting in the Kano school style of influence. Although he had a stable job and salary, his rank as a lower samurai provided an income that was insufficient of his needs, promoting him to turn to artisan crafts as another source of finance. Although his work as a fireman did not consume all of his time, in 1832 Hiroshige left the life of a samurai and focused all of his attention to creating landscape artwork. Hiroshige had two wives and lived in the barracks until the age of forty-three. In 1856 Hiroshige became a Buddhist monk and two years later died of a cholera epidemic. The work of Hiroshige was distinguished by his composition and color in regards to landscapes. He transformed landscapes into an “independent subject, and adapted it to the taste of the public… He is an undisputed master in the treatment of nature, and especially the poetic impressions it conveys.”

Thirty-six views of Mt. Fuji: 5, Tea-water Canal, Yedo. 1858. Woodblock, 33 x 22 cm.
Thirty-six views of Mt. Fuji: 15, Villages of Noge and Yokobama. 1858. Woodblock, 33 x 22 cm.
(illustration in text)

Thirty-six views of Mt. Fuji: 18, Sagami River. 1858. Woodblock, 33 x 22 cm.
Thirty-six views of Mt. Fuji: 32, Inume Pass in Kai Province. 1858. Woodblock, 33 x 22 cm.
(illustration in text)
Ando Hiroshige
Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji:
5, Tea-water Canal, Yedo, 1858

Ando Hiroshige
Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji:
18, Sagami River, 1858
Karel Appel (1921-2006) was born in Amsterdam into a modest family of five. At his fifteenth birthday his uncle, Karel Chevalier, began giving Appel art lessons. Four years later, Appel attended the Rijks-Academie in Amsterdam. Around the time of his first solo show when he was only twenty-five, Appel began to be influenced by Picasso and Matisse. Appel saturates all of his work with a frantic, forceful energy that takes up space both in the studio and on the page.38 Everything about his work is, “big, brutal and noisy.”39 The paintings of Appel leave behind sophistication and subtility, while achieving genuine articulation of “nightmarish experiences” morphed into color and shape.40 The physicality and uninhibited temperament of his work pioneered a new style of painting in Europe.

John Taylor Arms (1887-1953) was an etcher known for his architectural etchings and especially for his Gothic work. Arms studied art and architecture at Princeton University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Later he devoted himself to printmaking. His technical expertise was unrivaled. Arms wrote a *Handbook of Print Making and Print Makers* in 1934. He served as the first president of the Society of American Etchers. Examples of his work are in the collections of the Library of Congress, the British Museum and the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris.

*Apple Tree.* 1920. Etching, 28 x 26 cm.  
*Cobwebs.* 1921. Etching, 27 x 30 cm.  
(illustration in text)

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John Taylor Arms  
*Apple Tree,* 1920
Edouard Boubat (1923-1999), France’s most well known romantic photographer, was raised on Rue Cyrano-de-Bergerac, Montmartre. In 1938, Boubat enrolled at Ecole Estinne where he studied the art of photoengraving. When World War II began, Boubat turned his focus to capturing the horrific effects of battle in response to the war. Following the war, Boubat traveled the world photographing for the Realities magazine. His work for the magazine sent him to some of the most poverty-stricken lands in the world, yet he managed to always capture the love and beauty that did reside there.12 Boubat approached landscapes from different corners of the globe as a means to connect elements of daily life everywhere.13 At this point in his photographic career, Boubat’s pictures were taken to “celebrate the beauty, simplicity, and little things in life.”14

*Champ de Lin, Normandie.* 1978. Gelatin silver, 30 x 41 cm.
Alfred-Louis Brunet-Debaines (1845-1939) was the son of the architect Charles-Louis-Fortun Brunet-Debaines and studies architecture at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris before becoming a painter and printmaker. Landscapes and architecture were his principle subject matter. Brunet-Debaines lived in England from 1884 to 1897. He is best know today for his etchings.

