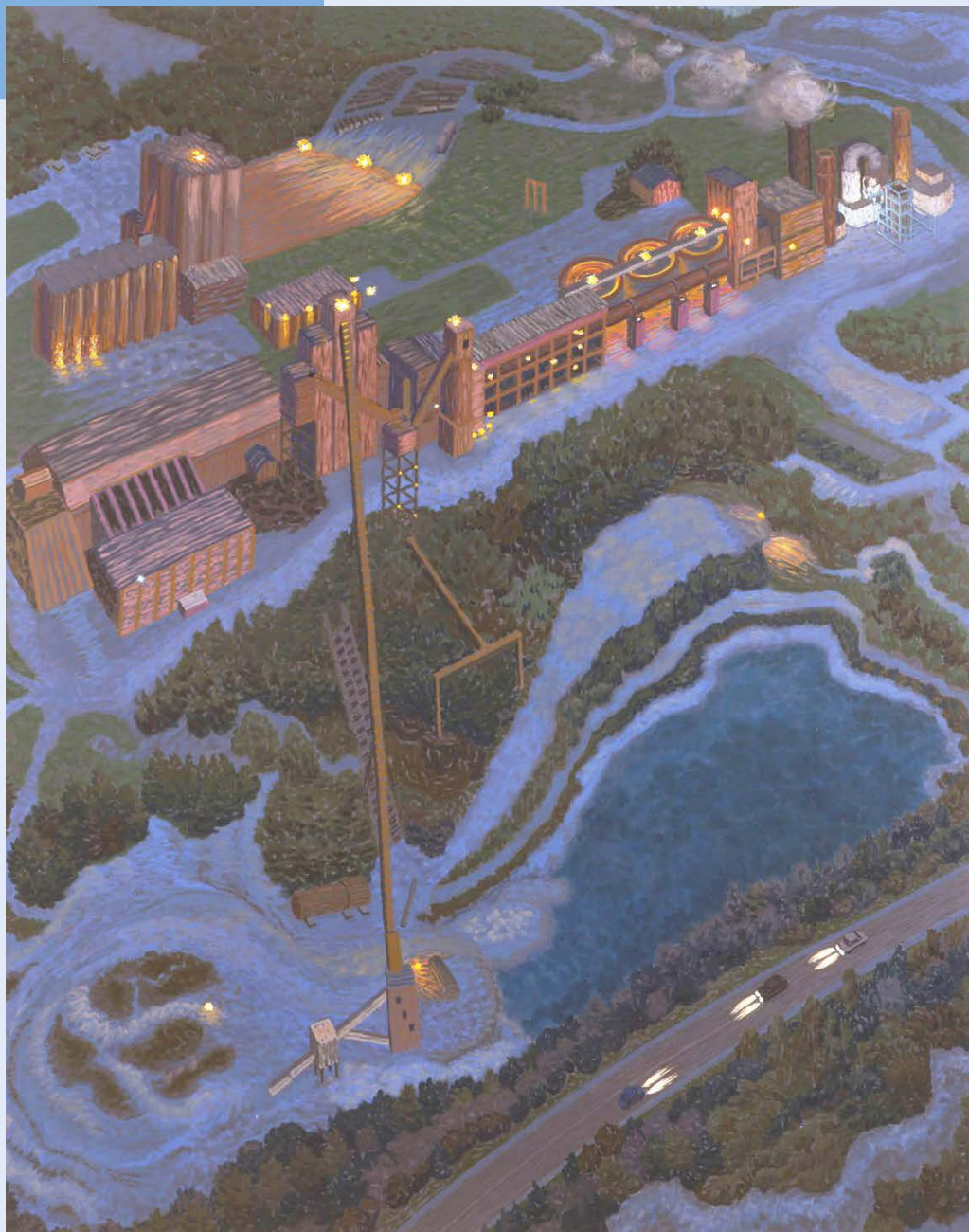


PMA CLASSROOM
BEST FOR
Middle School

Perspectives in Nature and Industry

Dragon Cement Co., Thomaston, Maine II
by Yvonne Helene Jacquette



Dragon Cement Co., Thomaston, Maine II, 1995
Yvonne Helene Jacquette (United States, born 1934)
Oil on linen, 80 x 63 1/2 inches

THEMES

- Perspective
- Art History and Philosophy/Religion
- Environmentalism and industry
- Visual symbolism

Content Areas and Standards Met

What Maine Ed Standards will this lesson meet?

What content areas does this lesson connect to?

