LESSONS BEYOND ART: Living Landscapes
Middle and High School

Learn about a group of artists known as the Florida Highwaymen and create an Instagram post inspired by one of their landscape paintings. Then, it's your turn to create your own landscape image of a place (real or imagined!) that is meaningful to you.

Supplies
Provided worksheets, internet browser, a pencil and colored pencils (or markers)

Who are the Florida Highwaymen

The Florida Highwaymen are a group of 26 African American artists that began working in and around Fort Pierce beginning in the mid-1950s. These self-taught artists captured the vibrancy and diversity of Florida's landscapes, depicting swaying palm trees, poinciana trees, and brilliant sunsets. These artists crafted these Florida scenes using their memories and imagination and did not paint directly from nature.

The Florida Highwaymen created their artwork during and after the segregation era. They faced discrimination and were not invited to show their work in whites-only galleries. In order to make a living as artists, they developed the technique known as “fast painting”. Fast painting involved adding similar details to multiple scenes in one sitting.

By creating several high-quality paintings at once, the Florida Highwaymen were able to sell more of their artwork in a shorter period. On the weekends, they traveled up and down I-95 and state road A1A to sell artwork from their cars. They sold to local businesses, hotels, individuals, and tourists. This inventive and efficient way of selling their artwork led a Florida art historian in the 1990s to label the group as "The Florida Highwaymen". In 2004, the Highwaymen were inducted into the Florida Artists Hall of Fame. Today, you can find their work in permanent collections at the A.E. Backus Gallery, Museum of Florida History in Tallahassee, and the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History in Culture in Washington D.C.

Here at the Tampa Museum of Art, Living Color: The Art of the Highwaymen, organized by the Orlando Museum of Art and curated by Gary Monroe in collaboration with OMA curator Hansen Mulford, focuses on the paintings created from the 1950s to the 1980s by a core group of the Highwaymen. Artists on view include Al Black, Mary Ann Carroll, Willie Daniels, Johnny Daniels, James Gibson, Alfred Hair, Roy McLendon, Harold Newton, Sam Newton, Willie Reagan, and Livingston Roberts.
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Learning Objectives
As a result of completing this project, students will be able to:
1. Analyze American history using primary sources using research and inquiry skills
2. Present observations and findings grounded in visual evidence
3. Create a narrative using relevant descriptive details with consistent style and voice

Resources
1. National Public Radio: The Landscape Art Legacy of Florida’s Highwaymen
3. Orlando Museum of Art: Living Color: The Art of the Highwaymen
4. Tampa Museum of Art Exhibitions: Living Color: The Art of the Highwaymen

Getting Started
1. Using the links above, or sources you find, research the Florida Highwaymen artists
2. Select one work of art to observe closely.
3. On the provided worksheet Florida Highwaymen Instagram Post, use the questions to help guide your looking and analysis of the artwork you selected.
4. Write a caption for your selected artwork as if you are creating a caption for an Instagram post.

Make Your Own
Now that you’ve closely observed one of the Florida Highwaymen landscape paintings, it’s time for you to reflect on a place (real or imagined) that is meaningful to you and create an Instagram post.
- Take a moment to reflect on places that are meaningful to you. Feel free to look at pictures, read journal entries, or talk with friends and family about the importance of that specific place to you.
- Once you’ve compiled your thoughts, make sure to clear your workspace except for the second worksheet provided: Make Your Own Instagram Post, a pencil, colored pencils or makers.
- Create a drawing of your meaningful landscape. As you create your picture, consider:
  - Where is this place?
  - What is the weather like and how did you convey that to your viewers?
  - What time of day is it and how did you convey that to your viewers?
  - What are you doing in this place? Is anyone with you or are you by yourself?
  - Come up with 5 adjectives to describe your landscape in the caption.

Modifications
For younger students, an adult can assist with researching the artwork created by the Florida Highwaymen. The students can verbally respond to the questions on the Make Your Own Instagram Post worksheet. Have the students create an image of their favorite real or imagined place and verbally narrate the decisions they made regarding their compositions.
Florida Highwaymen Instagram Post

Follow the instructions on page two from LESSONS BEYOND ART: LIVING LANDSCAPES to conduct your own research on the Florida Highwaymen. Select one work of art to create your Instagram post below. Cut and paste a picture or sketch the artwork you selected in the box below.

Imagine you are standing in this landscape. Use the following questions to guide your thinking. Make sure to address the questions below in your Instagram caption and base them in visual evidence. If you need more space, feel free to use the back of this worksheet.

1. What artwork did you select and why?
2. What are your initial thoughts about this place?
3. What is the weather like?
4. What do you see, hear, smell or feel?
5. Is this a place you've been before? Is this your first time in this place?
6. What questions would you ask the artist if you could and why?

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Make Your Own Instagram Post

Follow the instructions on page two from LESSONS BEYOND ART: Living Landscape to reflect on a place that is meaningful to you. Remember, this place can be real or imagined. Draw your landscape below and use the questions to help create your caption.

Make sure to address the questions in your Instagram caption and ground them in visual evidence. If you need more space, feel free to use the back of this worksheet.

1. Where is this place?
2. What is the weather like and how did you convey that to your viewers?
3. What time of day is it and how did you convey that to your viewers?
4. What are you doing in this place? Is anyone with you or are you by yourself?
5. Come up with 5 adjectives to describe your landscape in the caption. #AdjectivesAreCool

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