*Parting Day.* 1887. Print, 89 x 116 cm.
Rudy Burckhardt (1914-1999), Basel, Switzerland native, became an integral part in American art once he moved to New York City in 1935. Burckhardt arrived in New York City with an inheritance that enabled him to direct all of his attention towards his artwork. Over the duration of his 60-year art career, Burckhardt became known for fluently using photography, film and oil painting as a means of observing and depicting New York City. As Burckhardt became more known throughout America, onlookers began to notice and value the versatility and cross-disciplinary practices which strongly influenced other artists. The landscape scenes presented in Burckhardt’s work discover an ease and peacefulness within the chaos of the city, even with his overwhelming attention to detail. Burckhardt creates a visual rhythm through the people, streets and skyscrapers he depicted that has a calming effect. His paintings were “widely admired for their compositional poise and their ability to capture fleeting moments of urban human life.” Former HWS Faculty Member.

Times Square, dusk. 1973. Oil on canvas, 48 x 69 cm. (illustration in text)
Paul Caponigro (b. 1932), an internationally renowned photographer, was born in the city of Boston, Massachusetts in 1932. After attending Boston University with aspirations to study piano, Caponigro was introduced to photography. For the duration of his life, he has continued to thoroughly exercise both disciplines. Caponigro initially received his photographic training in San Francisco in the company of Benjamin Chin and Alfred W. Richter. Caponigro has become known for his Irish and Connecticut landscapes as well as being “an important teacher whose impact is evident in several generations of younger photographers” at Boston University. In 1962, he published his premier portfolio of prints. Subsequently, Caponigro received two Guggenheim fellowships in 1966 and 1975 that both channeled and advanced his career, as they enabled him to spend long periods of time photographing various natural sights in Ireland and England. This is where he came into his unique mystic style as well as explored his personal relationship with the natural world around him. “The introspective nature of Caponigro’s work is seen through his thoughtful account of a life lived in art with a grand, spiritual commitment to nature.  

Chiang Chaoshen (1925-1996) was born in the Anhui Province in China to a family of the literati class and was trained in the education of the traditional arts. From an early age, Chaoshen learned everything from poetry composition to painting. After relocating to Taiwan in 1949, Chaoshen was instructed by the literati master Pu Hsin-yu and was commended for his discipline and command in executing the Chinese tradition of art. “Highly regarded for his diligence in mastering all aspects of the tradition that he had inherited, Chiang was no mere imitator. His paintings, while essentially classical in form, have a freshness and modernity about them.”

*Untitled*. 1980. Ink and color on paper, 189 x 94 cm.
Giorgio de Chirico (188-1978) was a pre-Surrealist and then Surrealist Greek-Italian painter born in Volos, Greece, to a Genovese mother and a Sicilian father. He founded the scuola metafisica art movement. After studying art in Athens and Florence, De Chirico moved to Germany in 1906 and entered the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, where he read the writings of the philosophers Nietzsche and Arthur Schopenhauer, and studied the works of Arnold Böcklin and Max Klinger. De Chirico is best known for the paintings he produced between 1909 and 1919, his metaphysical period, which are memorable for the haunted, brooding moods evoked by their images. At the start of this period, his subjects were still cityscapes inspired by the bright daylight of Mediterranean cities, but gradually he turned his attention to studies of cluttered storerooms, sometimes inhabited by mannequin-like hybrid figures.

_Ritorno d’Autunno_. 1969. Lithograph, 73 x 84 cm. Robert North Collection. (illustration in text)
Chryssa Vardea Mavromichali (b. 1933) was born in Athens, Greece to a once-powerful family that was strongly cultured and educated. She began painting in her teenage years, while at the same time studying to become a social worker. She was sent by the Greek Ministry of Social Welfare to the Dodecanese Islands and later to the Ionian Sea island of Zante, whose population had suffered great loss from earthquakes. In Athens, she studied art with Anghelos Prokopion. In 1953, one of Greeks well-renowned art critics advised Chryssa to further study art in Paris at Academie de la Grande Chaumière.46 After going to Paris, Chryssa moved to San Francisco to attend the California School of Fine Arts. She subsequently moved to New York City where she set up a studio. Chryssa works with a variety of media such as silkscreen, light art and luminist sculpture. Chryssa was strongly influenced by the vibrant electricity the city possessed. The lines, shapes and movement fueled by neon signs and bright lights became a visionary state she translated into her work. *Gates to Times Square*. 1980. Silkscreen, 77 x 102 cm. Welsh Collection of Contemporary Art.
Camille Corot (1796-1875) was born to a family that was extremely business oriented. Somehow Corot managed to break away from the commercial career he seemed destined for and at the age of 26 began to apprentice academic landscape painter Victor Bertin. It was under Bertin where Corot learned classical compositions both in the studio as well as traveling to the Netherlands, Italy and other places in Europe. Corot was selling his work by 1845. He was admired for the lack of idealization or romanticism in his landscapes. They had a pure focus on nature in a poetic sense.

