

MINDFULNESS IN ART & NATURE

June 2021 Open Studio | BYU Museum of Art



WELCOME!

Today we're looking at paintings of people connecting with nature. Think about these questions:

- Why is it important for us to spend time in nature?
- How can nature inspire art?
- How can mindfulness help me?

MINDFULNESS IS:

When we set aside time to be quiet and focus on our senses, feelings, and surroundings. It can help us become more focused, less stressed, and ultimately more happy!

LET'S GET STARTED!



Asher Brown Durand, Landscape, 1866, Oil on canvas

Make your way to the Treasures from the Collection exhibition on the lower level. There, you'll find this painting by Asher Brown Durand called Landscape. Durand is one of America's most celebrated landscape painters. He believed there was something special about contemplating nature because light holds divine qualities. Notice the farmer sitting at the waters edge taking

a moment to experience this beautiful landscape. Paying attention to our senses in nature can help us practice mindfulness!

- **What are things you might see, hear, or smell if you jumped into painting?**
- **Why is it important to have quiet, reflective moments in nature?**

NEXT PAINTING!

In the same exhibition, find a painting by Charles Courtney Curran called Woodland Solitude. Curran is an American artist known for painting young women in beautiful outdoors settings. This springtime forest scene carries themes of growth and renewal. It reminds us of the hope and new life that comes after a long cold winter. Spending time in nature can infuse us with renewed energy and hope!

- What do you imagine the girl in the painting is thinking about?
- When have you felt a renewal of energy or hope in nature?



Charles Courtney Curran, Woodland Solitude, 1913, Oil on canvas

LAST ONE!

Finally, make your way to the Rend the Heavens exhibition and find the painting called November Montclair by George Inness. Like the other paintings we looked at today, the figure here is surrounded by a peaceful landscape. Inness uses loose brush strokes and soft shapes to relay a feeling of solitude and spirituality. This painting's next-door neighbor, Praying in the Nave by Max



George Inness, November Montclair, 1893, Oil on canvas

Thalman, shows a figure in a church having a similar moment of solitude. These paintings remind us that we can find reverence and peace in a variety of places!

- How is this painting different or similar to the other two paintings from today?
- What emotions do you connect to the color and texture in the paintings?

STUDIO ACTIVITY!

Today we are going to incorporate nature and mindfulness to make a sun-catcher!

INSTRUCTIONS



Mindful Meditation:

Spend some time meditating outside! Mindful meditation is when we set aside time to be quiet and focus on our senses, feelings, and surroundings. Before, during, or after your mindful nature walk/meditation, gather nature objects that can be pressed such as leaves, grass, flowers, feathers, etc. Make sure to respect other peoples' yards and gardens!

Here are **2 options** for how you can practice mindful meditation for this project:

- Find a comfortable place outside to sit or lie down. You might set a timer, listen to music, or use a guided meditation. Sometimes it's helpful to focus on your breathing, on the warmth of the sun, or the coolness of the shade.
- You could also choose to go on a mindful nature walk! Pay close attention to what you can see, hear, smell, and touch!



A FEW MORE INSTRUCTIONS



Making your sun-catcher:

1. With help from an **adult** and on a safe surface use an **iron (set on low, no steam)** to press your flowers/leaves between two sheets of blank paper. Apply heat for 15 sec, then allow to cool, Repeat until your leaves/flowers are dry and flat.
2. Cut out the circles pre-drawn on the contact paper. Then remove the adhesive cover from **one** of the contact paper circles and place your pressed nature objects in any arrangement on the sticky side. When finished, place the sticky side of the other contact paper on top, sandwiching your flowers/leaves between the sticky side of the two circles.



3. Prepare your sun-catcher ring by wrapping the provided yarn around the metal ring.
4. Poke/punch a hole about every 1.5" along the outside of the circle. Attach the circle with pressed flowers/leaves to your sun-catcher ring by weaving yarn in and out of the holes.
*Be careful to not punch holes too close to the edge of the circle!
5. Hang your sun-catcher near a window so the light can shine through!