

Educators' Supplement

American Horizons:
The Photographs of Art Sinsabaugh

Indiana University Art Museum
2008

Table of Contents

Introduction, 3

General Information

- About the Exhibition, 4
- About the Art Sinsabaugh Archive, 4
- About the Indiana University Art Museum, 4
- About the Artist, 5–6

Lesson 1: American Horizons: A Sense of Place

- Background Information, 6–7
- Concepts, Standards, and Objectives, 7–9
- Looking and Talking about Art, 9–10
- Activities, 11–12
- Library Resources, 12

Lesson 2: The Changing Landscape: Urban and Rural Environments and Somewhere In-Between

- Background Information, 13
- Concepts, Standards, and Objectives, 14–16
- Looking and Talking about Art, 16
- Activities, 16–18
- Library Resources, 18

Lesson 3: The Photographic Eye: Considering the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design

- Background Information, 18
- Concepts, Standards, and Objectives, 19–20
- Looking and Talking about Art, 20–21
- Activities, 21–22
- Library Resources, 22

Appendices, 23–26

Acknowledgements, 27

Introduction

This packet was designed to aid teachers in preparing their students, grades 3–6, for a visit to the exhibition, *American Horizons: The Photographs of Art Sinsabaugh*. Here, educators will find three interdisciplinary lessons, each with a theme: a sense of place, the changing landscape, and the elements of art and principles of design. Each thematic lesson promotes opportunities for integration with a myriad of subject areas, including: fine arts, visual literacy, language arts, geography, social sciences, U.S. history, and environmental studies (as per national education standards). Each lesson contains images with accompanying questions and activities that serve as catalysts for teachers and students to analyze, compare, and reflect.

Educators should adapt these lessons to meet their individual needs. If you are not able to visit the exhibition, please visit the on-line version at http://www.iub.edu/~iuam/online_modules/sinsabaugh/.

For more information about this Educational Supplement, contact Ed Maxedon, The Lucienne M. Glaubinger Curator of Education, at gmaxdedon@indiana.edu.

Lesson 1: A Sense of Place

- Rediscovering the American landscape through the lens of Art Sinsabaugh’s camera
- Experiencing a sense of place as defined by our psychological relationship with the environment
- Exploring a sense of place through poetry, music, and visual art

Lesson 2: The Changing Landscape: Urban and Rural Environments

- Examining how humans have shaped landscapes
- Documenting changes to landscape through photography and oral history

Lesson 3: The Photographic Eye: Elements of Art and Principles of Design

- Seeing through the eyes of an artist
- Experiencing how a photographer works
- Learning and understanding the language of art
- Observing our own landscapes as inspiration for artistic expression

General Information

About the Exhibition

A major exhibition, *American Horizons: The Photographs of Art Sinsabaugh*, organized by the Indiana University Art Museum, began a national tour with stops at The Art Institute of Chicago (Oct. 2, 2004–Jan. 2, 2005); Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio (Feb. 11–April 17, 2005); Krannert Museum of Art, University of Illinois, Champaign (June 3–Aug. 7, 2005); and Indiana University Art Museum, Bloomington (Oct. 1–Dec. 23, 2005). An extended tour continued to the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri (Jan. 26–April 6, 2008) and Monterey Museum of Art, California (June 7–Sept. 7, 2008). This retrospective represents the first complete survey of the artist's career ever assembled, including nearly one hundred photographs, with the majority drawn from the Art Sinsabaugh Archive at Indiana University. The retrospective is accompanied by the long-awaited monograph on the artist—written by the exhibition's guest curator and noted photo-historian Keith F. Davis and published by Hudson Hill Press—and a video on the artist's life and work, produced by IU Radio and Television Services. The Art Sinsabaugh documentary will also air nationwide on PBS in April 2008 and be available for purchase through PBS Home Video.

About the Art Sinsabaugh Archive

Art Sinsabaugh's work is preserved in the Art Sinsabaugh Archive at the Indiana University Art Museum, Bloomington. This unique collection includes over 3,000 photographs, as well as the artist's negatives, master slides, and papers. It is open to the public and scholars by request. To schedule a visit contact Nan Brewer, the Lucienne M. Glaubinger Curator of Paper, at nabrewer@indiana.edu or (812) 855-1040. Please allow at least two weeks notice.

About the Indiana University Art Museum

The Indiana University Art Museum's encyclopedic collection, ranging from ancient gold jewelry and African masks to paintings by Claude Monet and Pablo Picasso, includes over 35,000 objects—paintings, prints, drawings, photographs, sculpture, ceramics, jewelry, and textiles—representing nearly every art-producing culture throughout history. Developed as an educational resource, the collection not only comprises excellent examples of the major artistic traditions of the world, it also serves as an introduction to cultures and societies far removed from ours both historically and geographically.

About the Artist

Art Sinsabaugh's Childhood

The roots of my career as a photographer go back to my boyhood in New Jersey. I was always searching and exploring the visual world around me through geology, chemistry, film, and finally photography.

—Art Sinsabaugh (1971)

Art Sinsabaugh was born in 1924 and grew up in Irvington, a suburb of Newark, New Jersey. He was an only child who enjoyed the benefits of nurturing parents and a comfortable middle-class home. Both his mother and father were teachers who encouraged their son's curiosity and sense of discovery. This was especially evident on their annual summer road trips, where traveling was a source of entertainment, adventure, and inspiration for the entire family. In fact, some of his first photographs were snapshots of his family vacations, taken with a simple "Brownie" camera. Later, sometime in his teens, he acquired an 8-mm movie camera and an inexpensive 35-mm camera.