*Souvenir d’Ostie.* 1855. Print, 35 x 27 cm.  
(illustration in text)

*Untitled.* 1800-99. Print, 57 x 64.75 cm.
Arthur Dove (1880-1946), born in Geneva, New York, was the first American artist to paint a completely abstract picture. However, unlike European abstract artists, his style of paintings did not fall into any particular cultural contexts. His work provided a sense of isolation, which mirrored his own reclusive nature. Dove took a spiritual approach to the depiction of landscapes. His landscapes were depicted as somewhat lyric meditations on nature, illuminating all moods and shades of nature. After graduating from Cornell University in 1903, Dove spent time working as a magazine illustrator. Five years later he visited France, where the influence of Henri Matisse and Paul Cezanne seeped through to his own work. Following his trip to France, Dove began experimenting with the usage of bright colors, curvilinear rhythms and non-naturalistic representation. In addition to owning a farm in Connecticut, Dove went through a period where he led a nomadic life, camping in the wilderness. Similarly after splitting with his wife, Dove spent seven years sailing through the Long Island Sound. These experiences aided Dove in forming a close-knit, more personal relationship with nature that strongly influenced his work.

Stuyvesant Square. 1907. Oil on canvas, 90 x 108 cm (illustration in text)

Asher Brown Durand (1796-1886) was born in Jefferson Village, New Jersey into a family of nine. Due to the modest financial situation of his family, he was not formally educated. While the rest of Durand’s siblings were working on the family farm, his poor health led him to learn his father’s watchmaking and silversmith trades. This is where Durand’s exposure to engraving began. (Published in John Durand, The Life and Time of A.D. Durand, New York 1894 p. 21). Eros Smith, an acquaintance of Durand’s father, saw some of Asher’s work in his father’s store and was able to get Asher an apprenticeship in New York with renowned engraver, Swatchell Leney. After spending many years painting landscapes during summer trips to Catskill, the Adirondacks and the White Mountains, it became evident that Durand’s focus had shifted to wilderness landscapes. By 1848, Durand was recognized as the principal American landscape painter. The landscapes of Durand leaned towards German Romanticism. The work of Durand was known for subdued theatrical composition and placid, unified lighting. Durand’s usage of tonal variation and disembodied subjects prove to be stylistic characteristics that allow the true essence of nature to be the main focus of the painting, as it removes excess distractions.

Pro Patria. 1860. Oil on canvas, 57 x 42 cm. L. Thomas Melly Collection. (illustration in text)
William Garnett realized his passion for the American landscape in a rather unorthodox manner. While flying cross-country after serving as a cameraman for the United States Army during World War II, Garnett was in awe of the beauty of the aerial view of landscapes. Garnett was so struck by the views he saw, he learned how to pilot a plane so he would have the ability to photograph such views. He single-handedly transformed aerial photos that had been seen as purely scientific into works of artistic genius that resemble abstract expressionist paintings. The American landscapes he produced were meant to enlighten humans by revealing patterns that cannot be seen from the ground without the conventional horizon line depicted in many other American landscapes.

Childe Hassam (1849-1935), a Dorchester, Massachusetts native, was apprenticed to a wood engraver at the age of seventeen and soon thereafter became a freelance illustrator. Hassam was briefly enrolled in night classes at the Boston Art Club and subsequently studied anatomy with William Rimmer at the Lowell Institute. After having private painting lessons, Hassam traveled to Great Britain, Spain, Italy and France, producing numerous watercolor landscapes. Hassam married Kathleen Maude Doane after his travels and the couple lived in Boston and then Paris. After returning to the United States, Hassam spent his summers capturing the light and atmosphere of New England landscapes. Hassam was a prolific painter that was highly venerated for such depiction of light and atmosphere.