WRITING

Composing for Audience and Purpose

Routinely produce a variety of clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, audience, and purpose.

SOCIAL STUDIES AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

History and Environmental Science: Students draw on concepts and processes using art to discuss and develop historical perspective and understand issues of continuity and change in the community, Maine, the United States, and world. (Specifically, regarding changing perception of industry as depicted in art history.)

VISUAL ARTS

A1 Artist's Purpose

Students explain and compare different purposes of artists and their artwork, in the context of time and place.

A2 Elements of Art and Principles of Design

Students compare features of composition both within an artwork and among art works.

B3 Making Meaning

Students create art works that communicate an individual point of view.

D1 Aesthetics and Criticism

Students compare and analyze art forms.

E1 The Arts and History and World Cultures

Students compare products of the visual/performing arts to understand history and/or world cultures.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL) COMPETENCIES

Self-awareness: Linking thoughts and feelings, Identify and recognize emotions, Integrating personal and social identities

Social awareness: Perspective taking, empathy, respect for others

Relationship skills: Communication and active listening

Responsible decision-making: Reflecting



Objective

What will students do/experience/think about, etc?

What is the overall goal of the lesson plan?:

Students will explore the concepts of abstraction and realism

Students will understand how and why artists manipulate perspective

Students will practice close observation and take on a unique perspective

Students will consider how landscapes change and the impact of industry

Students will consider how philosophy and cultural practices from around the world influence artists' practices

Essential Question

What is the big question that this lesson plan seeks to explore or have students grapple with?

How do artists use perspective in their work?

How can philosophy be integrated into an artwork?

How can artists document and influence societies' perception of concepts such as industry?

How do artists convey the passing of time?



Yvonne Helene Jacquette (United States, born 1934)

Dragon Cement Co., Thomaston, Maine II, 1995

Oil on linen, 80 x 63 1/2 inches

Museum purchase with support from the Friends of the Collection, 2002.15

Image courtesy of Luc Demers

Materials Needed

Project #1

- Multiple pieces of plain paper
- Pencil or other drawing utensil
- Access to the artwork (See previous page or visit collections.portlandmuseum.org)

Project #2:

- Multiple pieces of plain paper
- Pencil or other drawing utensil
- Paint, markers, colored pencils, crayons, etc. (optional)
- Access to the artwork (See previous page or visit collections.portlandmuseum.org)

Instructions:

Look

Take about a minute to look closely at this artwork.

Think

Think to yourself:

- What do I see happening here?
- Would I describe this as abstract or representational art? What am I seeing that is making me answer that way?
- How would you describe the individual colors (what kind of green, for example)? Do they feel warm or cool? How are the colors working together?
- Which of these shapes or forms are recognizable/familiar to me? Which ones are unfamiliar?
- What mood am I feeling from this painting?
- How are natural and man-made elements interacting in this work?
- How are space and visual elements organized in the work?
- What signs do I notice of movement/time?
- How does the brushwork vary?
- What are some of the “dualities” in this painting? (Duality is the contrast between two ideas or two aspects of something for example: peace and war, love and hate)

Respond to the questions posed above.

Write your responses down using your paper and writing utensil, share them with someone in your house, or discuss.



Learn

Use this section to learn more about the artist, the process, and the subject.

Yvonne Jacquette is known for her large-scale aerial landscape paintings. Her paintings often use the technique of pointillism, in which small dots of color are applied create a larger image. Before Jacquette paints, she makes pastel studies of her observations, which she then paints from memory. Two jobs that influenced Jacquette's artwork were when she drafted helicopter designs and then when she designed textiles at a fabric company. Her work in helicopter design influenced her understanding of spatial relationships and geometry. Whereas her work in fabric design taught her about color and how to use line to create dimension.

Jacquette began painting at night when her friend Edwin Denby was ill. She sketched the view from his bedside at New York University Hospital, which overlooked the Queensboro Bridge, F.D.R. Drive and a section of the East River. The drama of the view and the new vocabulary of color inspired her to paint her "nocturnes". After a flight school opened close to her Maine summer home, Jacquette started making sketches from the sky more regularly. The paintings that would emerge from these studies are in fact composites (combined imagery) of the different angles that she could see as she circled an area.