His snapshots of his father and mother—often recorded arm in arm, posed near their travel trailer among trees or beside a lake—are direct and affectionate. It seems clear that, for young Art, the act of photography was intertwined with the things he most loved: family, nature, and leisure. One gets the sense that photography was an expression of freedom and security, a way of commemorating the comforting patterns of his life as well as recording what was new.

Art Sinsabaugh's Training

Sinsabaugh began his formal art training after serving in the military as an army photographer. In 1946, he was accepted into the Institute of Design in Chicago, founded by Hungarian photographer László Moholy-Nagy. This school, known for its innovative approach to teaching fine arts and commercial design, offered an intellectually stimulating environment for its students. The instructors, Arthur Siegel and Harry Callahan, had just implemented a new four-year photography program. Both men were instrumental in shaping Sinsabaugh's artistic development. Callahan inspired the young student with his strong work ethic and inner drive to create art, and Siegel, as a documentary photographer, encouraged him to become an active observer and participant in the world at large.

Art Sinsabaugh's Early Career

After his graduation in 1949, Sinsabaugh was hired as an instructor at the Institute of Design, teaching photography with Callahan. By 1952, Sinsabaugh was acquiring additional jobs as a freelance photographer and graphic designer. Still continuing to teach part-time in the evenings for the Institute of Design, Sinsabaugh worked hard on his art, searching for his own photographic style.

In 1959, Sinsabaugh was offered a full-time teaching position at the University of Illinois in Champaign, and he moved from the congested, urban environment of Chicago to the open, rural country of central Illinois. The wide expanse of flat farm fields in every direction forced Sinsabaugh to look at landscape in an entirely new way, and thus transformed his art.

Art Sinsabaugh's Photographs

Sinsabaugh made his artistic breakthrough in the early 1960s with a giant “banquet” camera that produced 12 x 20-inch negatives. He developed a unique methodology that utilized the extra-large-format contact prints cropped (sometimes dramatically) to evoke the sweeping horizons he saw in nature. He was a landscape photographer in the broadest sense: he photographed the spaces—both rural and urban—that we inhabit.

Working in large series, he sought to create an all-encompassing “census” of the American landscape—the rural Midwestern farm (Midwest Landscape Group), the urban cityscapes of Chicago and Baltimore (Chicago and Baltimore Landscape Groups), the mountains and resorts of New England and the barren deserts of the southwest (American Landscape Group). Rather than focusing on individual people and places, Sinsabaugh captured the rhythms of human life and our relationship to the land through the formal elements—the buildings, silos, bridges, highways, homes, skyscrapers, trees, and gravestones—that punctuate our views. Taken as a whole, Sinsabaugh's remarkable photographs capture a richly nuanced sense of place and the ever-changing face of the American environment.

Scan #0: Jon Pownall, *Art Sinsabaugh on Balcony of Marina City after Making Chicago Landscape* [#157], 1964 © 2004, Lynda Pownall-Carlson

Lesson 1 – American Horizons: A Sense of Place

Background Information

A sense of place is a concept that refers to our psychological relationship with an environment. Visual artists have a long tradition of recording this relationship, whether through landscape painting, photography, or other art forms.

Sinsabaugh was very responsive and sensitive to his natural surroundings. He may have developed his love of nature while traveling extensively across country with his family on vacations. One summer the Sinsabaugh family traveled approximately 10,000 miles on a western expedition through South Dakota, Montana, Oregon, California, Colorado, Iowa, and Illinois.

When Sinsabaugh eventually settled in the Midwest, first in Chicago and then in Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, he was initially struck by the emptiness of the landscape and its difference from his native New England.

I drove and I drove and I drove and I drove. It must have taken an hour and a half and as I passed the last hot-dog stand, I realized I was in the country but so much so, so much in the country, that there just wasn't anything there, nothing.

—Art Sinsabaugh (1967)

Nevertheless, the artist continued to return to the outskirts until he began to appreciate the “unbelievable infinite detail on the horizon”—the silos, telephone poles, trees, houses, outbuildings, tombstones, and rhythmically plowed fields. The once seemingly blank space now yielded a wealth of visual possibilities.

By the late 1960s, Sinsabaugh conceived his most ambitious project: a visual census of the entire country. Inspired by Dorothea Lange's 1964 *Project One* (a plan for teams of photographers to document all facets of American life) he applied for and received a Guggenheim Fellowship. He headed east, taking pictures in Illinois, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine. The country's varied topography and cultural geography required that he find new ways of seeing appropriate to each region.

Although he eventually realized that the original scope of his “American Landscape” project was impossible, Sinsabaugh resumed his survey of the American land in the 1980s. He traveled to the Southwest, as well as returning to familiar haunts in New England. These late works are marked by a new sense of serenity and wonder, recalling both the majesty of the surroundings and the legacy of nineteenth-century landscape photography.

As a photographer, Sinsabaugh used the camera to express his sense of place. Throughout his career, he recorded the places he knew best: first Chicago; then, the fields of central Illinois; and finally, the changing landscape across the U.S. Sometimes he revisited familiar places from his childhood and took photographs, working hard to capture his personal sense of place.