*Church at Old Lyme.* 1924. Etching, 35 x 31 cm. Robert North Collection.
Katherine Jackson (b. 1943), of New York City, attended Harvard University in 1965 to receive her Bachelors and in 1977 received her Ph.D. in English. While at Harvard, Jackson was a teaching assistant for English Literature classes. From 1998-1999, Jackson attended the fifth year certificate program at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Throughout her time in the fifth year certificate program she was an assistant professor at the museum. Following her time at the museum Jackson taught art at an inner city school in Dorchester, Massachusetts and subsequently in 2006-2007, Jackson was a non-resident studio instructor at Maine College of Art. Jackson is known for its essential “meditation on language,” catching the viewer between visual and verbal ways of experiencing the world. The landscapes Jackson constructs call on all of the senses with the mixing of mediums and colors such as glass, oil paints, and rice paper.

Camus Series #3. 2007. Archival print, 91 x 122 cm.
Corinne Jones (b. 1954), a Texas native, received her Bachelor of Fine Art at Austin Peay State and her Masters of Fine Art at Austin State University. She is currently teaching art classes at Angelina College in Texas. Both botanical studies as well as bird studies influence the method in which she approaches the landscape works she creates. Jones experiments between creating two-dimensional and three-dimensional works of art. Rather than focusing on constructing a naturalistic representation of the subjects of her artwork, Jones focuses on emphasizing “sculptural characteristics.” She uses layering of mediums as a means to convey metaphors.

Menashe Kadishman (b. 1932) was born in Tel Aviv, Israel. By 1947, he was studying with the famous sculptor Moshe Sternschuss and a few years later with another sculptor Rudi Lehmann. After studying rigorously with these two sculptors, Kadishman attended both the St. Martin’s School of Art and the Slade School of Art in London. In the early sixties, Kadishman started his career as a minimalist painter and “continued on to become a pioneer of conceptual art in the late sixties.” In the 1980’s, Kadishman shifted his focus from minimalist painting back to painting and sculpting. During this transition, he also took a new interest in depicting naturalistic imagery in his work through an abstract perspective.

Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849) was a creative and innovative woodblock painter, known for having a profound influence in Western impressionism. At the age of fourteen, Hokusai apprenticed as an engraver. Four years later, Hokusai met Katsukawa Shunsho and entered his theatrical prints studio. He was influenced by many artistic influences, including both Western and Chinese art, constructing a universality to his style. This proved to be a strongly distinguishing quality from the other Ukiyo-e. Hokusai strongly influenced the establishment of prints of landscapes, birds and flowers as an independent category from the Ukiyo-e.

Umeya. 1800-1899. Woodcut, 32 x 42 cm.  
Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji: Partial View of the Mitsui Stores at Surugacho in Edo. 1830. Woodcut, 28 x 49 cm (illustration in text)
**Hugh Kepets (b. 1946)**, a Cleveland, Ohio native, is one of the most inventive American landscape artists of the 20th century. In 1964, Kepets received his BFA at Carnegie Mellon University. Subsequently he received his BA from Ohio University. He moved to New York City in 1973, where his art became immediately successful. He now lives in Milford, Connecticut, but keeps a residence in the city. Although his main residence is Millford, Kepets still keeps a place in the city as he has lived and worked there for the last three decades.” Working primarily with structural, architectural and still life subject matter, Kepets goes far beyond the simple depiction of his material.” Kepets work can be characterized by having the unusual dualism between complex and engaging. He takes objects that are fairly common and transforms them into evocative abstractions. Similarly, he uses unorthodox representations of space and perspective.

*Smithfield street bridge*. 1980. Silkscreen, 76 x 89 cm. Welsh Collection of Contemporary Art. (illustration in text)

**Michael Kessler (b. 1954)** was born in Hanover, Pennsylvania and currently lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico. His layering of squares and rectangles with swirls of organic background are reminiscent of Hans Hofmann. “Appearances are deceptive, and anyone who is interested in the true nature of the universe knows that there are far more questions than answers. The more we know, the more we know we don’t know. I want my paintings to reflect both the desire to know and the futality of trying to know.” Nature plays a big role, not so much how nature looks but how it seems to work. Most obvious are the architectonic devices which bring to mind the cityscape rather than the landscape.

