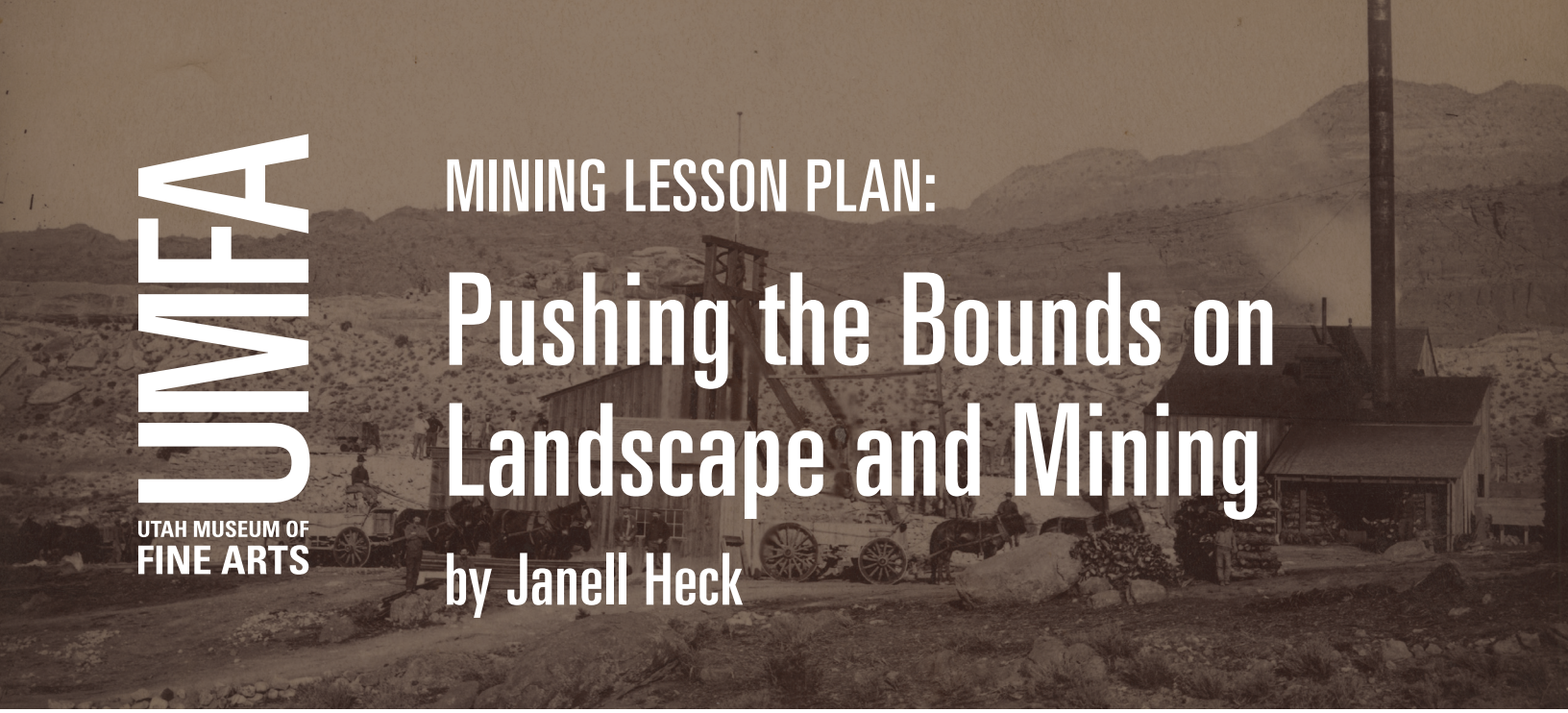

UMFA
UTAH MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

MINING LESSON PLAN:
Pushing the Bounds on Landscape and Mining

by Janell Heck

In this lesson, students will be pushing the bounds when it comes to landscape and how we view mining.

Students will be referring to work by artist Patrick Nagatani found in UMFA's *Mining in the West* digital exhibition to create a new landscape altered by mining. "Mining" can be taken in many different ways and various contexts whether it be literal or symbolic (data mining, information mining, etc.) This lesson is designed to expand the ideas around the word "mining".

Students will be looking at Nagatani's work for inspiration and use these techniques when painting a landscape.

Objectives:

Students will

- Find inspiration from Patrick Nagatani and artworks *Mining in the West* digital exhibition
- Learn about how mining impacts the environment
- Learn how to make compositional landscapes
- Learn color mixing and theory
- Use different brushes and brush marks
- Complete a landscape painting

Grade level:

High School (advanced painting). Could be revised for lower levels.