Concepts, Standards, and Objectives

After three years in Chicago...I decided to photograph in New England...I forgot what it was like, and when I first arrived I became claustrophobic. Everything seemed so close after the Midwest. It was a normal psychological reaction to the limited space, going from the flatlands to the mountains. I had this nostalgic memory of Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine from vacations as a child, and these were New England to me.

—Art Sinsabaugh (1980)

Concepts Explored in Lesson 1

This lesson explores a sense of place and examines our relationship with the environment in which we live.

Change is an inevitable part of our relationship with the environment.

National Education Standards

English and Language Arts, Geography, Social Sciences, and U.S. History

Students will understand

- the physical and human characteristics of places
- how physical systems affect human systems
- how folklore and other cultural contributions from various regions of the U.S. help to form a national heritage

Fine Arts

Students will

- describe how different materials, techniques, and processes cause different responses
- use different media techniques and processes to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories
- identify connections between the visual arts and other disciplines in the curriculum

Objectives of Lesson 1

- Students will explore and discuss photographs of Art Sinsabaugh through sensory perception.
- create a panoramic landscape depicting a meaningful place in their lives.
- write a sense poem describing their own landscape or memorable place.

Materials Needed

- Construction paper or watercolor paper cut to emphasize panoramic proportions: 6” x 18”
- Pencils
- Erasers
- Oil pastels
- Watercolors
- Photograph of a landscape
- Photographs of different regions of the U.S.

Motivational Options

- Read Kathy Jakobsen’s *This Land is Your Land* (see Lesson 1 Resources) and discuss the landscape illustrations.
- Listen to Woody Guthrie’s song *This Land is Your Land* (see Appendix B) and discuss the lyrics.
- Look and talk about Art Sinsabaugh’s photographs labeled 1-A, 1-B, 1-C, 1-D.

Vocabulary

horizon line – the line where water or land ends and the sky begins

panorama (*n.*), *panoramic* (*adj.*) – a wide, unbroken view of an entire surrounding area

crop – to cut or make smaller

landscape – an expanse of scenery that can be seen in a single view

banquet camera – an extra-large-format view camera originally designed to photograph large groups of people at indoor social gatherings

sense of place – a psychological relationship with an environment

view camera – a camera with lens, bellows, and a spring back that allows a sheet of film or glass plate holder to be inserted between the lens board and the back of the camera. Each photograph is taken on a single sheet of film or glass plate. It is called a view camera because its ground-glass viewing screen shows the photographer exactly what the film will record (albeit inverted). The image on the glass viewing screen is not very bright, and, to see it clearly, photographers put a black cloth over the back of the camera and their heads.

Looking and Talking about Art

Sinsabaugh frequently cropped the upper and lower registers of his *Midwest Landscape* photographs to emphasize the horizon. His images in this series are roughly twenty inches wide and less than five inches high. His narrowest image is only one inch high! The horizontal format forces us to pay close attention to the relationships of the details along the horizon line.

Sinsabaugh carried a large banquet camera to each site he wished to photograph. He spent hours, and sometimes even days, looking, contemplating, and waiting for that decisive moment which might capture that particular sense of place. Knowing that each landscape has its unique sense of place, Sinsabaugh was willing to wait. This patient method of making a photograph gave him the opportunity to more fully experience a landscape and become responsive to its poetic nuance and artistic possibilities.

Sinsabaugh photographed many places dear to his childhood. The *New Hampshire Landscape #21* (Scan #1-D) was intimately familiar to him from his repeated summer visits to New England. Revisiting places from childhood made him realize how much landscapes change over time.

Show these two photographs together to discuss the following questions:

Scan #1-A: *Chicago Landscape #122* from “Chicago Landscape Group,” 1964
Chicago skyline from Lake Michigan with Navy Pier

Scan #1-B: *Midwest Landscape #5* from “Midwest Landscape Group,” 1961
Narrow panoramic horizon showing farm and suburb

- How are these two photographs similar? How are they different?
- Describe what you see in these landscapes by Art Sinsabaugh.
- Where in the USA do you think these photographs were taken?
- Which things have the artist emphasized in each image?
- These images are in a panoramic format. Why might Sinsabaugh prefer to show his landscapes in this format?
- The artist cropped these photographs to make them narrower. What effect does cropping produce? How would the feeling change if the artist added more space to the top of the photograph? And/or the bottom?
- Can you locate the horizon line in each photograph? Look closely and describe the details that appear on the horizon line in each.
- How does the artist convey a sense of place in each photograph?

Show these photographs separately to discuss the following questions:

Scan #1-C: *Utah Landscape #8* from “American Landscape Group,” 1980
Southwestern U.S.A.

Scan #1-D: *New Hampshire Landscape #21* from “American Landscape Group,” 1969
Northeastern U.S.A.

Ask the students:

- Describe what you see in this photo.
- Where is the horizon line located?
- Are you looking at the scene from above, straight on, or from below?
- Do you think Sinsabaugh cropped this image? If so, where?
- What can you tell me about this place?
- Where do you think this place might be located?
- Create a title that you feel best describes this particular location.

Activities: Sense of Place

I. Visualize and create a panoramic landscape drawing.

Ask your students to visualize a place that is important to them. It might be a place they visited on a vacation, they see everyday, or they remember from their past.