*Cadmia*. 2003. Acrylic on panel, 168 x 112 cm. John Raimondi collection. (illustration in text)
Paul Klee (1879–1940) was a Swiss painter with a highly individual style influenced by movements such as Expressionism, Cubism and Surrealism. Additionally, Klee had an avid interest in color theory which he exercised through experimentation and documented writing. The youngest of two, Klee was born into the household of a music teacher and a trained singer. Thus, Klee was exposed to both visual and performing arts at an early age. At his eighth birthday, Klee’s passion was instigated when receiving a box of sidewalk chalk from his grandmother. In 1898 Klee began studying at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich with Heinrich Knirr and Franz von Stuck. Although Klee exhibited a natural talent at drawing, he struggled with grasping any sort of natural color sense. This lack in his artistic mind suppressed Klee’s true artistic nature until he received an epiphany when visiting Tunisia and witnessing both the quality of light and the effect the light had on color.  

Stanley Lewis (b. 1941) is a landscape painter who approaches his work with a “sculptor’s sensibility” and a personal perception of the world. His landscapes are depicted through various layers of mediums that may be carved, torn, cut or covered thickly with paint. Often times the landscapes are depicted on a certain level of abstraction Lewis received a BA from Wesleyan University and both a BFA and MFA degrees from the Yale School of Art. After his time as a student, Lewis became one of the most highly respected art educators in the country. From 1990 to 2002 Lewis was a professor at American University as well as Kansas City Art Institute. Lewis is currently teaching at the New York Studio School.

*Untitled.* 1900-99. Drawing, 102 x 82 cm.
Ron Netsky (b. 1952) grew up in New York State. He attended Philadelphia College of art in 1973 where he received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. After college, Netsky proceeded to receive his Master of fine arts Degree from Washington University in 1975. Ron Netsky is currently teaching printmaking at Nazareth College in Rochester, NY.

Naumkeag II. 1996. Etching, 42 x 39 cm.
Samuel Palmer (1805-1881), a London native, was known for his painting and etchings. As an integral member of the English romanticism movement, Palmer created visions of the ideal pastoral life. His humble upbringings as the son of a bookseller and a pious nurse strongly influenced the subject matter and sentimental nature of his art. Palmer had no formal artistic training. Palmer and six of his friends formed a group called “The Ancients” who shared similar outlooks regarding their symbiotic relationship with nature and influence of William Blake. Palmer lived with this group of artists in Shoreham, England where he constructed “marvelous works transcend time and space; they relate to the Bible and the classics, especially Virgil, and speak of separateness, loss, absence and melancholia.”

Weary ploughman. 1858. Etching, 41 x 48 cm. Robert North Collection.
(illustration in text)

DeWitt Parshall (1864-1956) was born in Buffalo, New York. He attended Hobart College in 1894 and during his time there, developed a talent and love for the art of caricature. Following his graduation, Parshall sailed for Dresden where he attended the Royal Academy for art. While abroad, Parshall additionally studied in Paris at Academies Cormon and Julian. In 1917 Parshall moved to Santa Barbra, California where he remained until his death. Parshall’s most famous works were oil paint on Masonite. As “one of the foremost American landscape painters of the 20th century,” Parshall had a strong influence on the Santa Barbra art community. He was known as a tonalist who visited all sites he painted, but physically painted them from memory, which gave his works a romantic and emotional tone.

Jean Baptiste Pater (1696-1736), a French rococo painter, was born in Valenciennes to an artistic and cultured family. Pater’s father was a sculptor and he spent many years teaching him the trade. He grew up painting festival scenes and was artistically influenced predominately by Jean-Antione Watteau whom he worked under for a few years. Tempermental dissagreement separated the partners, and Pater eventually returned home broke. In addition to Watteau, Pater was influenced by the compositions, settings, costumes and jovial moods of Flemish art. In 1728, Pater was accepted into the Academie Royale. However, he was never successful enough to be consistently financially secure. Pater spend most of his life on an unsteady flow of income, never being able to relax.