Duration:

60 minutes - Introduction of topic and project

Additional class periods needed for student research, planning, and techniques.

Materials:

- Canvas
- Paint gesso
- Various brushes
- Matte medium
- Color palette or containers
- Paper towels
- Water

Vocabulary/Key Terms:

- Collage – a piece of art made by combining different materials such as photographs, pieces of paper, and/ or fabric on to a backing.
- Composition – putting together a conscious idea or thought into an art piece.
- Gesso – a hard compound of plaster of Paris or whiting glue, used for sculpture or as a base for gliding or paneling in wood.
- Matte medium – a paint additive that helps acrylic paints have volume and adds moisture. Also used for a matte finish on your paintings.
- Chromogenic process – a chromogenic print, also known as a C-print or C-type print, a silver halide print, or a dye coupler print, is a photographic print made from a color negative, transparency or digital image, and developed using a chromogenic process.

Activity

Step 1:

For prepping this lesson, students will be looking over the *Mining in the West* digital exhibition, and focus on artworks by Patrick Nagatani. As a class, discuss the artworks, their possible meanings, and processes for creation. Highlight possible pros and cons about mining and how mining could be an abstract idea or symbol in addition to a literal means of extraction.

- How do we benefit from mining?
- What do we risk from it?

Step 2:

Prep canvas boards with gesso and give them time to dry.

Step 3:

Brainstorm and plan your artwork. Questions to consider:

- What landscape will you depict in your painting? Is it a real or imagined place, urban or nature scene? Why did you pick the landscape you did?
- How will your painting visually communicate an idea around mining? Is this idea literal or more abstract?
- What feelings do you hope your viewers will feel when they look at your painting?
- What are you trying to communicate to them?

Step 4:

Students will present their ideas with peers and revise their ideas based on feedback. This can be effective in ensuring the final pieces are pushing the broader topic of mining and meeting learning objectives.

Step 5:

Begin painting.

Step 6:

Have students assess how their paintings are developing throughout the process to see if they are meeting their goals.

Methods for Assessment:

- Students will write an artist statement explaining their piece and process. They could write about references used, inspiration, process of ideas, meaning behind their painting, themes of mining, etc.

Additional Resources:

www.patricknagatani.com

Artwork Spotlight:

Patrick Nagatani (American), *Cow Pie Yellow Cake, Uranium Mine, Homestake mining Company, near Mi. Taylor, Milan and Grants, New* Mexico, 1990, chromogenic process, paper. Gift of Dr. Mark Reichman, UMFA2003.25.27.

Patrick Nagatani (American), *Uranium tailings, Anaconda Minerals Corporation, Laguna Pueblo Reservation, New Mexico,* 1990, chromogenic process, paper. Gift of Dr. Mark Reichman, UMFA2003.25.28.

Patrick Nagatani (American), *Japanese Children's Day Carp Banners, Pagua de Village, Jackple Mina. Uranium Tailings, Laguna Pueblo Reservation, New Mexico*, 1990, chromogenic process, paper. Gift of Dr. Mark Reichman, UMFA2003.25.29.

Patrick Nagatani (American), *Trinitite Ground Zero, Trinity Site, New Mexico,* 1989, chromogenic process, paper. Gift of Dr. Mark Reichman, UMFA2003.25.59.

- "Trinitite is desert sand fused into glass by the force of a nuclear explosion. It inherited its name from the Trinity test, the first nuclear bomb dropped in the New Mexican desert in the summer of 1945. Here in Nagatani's photograph, it rains down from the sky."

Patrick Nagatani (American), *Waste Isolation Pilot Plant Nuclear Crossroads, U.S. 285, 60, 54, Vaughn, New Mexico,* 1989, chromogenic process, paper. Gift of Dr. Mark Reichman, UMFA2003.25.55.

Patrick Nagatani (American), *Golden Eagle, United Nuclear Corporation Uranium Mill and Tailings, Churchrock, New Mexico,* 1990, chromogenic process, paper. Gift of Dr. Terry and Lee Anne Box, UMFA2004.18.3.

Contributer Bio:

My name is Janell Heck, I am an Art Education major at The University of Utah. I'm in my last year at the University and graduating in spring of 2022. Most of my work revolves around environmental, landscapes, and natural aspects. While at The U, I have found an interest in printmaking and hoping to use these new techniques in my future work.

Additional edits and some formatting and layout changes were made to this lesson by Annie Burbidge Ream, Co-Director of Learning and Engagement at the Utah Museum of Fine Arts.

Heading image | Photograph of the Buckeye Mine at Silver Reef, Utah, ca. 1885. detail, Mark A. Pendleton Photograph Collection, P0008, Special Collections, J. Willard Marriott Library, University of Utah.