- Visualize this special place.
- How does this place look, smell, and/or feel?
- What sounds might you hear in this place?
- Why is this place important to you?
- What feeling might you want to convey to others?
- Think about how you might use some, or all, of the elements of art (color, line, shape, form, etc.) to help you interpret your sense of place.
- What things might you emphasize in your panoramic landscape to suggest to others your sense of place?
- What things might you emphasize in your panoramic landscape to suggest to others your sense of place?
- Where will you place your horizon line?
- What colors, lines shapes, and/or textures might you select?

Have your students make a pencil drawing of a special place in a panoramic format.

1. Begin with a sketch from a photograph or from memory.
2. Mark on the page where you would like to crop the drawing to make it a panorama and emphasize the horizon line.
3. Crop your drawing.
4. To complete your pencil drawing, apply colored chalk, pencils, and/or markers to enhance your landscape.

II. Create a sense poem (see Appendix A for format) about your panoramic landscape

1. Read the lyrics to Woodie Guthrie's *This Land is Your Land* (see Appendix B), as well as the poems *Chicago* by Carl Sandburg and *Song of Industrial America* by Sherwood Anderson (see Appendices D & E).
2. Discuss and compare how these poets and this songwriter portray a sense of place.
3. Think of a title for your panoramic landscape and write a sense poem to describe your special place. Use the sense poem template in the appendix to help you formulate your ideas.
4. Plan an exhibition of the panoramic landscapes and sense poems.
5. Read your poem aloud in class and compare it to your landscape.

III. Reflection and Memory

- How did you create a panoramic landscape that expressed your sense of place? What did you choose to emphasize? Why?
- Why is this particular place important to you? What things did you emphasize on your horizon line? Why?
- Explain how your panoramic landscape might change throughout the day, the seasons, or over the years.
- Have your memories or feelings of this place changed over time? If so, how?

IV. Regional Awareness

Have the students bring in photographs from magazines or family collections that represent the different regions across the U.S. Compare the images and discuss.

- What do we mean by a “region?” (an area that has certain distinctive attributes, like climate, geographic features, customs, vegetation, types of homes, etc. that set it apart from other areas.)
- How many different regions of the U.S. can you name?
- What is unique about each of these regions?
- What is unique about our region?
- How might you define your sense of place in your neighborhood? Your town or city? State? Region? Country?
- How do the things mentioned below define your region of the country?

Rivers	Farms
Towns/Cities	Railroad tracks
Valleys	Hills
Forests	Lakes

Resources Available from Your Local Libraries

- Bunchman, Janis, and Stephanie Bissell Briggs. *Activities for Creating Pictures and Poetry*. Worcester, Mass.: Davis Publication, Inc., 1994.
- Davies, Richard O., Joseph A. Amato, and David R. Pichaske, eds. *Writings on the Midwestern Small Town*. Minneapolis: Minnesota Historical Society (Borealis Books), 2003.
- Davis, Keith A. *American Horizons: The Photographs of Art Sinsabaugh*. Manchester, Vt.: Hudson Hills Press, 2004
- Hiss, Tony. “The Experience of Place.” *Aperture* 150 (1998): 41-44.
- Jakobsen, Kathy. *This Land is Your Land*, words and music by Woody Guthrie. New York: Little Brown and Company, 1998. Book with CD.

Lesson 2 – The Changing Landscape: Urban and Rural Environments and Somewhere in Between

Background Information

A documentary photograph records a specific event or place at a specific time. However, it is never entirely objective. Artists' decisions are informed by a wide range of artistic, social, political, and/or personal influences. The photographer chooses the subject matter and shapes the imagery according to his or her opinions and attitudes toward it. In these images, Sinsabaugh focuses our attention on how humans have used the land.

Sinsabaugh immediately recognized that his landscapes could be more than simply beautiful panoramas. His work of the mid-1960s reflects a clear sense of social awareness. Shooting during a period of dramatic economic and social change (the age of urban renewal), he was particularly drawn to environments in transition—“before something was to go up or as something was coming down.”

His *Chicago Landscape Group* was undertaken in conjunction with the City of Chicago Department of City Planning's 1964 Comprehensive Plan. This relationship gave Sinsabaugh unprecedented public access.

I loved working in Chicago. We essentially made a trade. City Planning gave me the official authority to gain access to buildings, stop traffic, raise bridges, use city boats and helicopters, in exchange for prints, and a small amount of money. I felt as if the whole city were mine.
—Art Sinsabaugh (1980)

The resulting series, comprising almost three hundred images, is an in-depth visual document of the city, from its skyscrapers and row houses to its beaches and parking lots. In addition to picturesque views of the city's skyline, Sinsabaugh recorded the construction of new interstate highways as they separated older neighborhoods near downtown Chicago and the spread of suburbia into the rapidly vanishing rural areas of northern Illinois.

His straightforward, detached depictions of ordinary scenes, from junkyards to urban sprawl, foreshadowed the environmental concerns of the “New Topographic” photographers of the 1970s. While many of these ideas already were apparent in Sinsabaugh's *Chicago Landscape* series, they took center stage in the photographs he made in Baltimore. Working once again with an urban planning department, Sinsabaugh created images that highlight the city's economic transformation and the inevitable clashes between old and new ways of life.