The Bird Trap. 1700-1799. Oil on canvas, 76 x 108 cm.
(illustration in text)

Gillian Pederson-Krag (b. 1938) attended received her Bachelor in Fine Art degree from Rhode Island School of Design and proceeded to receive her Masters in Fine Art degree from Cornell University. Since then in addition to printmaking, Pederson-Krag has taught at Cornell, Dartmouth, and at Hobart and William Smith colleges. Pederson-Krag brings a figurative and symbolic approach to constructing landscapes. Although she learned the art of printmaking while an undergrad, she did not fully explore it until years after graduating. After exploring printmaking, she discovered that etching provided a different element to a picture, as it can induce a different range of emotion.

Landscape-Ithaca. 1989. Oil on canvas, 49 x 60 cm.
Gillian Pederson-Krag
Landscape - Ithaca, 1989
Eliot Porter (b. 1901) in Chicago suburb Winnetka, Illinois was the second of five children. Porter was brought up in a middle-class household by a father who, although worked in the realm of real estate, infused his passion for natural history into his children. Growing up with this sort of exposure to science and environmental knowledge provided a strong influence on Porter, as when he received his first camera at the age of 10 he immediately wanted to photograph the outdoors. Porter was sent east to a high school boarding school, then remained out East to go to college at Harvard. Although he graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in chemical engineering and subsequently in medicine, Porter remained passionate about photography. After working at Harvard as a biochemical researcher, the influence of his brother and realist painter Fairfield Porter and photographers Alfred Stieglitz and Ansel Adams pushed Porter to take up photography full time. Porter had a specific interest in photographing northern New England landscapes. Porter was first recognized for his black and white photographs. However he progressed to working with color in order to capture a more actuate depiction of birds using Georgia O’keefe’s dye transfer process. Eventually Porter became the, “first established artist-photographer to commit to exploring the colorful beauty and diversity of the natural world.”

Chester J. Straub Collection

Don Resnick (1928-2010), although born in the bright lights and tall building environment of New York City, has captured the truest, most organic essence of American landscapes in his oil paintings. After attending Hobart College in Geneva, New York, Resnick continued his studies at The School for Social Research in New York City and subsequently at the Internationale Akademie fur Bildende Kunst in Salzburg, Austria. Following his years of studying, Resnick worked from his home-studio in Long Island New York. The work of Resnick has changed and evolved over time from tight, clean brush strokes to “increasingly loose, even impulsive brushwork, and an almost watercolor-like lucidity.” Additionally, his latest works depicts a special focus on utilizing the fading light of a sunset as a means to unify the elements of sun, sea and land. Resnick has the power to transform any mundane vision or commonplace into a fresh, innovative illustration. Hobart class of 1949.

Tidal pools. 1900-99. Oil on canvas, 122 x 163 cm.
(illustration in text)
Eliot Porter

*Waterfall, Hagavatn, Iceland, July 25.*
1972. Cibachrome, 61 x 51 cm.
Chester J. Straub Collection
James Rosenquist (b. 1933) was born in North Dakota and currently lives and works in both Florida and New York City. As a child, Rosenquist traveled frequently throughout the Midwest. In junior high, Rosenquist received a scholarship to study art at the Minneapolis School of Art. Rosenquist attended University of Minnesota as a studio art major and studied with Cameron Booth who provided a strong influence Rosenquist’s art. During the summers of his college years, Rosenquist painted signs and bulk storage tanks for a contractor in Wisconsin and continued to work in the realm of commercial art after college painting billboards for different companies. After saving enough throughout his commercial career, Rosenquist took a year off to focus completely on his art. During this year, Rosenquist shifted from producing abstract expressionist works to constructing images of fragmented popular culture by experimenting in numerous different printmaking studios. In the following years, Rosenquist participated in many aspects of political art, the most famous portraying anti-Vietnam beliefs. Rosenquist additionally took part in governmental acts directly, as he spent many years fighting the U.S. Senate for the legal rights of artists.