Yvonne Jacquette photo courtesy dcmooregallery.com

"I've been a Buddhist for a long time and there's a lot of teaching about emptiness, which isn't nothingness, but fullness." —Yvonne Jacquette

While Jacquette's work does not contain overtly political statements, her paintings often have ecological implications and explore the relationship between natural and man-made landscapes. There is a contradictory aspect to many of her paintings of industry, the subject appears both unappealing and enticing; horrible and beautiful. Jacquette served on a committee to encourage regulation of nuclear energy because of potential environmental damage. Some of her factory and power plant paintings have a "Darth-Vader" like quality which alludes to potential ecological disasters. How is fire depicted in *Dragon Cement Factory, Thomaston, Maine II*? Does it remind you of a dragon at all?

Jacquette studies **Buddhism** and has fascination with coexistence of both positive and negative elements. She was inspired by Tibetan and Nepalese artifacts, Thangkas, which are paintings on cotton and mounded on brocade. They are usually depictions of Buddhist motifs or mandalas and are used to help focus prayer and meditation. According to Jacquette, meditation is about looking for a more expanded view of the world. Do you see elements of a mandala or circularity in *Dragon Cement Factory, Thomaston, Maine II*? How about aspects of the duality of emptiness and fullness? If we were to look at this painting as a focus for meditation, what might Jacquette be suggesting we meditate on or think more about?

Act

Activity 1: Unique Perspective Guided Imagery Activity

Jacquette used unique vantage points as her artistic inspiration. In *Dragon Cement Factory, Thomaston, Maine II*, she captured the Maine landscape in color and line. Echoing her practice s of using an aerial perspective and immersing the viewer, you will envision a landscape using your imagination. This activity also connects to Jacquette's practice of meditation.

Choose a place in the world that is significant to you personally or that is symbolic of a current event or issue that matters to you. Imagine yourself floating above this place like Jacquette as she flies around sketching landscapes. Write down your answers when responding to these questions: What does this unique perspective reveal to you about the landscape? What colors, shapes and lines are you seeing? How would you describe the sense of motion in the piece? If you could touch the landscape, how would it feel? How might it smell?

Take these words and create a guided imagery script. Guided imagery is practice that has been used for healing within Chinese medicine and American Indian traditions for centuries. Guided imagery is intended to immerse and guide a person through a sensorial experience.

Before writing, consider the purpose of your guided meditation, if you want to calm or energize a person. Start by describing the environment that you wish the listener to experience. As you do so, attempt to involve the listener's senses. Describe what can be seen, smelled, heard and touched.

Find a partner in your class and share your guided imagery. Consider encouraging your partner to get comfortable and start with a relaxing breathing exercise.

After you read your guided imagery, have your partner spend 15 minutes sketching out what they saw during the guided imagery experience.

Act

Activity 2: Experimenting with Perspective and Light

Yvonne Jacquette found inspiration in the way light impacts landscapes and dramatic viewpoints. In *Dragon Cement Factory*, Thomaston, Maine, she captured a nocturnal scene from an aerial perspective. Like Jacquette, you will choose a specific time of day and a dramatic perspective to capture.

Choose a time of day to start this project—would you like to explore the night sky or dusk – as day changes to night? Think about a unique perspective, such as looking down at something or looking up. Find a window or a place outside where you feel comfortable drawing.

DRAWING #1: Using your drawing utensil, draw what you are seeing as you observe it. Focus on the shapes and shapes that you are seeing. Notice the light and shadows. Try to capture what is happening with the shifting light. Try not to spend more than 10 minutes on this one drawing—you should focus on capturing the essence or the basic elements of what you are seeing.

Find a way to turn your body or move over a few feet to a new position in order to get a new perspective or angle.

DRAWING #2 and #3: Get out a new piece of paper and do a similar drawing from this new angle. Then move to another angle and repeat. Try not to spend more than 10 minutes on each drawing.

DRAWING #4: Take out another piece of paper and make your drawing from memory and without looking at the scene you looked at for Drawings 1-3.

OPTIONAL: Instead of a pencil, make your drawings with colored pencils, markers, or oil pastels. Turn your drawings into a painting, trying to capture the specific qualities of light that you observe.

Reflect and Share

What was this process like for you? What was easy?
What was more challenging?

Did this process spark any moments of joy for you?
What was joyful to you?

How did going through this process help you to see the artwork
in a new way?

The last step in interacting with art is to share your experience
with others. Share your artwork with the PMA! Or, share your
artwork with others in your home or class.

Resources

www.dcmooregallery.com/artists/yvonne-jacquette

brooklynrail.org/2008/02/art/yvonne-jacquette-with-john-yau

artcritical.com/2003/09/04/yvonne-jacquette/



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