Concepts, Standards, and Objectives

It became clearly apparent to me that I was into something much more than pretty pictures of Chicago as a prairie city. I could see that there was slowly developing a pattern of social awareness...in much of the city that I photographed, I was photographing the old because of my knowledge that it wouldn't be there forever. I found myself literally running from one end of the city to the other to try and photograph how an area appeared before something was to go up or how an area looked as something was coming down.

—Art Sinsabaugh (1967)

Even my city pictures I consider landscape, not cityscapes...I'm concerned with land and its uses and misuses.

—Art Sinsabaugh (1978)

In many respects, these photographs can't be done again, because the landscape has changed. The way it looked in the past doesn't exist anymore, except in someone's memory.

—Art Sinsabaugh (1980)

Concepts Explored in Lesson 2

This lesson will look at how humans have altered and shaped their physical Surroundings; how change can have a positive or negative effect on our environment and on humans; and, how change generates additional change.

National Education Standards

Geography, Social Sciences, & U.S. History

Students will understand

- the physical and human characteristics of places
- how physical systems affect human systems

Fine Arts

Students will

- describe how different materials, techniques, and processes cause different responses
- compare multiple purposes for creating artworks
- analyze, describe, and demonstrate how factors of time and place influence physical characteristics that give meaning and value to artworks
- identify connections between the visual arts and other disciplines in the curriculum

Objectives of Lesson 2

- Students will discuss and interpret meanings of photographs
- investigate changes in land use in their community
- document land use in their community

Materials

- Old photographs of your community
- Magazines
- Colored pencils
- Construction paper
- Glue sticks
- Scissors
- Notebook
- Pencils
- Camera

Motivational Options

- Have your students read *The Little House* by Virginia Lee Burton (see Lesson 2 Resources). Discuss the story and illustrations. Ask the students if they can think of a place where changes have altered the landscape. What has changed? What has remained the same? Are the changes positive or negative? Can they be both?
- Think about the landscape in and around your hometown. Why are natural places valuable to our communities? What might be a good example of a man-made place? How are man-made places valuable?
- Read out loud Sinsabaugh’s first quote at the beginning of the lesson, and ask the students to select which photographs they feel best show Sinsabaugh’s concern for land usage.

Vocabulary

documentary photograph – a photograph that serves as a factual record of an event or place

oral history – historical information consisting of personal recollections, usually obtained through tape-recorded interviews; the gathering and presentation of such information

point of view – a person’s opinion or perspective on something

subject matter – an object, scene, person or event chosen by an artist for representation

rural – refers to an area that is sparsely settled, where land is used primarily for farming; also referred to as “the country” or countryside

suburban – refers to a residential area or community located on the outskirts of a major city

urban – refers to a densely populated, area, such as a city or town

Looking and Talking about Art

Scan #2-A: *Chicago Landscape #48* from “Chicago Landscape Group,” 1964
Urban environment depicting an old neighborhood divided by an interstate

Scan #2-B: *Midwest Landscape #11* from “Midwest Landscape Group,” 1963
Recent suburban development next to a highway

Scan #2-C: *Midwest Landscape #9* from “Midwest Landscape Group,” 1962
Industry within a rural landscape

Scan #2-D: *Baltimore Landscape #7A* from “Baltimore Landscape Group,” 1967
Urban environment depicting a home next to a salvage yard

I. Before you begin, have your students spend a few minutes looking carefully at the photographs in this section and ask the following questions:

- What types of things might you expect to see in a rural landscape? A suburban landscape? An urban landscape (a city)?
- What type of landscape is this? (point to an example of each type of landscape)
- What do you think the photographer is trying to show us here?

II. Encourage students to discuss the many ways humans have altered their landscapes. Ask the following questions as you view each photograph in this section:

- Why do you think the artist has chosen this way to show the changing landscape?
- What might be the artist’s point of view?
- Can you think of both a positive and a negative way to interpret the photograph?
- Does this photograph show recent changes to the landscape?
- How do you think these changes to the landscape affect the people that live near these areas?

Activities: Documenting Change

I. Art Activity

For students:

1. Find an image of either a natural or rural landscape. You may use a picture from a magazine or an old photograph of your community for inspiration. If applicable, be sure to include the location and/or date of the original photograph.

2. Glue this photo or image to a piece of construction paper.
3. Next, find pictures of things that you feel are *either* urban *or* suburban in old magazines and cut them out.
4. Arrange these cut-out pictures on top of your original rural image to change it into *either* an urban *or* suburban one.
5. Glue these cutouts into place

II. Oral History Activity

- Have students interview and write down stories of family and/or senior community members who have witnessed urbanization in their communities. The students should document how the interviewees felt about these changes and how they affected their daily lives.
- Next, have the students examine old photographs of your community over the years. They may use the local library or historical society to research photographs in history books, newspapers, and other documents.
- Reproduce these photographs to make a classroom display or book depicting a timeline of all the changes that have occurred over a period of time in your community. Include quotes and stories from your interviews.
- Invite parents, grandparents, and/or other community members to visit your classroom to share a story of a building or place that no longer exists or has been transformed in some way.

III. Photography Activity

If students have access to cameras, consider the following assignments:

- Have students take photographs of a place in their community where construction is taking place. This site could be a natural landscape in the process of being converted into residential or commercial use, or it could be an older historic building being renovated or demolished. Ask students to write a story about what they think may be happening at this site.
- If students have found an old photograph of a particular site in their community, they could revisit this same location and photograph it again to document the changes that have occurred over time. Have the class examine the two photographs and discuss the changes shown.