Arthur Rothstein (b. 1915) had already taken an interest to photography before attending Columbia College. While at Colombia, Rothstein founded the Camera Club, and used photography as a means of supplementing his tuition. He was mentored by Roy Stryker and Rex Tugwell. Due to the Great Depression, Rothstein joined the Farm Security Administration. Following the Great Depression, Rothstein worked for Look Magazine as a photographer until the Second World War. During the Second World War he became part of the Office of War Information, for which photographing China, Burma and India. Rothstein played an integral role in the development of photography, as he invented the X-O Graph, a 3D printing process. Through his lens, Rothstein had the ability to depict landscapes in their most authentic essence. He was an observer who captured the devastation and severity of rural life without intruding with his surroundings.

*Agate, Nebraska.* Gelatin silver, 35 x 28 cm.
(illustration in text)

*Sheepherder’s Camp, Montana.* 1939. Gelatin silver, 25 x 28 cm.
Walter Elmer Schofield (1867-1944) was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Schofield studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and later at the Académie Julian in Paris. He became associated with a circle of American realists of the period such as Edward Redfield, Everett Shinn, Robert Henri and George Luks as well as the impressionists of Pennsylvania. Following his marriage to Muriel Redmayne, Schofield settled in St. Ives, Cornwall, England. This quaint colony proved to have a lasting influence on him, where he learned the tradition of plein air landscape painting. Schofield preferred to paint directly from nature, even if that meant enduring a blustering snowstorm. This direct connection between the painting and the landscape infused the painting with a true essence of the energy and excitement of the subject matter. Schofield was best known for the vivacious, masculine style. His work progressed from having a soft, romantic quality, to his later work that was distinguished by intrepid realism and impressionism.

Morning snow. 1914. Painting, 127 x 152 cm.
David Shapiro (b. 1944) was born in Brooklyn, NY. He attended the Skowhegan School of Art in 1965. A few years later, Shapiro received his BFA at PRATT Institute back in Brooklyn. He subsequently received his MFA at Indiana University. Shapiro additionally taught at Western Michigan University, Pratt, Barnard, and University of Bridgeport and at Parsons School of design.

Toshi Yoshida (1911-1995) was born in Tokyo as the eldest son to printmaker and painter Hiroshi Yoshida. As an early child, one of Toshi’s legs became paralyzed which provoked him to produce sophisticated drawings and sketches of objects and animals around his home. At the age of nineteen, Toshi accompanied his father on a trip to India where he sketched as many landscapes and animals as possible. His father, being a printmaker in the sosaku hanga movement, strongly influenced Toshi’s early artistic development, as his father did not allow any artistic freedom for Toshi during his time as an apprentice to him. In addition to his father’s artistic boundaries, in 1936 military dictatorship severely censored all art. In 1940, Toshi married Kiso Yoshida. When his father died in 1950, Toshi broke away from the naturalism in which his father so strongly had encouraged, and began experimenting with abstraction. In his late years, Toshi reverted his focus to animal prints and even illustrated picture books.

Irożaki day. 1961. Woodcut, 45 x 53 cm. Robert North Collection. (illustration in text)
Susan Unterberg (b. 1941) was educated at Sarah Lawrence College and later received her M.A. in Photography at New York University. Unterberg is known for her diverse style and level of abstraction. She has a keen focus on color, shape and movement, and digresses from the focus of specific objects. Throughout her artistic career, Unterberg progressed from producing conventional portraiture to using metaphors as a means of depicting people.  

*Water dreams: Fish and clouds.* 1995. Chromogenic print, 76 x 102 cm.
Notes:

5. Paías, Manuel.
10. Weston, 85.
11. Weston, 86.
22. Michener, 1. 2001-2010, The James A. Michener Art Museum. All rights reserved. James A. Michener Art Museum | 138 S. Pine St. | Doylestown, PA
25. Smith, Robert. 1999,
26. Amon Carter Museum Website (Will find correct way to site after meeting with IT)
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34. Hoffman, 484
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http://www.chandlersf.com/artists/jones

http://www.duncanmillergallery.com/boubat

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The Davis Gallery at Houghton House is named in honor of Clarence “Dave” Davis ’48, a nurseryman and loyal alumnus. His leadership gifts to the Colleges have significantly enhanced the visual arts on campus, funding the recent renovation of The Davis Gallery and a permanent endowment for the gallery. Mr. Davis has also made long-term arrangements to create an endowed chair in the visual arts.
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