IV. Writing Activity

- Have students write a short story about landscapes or places that have been transformed by human contact. Compare and discuss the advantages and disadvantages of human contact.

VI. Ecology Activity

- Discuss the reasons why different types of natural landscapes need to be preserved.
- What are some of the ways we can preserve natural landscapes?

- Have the class make a list of places around the U.S. that they feel need preservation.
- Have the class make a list of the places in their region that they feel need preservation

Resources Available at Your Local Library

- Barrett, Terry. *Criticizing Photographs: An Introduction to Understanding Images*. Mountain View, Calif.: Mayfield Pub. Co., 2000.
- Burton, Virginia Lee. *The Little House*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942.
- Davis, Keith F. *American Horizons: The Photographs of Art Sinsabaugh*. Manchester, Vt.: Hudson Hills Press, 2004.
- Duany, Andres, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck. *Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream*. New York: North Point Press, 2000.
- Kunstler, James Howard. *Geography of Nowhere: The Rise and Decline of America's Man-Made Landscape*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993.
- Müller, Jörg. *The Changing City*. New York: Atheneum Publishers, 1977.

Lesson 3 – The Photographic Eye: Considering the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design

Background Information

Like all languages, art communicates through its own basic vocabulary. Each artist finds her/his own voice within the language of art. First, the artist considers the elements of art, such as line, color, shape, value, and texture. Next, he or she uses the various principles of design, such as balance, emphasis, scale, perspective, and rhythm, to organize the elements of art and focus the viewer's attention on a composition. By learning the full range of the properties of different materials and tools, artists learn to create compositions, reflecting the personal, social, and/or physical functions of art.

At the Institute of Design, Sinsabaugh learned a broad spectrum of basic artistic skills. There, first-year art students enrolled in a variety of basic disciplines, including drawing, sculpture, color composition, and photography. The emphasis was on the basic elements of art and the principles of design as well as the expressive qualities of materials. The Institute's philosophy embraced and nurtured the pragmatic and the spiritual as well as the collective and individual concerns of each student.

Sinsabaugh's dual interests in abstraction and environments can be traced back to his study of design "problems" at the school. As a student—and, later, an instructor at the ID he developed sophisticated picture-making skills combined with an acute sensitivity to the visual possibilities of the American landscape. His cool, clear aesthetic has been described as a mixture of the great expansive vision of nineteenth-century landscape photographers with mid-twentieth century formalism (i.e. Carleton Watkins meets Sol LeWitt). One critic has equated this remarkable synthesis of subject and form with the elegance and refinement of "haiku" poetry.

Concepts, Standards, and Objectives

When any human being works with his hands, whatever he does will be translated into the brain as knowledge. This knowledge, in turn will react on his emotional self. That is how a higher level of personality is achieved.

—László Moholy-Nagy, the founder of the Institute of Design (1946)

The creative endeavor provides the energy for a remarkable process of inner development: in the act of making things, we remake ourselves.

—Keith F. Davis, *American Horizons: The Photographs of Art Sinsabaugh* (2004)

I'm not particularly concerned with the placement of objects or the horizon. I'm really concerned with the layering of strips, balancing the center, left and right of the frame, and the edges because that's where the photograph begins and ends. Sometimes I try to create tension at the edges, which I consider playing dangerously, but fun. The photographic image to me is almost sacred and should be handled so.

—Art Sinsabaugh (1980)

Concepts Explored In Lesson 3

This lesson explores how photographers use the elements of art and principles of design to create compositions.

National Education Standards: Fine Arts

- Students will generalize about the effects of visual structures and functions
- take advantage of qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques, and processes to enhance communication of ideas
- describe and compare responses to their own artwork and to artworks from various eras and cultures

Objectives of Lesson 3

- Students will examine photographs to understand the language of art
- Through a variety of activities, students will understand the decisions photographers make when creating an image
- Students will observe their own landscape as inspiration for artistic expression and meaning

Materials

- Viewfinders
- Cardstock or shoebox

- Pencil
- Drawing paper
- Panoramic or regular disposable cameras
- digital cameras (optional)

Motivational Options

- Make a viewfinder
- Ask the students to describe how Sinsabaugh utilized the elements of art and principles of design in his photographs
- Bring in an object from home and have students view the object from different vantage points

Vocabulary

composition – the plan, placement, and arrangement of the elements of art and the principles of design in a work

vantage point – the angle from which the artist observes her/his subject

frame – the horizontal and vertical edges of a photograph or an image

elements of art – the basic components used by the artist when producing works of art, including color, value, line, shape, form, texture, and space

principles of design – the artist’s choice and arrangement of the elements of art, including balance, emphasis, movement, rhythm, and repetition

focal point – the main area of visual attention or interest in an artwork’s composition

symmetry – the mirroring or duplication of one portion of an artist’s composition to another; also referred to as balance

Looking and Talking About Art

Scan #3-A: *Chicago Landscape #66* from “Chicago Landscape Group,” 1964
Highlight: contrast, rhythm, pattern, emphasis

Scan #3-B: *Pennsylvania Landscape #2* from “American Landscape Group,” 1971
Highlight: balance, asymmetry, repetition, harmony, and scale

Scan #3-C: *Chicago Landscape #155* from “Chicago Landscape Group,” 1964-65
View of Amoco Building
Highlight: vantage point, scale, repetition, and space

Scan #3-D: *Midwest Landscape #34* from “Midwest Landscape Group,” 1961

Highlight: lines, repetition, rhythm, contrast, space, and unity

Show the photographs separately and ask the students the following questions:

- Do you see any repetition of lines or shapes in this photograph?
- What has the artist emphasized here? De-emphasized? What shapes dominate in this photograph?
- Do you think this work looks balanced or has equal weight to its different parts throughout the composition?
- Is there anything you might add to this photograph to make it feel more balanced?
- Does this photograph seem symmetrical or asymmetrical?
- Where is the vantage point (location from where the artist took the photo) in this image?
- Which elements of art (line, shape, form, texture, and tonality) are emphasized here?
- How has the artist used the principles of design (unity, rhythm, emphasis, etc.) to make this composition?
- What feeling does this image evoke in you? Which elements of art and/or principles of design best serve to create this feeling?
- How did this artist focus our attention?

Activities: The Photographic Eye

I. Have students create viewfinders.

- Teachers and students can use illustration board or card stock to create picture frames that will serve as viewfinders.
- Experiment with different sizes and formats of viewfinders (i.e., panoramic, horizontal or vertical orientation, etc.)
- Have your students practice “framing” the images by looking through the view finder.
- Experiment with different vantage points by looking at the subject from below, above, straight on, and from the side.
- Have the students consider the various elements of art and principles of design they may want to use in their compositions.

II. Have students take photographs of the landscape around the school

Divide class into small groups or pairs (depending on how many cameras you have). If you have one or two cameras, have students take turns as others sketch out an area of the classroom or outdoors from various vantage points. Experimenting with different cameras, students should take 2–4 photos, remembering to vary the elements of art and principles of design.

For students:

1. Think about an area around your school that you would like to photograph. It might be a place where you hang out before or after school, or just a place you think is visually

interesting. Imagine how this area looks from a “bird’s-eye-view” (from above) or from an insect’s perspective, looking from below.

2. Use your viewfinder to practice framing the final image you have selected. Experiment with different vantage points and focal points.
3. Use the elements of art and the principles of design to make your compositions. Keep in mind framing issues such as focal and vantage points.
4. Select one of your photographs to share with the class. Explain what you were trying to accomplish and how you used the elements of art and principles of design.

Questions for each student to consider:

- What does your photograph show us?
- Does your photograph tell us something or does it make us feel a certain way? Or both? How?
- Do photographs need to communicate ideas or feelings for us to appreciate them?
- How did you organize your composition?
- If you were going to take another photograph of this same place, would you make any changes to the composition? Explain why or why not.

Resources Available through Your Local Library

- Baldwin, Gordon. *Looking at Photographs: A Guide to Technical Terms*. Malibu: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1991.
- Broudy, Harry, and Ron Silverman. Aesthetic scanning chart developed in 1985 at the Getty Institute for Educators on the Visual Arts in Los Angeles, 1988.
- Davis, Keith F. *American Horizons: The Photographs of Art Sinsabaugh*. Manchester, Vt.: Hudson Hills Press, 2004.
- Varriale, Jim. *Take a Look Around: Photography Activities for Young People*. Brookfield, Conn.: Millbrook Press, 1999.

Appendices

Appendix A

Sense Poem Format

Students can use this template as a guide to brainstorm ideas for their sense poem.

Title of poem: _____

I see _____

I hear _____

I smell _____

I touch _____

I taste _____

I feel _____

I remember _____

I dream _____

Appendix B

Woody Guthrie (1912–1967), Musician and Songwriter

Woody Guthrie was one of the most important American folk musicians of the first half of the 20th century. Born in Oklahoma, Guthrie had first-hand knowledge of the Dust Bowl and wrote a song called *Dust Bowl Blues*. By the time he gained recognition in the 1940s, he had written hundreds of songs, many of which remain folk standards to this day, such as the American anthem, *This Land is Your Land*. He authored a book, *Bound for Glory* and served as a newspaper columnist. Toward the end of his performing career, when he was raising a family in the early 1950s, he began composing music from a child's point of view.

Woody Guthrie lyrics to *This Land is Your Land* (1949)

Chorus:

This land is your land, this land is my land
 From California, to the New York Island
 From the Redwood Forest, to the gulf stream waters
 This land was made for you and me

As I was walking a ribbon of highway
 I saw above me an endless skyway
 I saw below me a golden valley
 This land was made for you and me

Repeat Chorus

I've roamed and rambled and I've followed my footsteps
 To the sparkling sands of her diamond deserts
 And all around me a voice was sounding
 This land was made for you and me

Repeat Chorus

The sun comes shining as I was strolling
 The wheat fields waving and the dust clouds rolling
 The fog was lifting a voice come chanting
 This land was made for you and me

Repeat Chorus

As I was walkin' – I saw a sign there
 And that sign said – no tress passin'
 But on the other side...it didn't say nothin'!
 Now that side was made for you and me.
 Repeat Chorus

In the squares of the city – In the shadow of the steeple
 Near the relief office – I see my people
 And some are grumblin' and some are wonderin'
 If this land's still made for you and me.

Repeat Chorus (2x)

Appendix C

Kathy Jakobsen—American Folk Artist

Kathy Jakobsen, a self-taught artist from Michigan, has come to be recognized as one of the best, folk landscape painters of the century. Jakobsen paints with meticulous detail, capturing not only the essence of what she sees, but also the tempo and rhythm of what she feels. Although she mainly paints rural and urban scenes, Jakobsen has recently collaborated with Woody Guthrie's granddaughter, Nora, to illustrate a children's book based on Guthrie's famous song, *This Land is Your Land*.

Other books illustrated by Kathy Jakobsen include:

Johnny Appleseed, written by Reeve Lindbergh (New York: Megan Tingley Publishers, 1993).

My New York, written and illustrated by Kathy Jakobsen (New York: Megan Tingley Publishers, 2003).

Meet Me in the Magic Kingdom, written and illustrated by Kathy Jakobsen (Orlando: Disney Press, 1995).

Appendix D

Sherwood Anderson (1876–1941), Writer and Poet

Sherwood Anderson, born in Camden, Ohio, was a writer whose prose style derived from everyday speech. With the publication of his masterwork, *Winesburg, Ohio* of 1919, he became established as an influential short story writer who accurately portrayed life in typical small Midwestern towns. When Anderson moved to Chicago he took a job in advertising while maintaining his status as a writer, along with Theodore Dreiser and Carl Sandburg, in the so-called Chicago Group.

“Song of Industrial America,” from *Sherwood Anderson’s Notebook*, (New York: Little Brown Publications, 1925)

“First there are the broken things—myself and others. I don’t mind that—I’m gone shot to pieces. I’m part of the scheme—I’m the broken end of the song myself. We are all that, here in the West, here in Chicago. Tongues clatter against teeth. That’s nothing but shrill screams and a rattle. That had to be—it’s part of the scheme.”

Appendix E

Carl Sandburg (1878–1916), Poet, Writer, and Folklorist

Born in Galesburg, Illinois, Carl Sandburg became known as “The Voice of America.” Traveling throughout the U.S., Sandburg chronicled the lives and struggles of America’s working class in his poetry. In 1916, he wrote the poem *Chicago*, celebrating the citizens of the city where he had spent much of his life.

Near the end of his life, Sandburg exhibited a keen interest in American folk culture, collecting some 300+ folksongs and ballads in his *American Songbag* (1927). He gave public poetry recitals, sometimes with guitar accompaniment, wrote children’s books, and produced an important novel, *Remembrance Rock* (1948). Sandburg won the Pulitzer Prize for the last of his six-volume *Biography of Lincoln*.

“*Chicago*” by Carl Sandburg (1916)

HOG Butcher for the World,

Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat,
 Player with Railroads and the Nation's Freight Handler;
 Stormy, husky, brawling,
 City of the Big Shoulders:

They tell me you are wicked and I believe them, for I
 have seen your painted women under the gas lamps
 luring the farm boys.
 And they tell me you are crooked and I answer: Yes, it
 is true I have seen the gunman kill and go free to
 kill again.
 And they tell me you are brutal and my reply is: On the
 faces of women and children I have seen the marks
 of wanton hunger.
 And having answered so I turn once more to those who
 sneer at this my city, and I give them back the sneer
 and say to them:
 Come and show me another city with lifted head singing
 so proud to be alive and coarse and strong and cunning.
 Flinging magnetic curses amid the toil of piling job on
 job, here is a tall bold slugger set vivid against the
 little soft cities;

Fierce as a dog with tongue lapping for action, cunning
 as a savage pitted against the wilderness,
 Bareheaded,
 Shoveling,
 Wrecking,
 Planning,
 Building, breaking, rebuilding,
 Under the smoke, dust all over his mouth, laughing with
 white teeth,
 Under the terrible burden of destiny laughing as a young
 man laughs,
 Laughing even as an ignorant fighter laughs who has
 never lost a battle,
 Bragging and laughing that under his wrist is the pulse.
 and under his ribs the heart of the people,
 Laughing!
 Laughing the stormy, husky, brawling laughter of
 Youth, half-naked, sweating, proud to be Hog
 Butcher, Tool Maker, Stacker of Wheat, Player with
 Railroads and Freight Handler to the Nation.

Acknowledgements

This educators' supplement was prepared by the education department of the Indiana University Art Museum (IUAM) to accompany the exhibition, *American Horizons: The Photographs of Art Sinsabaugh*. Jeanne Nemuth and Lorraine Patel, graduate student interns in Art Education, researched and wrote the initial text and lesson plans under the supervision of Nanette Esseck Brewer, the Lucienne M. Glaubinger Curator of Works on Paper, and Edward Maxedon, the Lucienne M. Glaubinger Curator of Education, at the Indiana University Art Museum.

American Horizons: The Photographs of Art Sinsabaugh was organized by the Indiana University Art Museum. Major exhibition support has been provided by the law firm of Barnes and Thornburg LLP, the Lucienne M. Glaubinger Curatorial Endowment, and Bill and Nancy Hunt. Additional project support has come through generous grants from the Judith Rothschild Foundation and the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts. Sponsorship support for the Chicago presentation has been generously provided by LaSalle Bank.

All Art Sinsabaugh photographs and quotes
© 2004, Katherine Anne Sinsabaugh and Elisabeth Sinsabaugh de la Cova

Educators' Supplement © 2004, Indiana University Art Museum