Utah Biennial: The Present as Influenced by the Past

Photography and Abstract Painting
Jim Mangan's *Time of Nothing*

Summary:
Students create a large-scale drawing from a zoomed-in portion of a photograph that they have found online that depicts 'natural beauty' in the environment. Students produce artworks that depict only a few small details of their photograph enlarged to become abstract marks without any clear indication of the original image.

Main Curriculum Tie:

Art History and Criticism (Grade 3-12):

Standard 1: Examine how Mangan's artwork was created by manipulating media by organizing images with art elements and principles of abstract paintings. *What variety of media is used by the artist and your students including current arts-related technologies? What is expressed by sourcing photographs from the web? What is the effect of change to your final artwork from its original photograph? What new meaning has been created? What old information is still there?(3-6)*

Standard 2: Students will create and find meaning by analyzing, criticizing, and evaluating each students works of art. *How do each students' artwork compare regarding effective use of art elements and principles? What is the impact of the artwork on the viewer regarding style, content, and and forming technique? Does anyone artwork fulfill its function more than the rest?(6-12)*

Educational Technology (Grade 3-6, 9-12)
Standard 1: Discuss common uses of technology in daily life and advantages and disadvantages those uses provide. *What advancements has the internet provided to the masses? Who can access the internet and for what? How has photography changed in technique and process?* (3-6)

Standard 2: Discuss basic issues related to responsible use of technology and information; and describe personal consequences of inappropriate use. *What is public and available online? What is private? Where are the boundaries drawn for either and by whom?* (9-12)

Standard 3: Evaluate the accuracy, relevance, appropriateness, comprehensiveness, and bias of electronic information. *Who is writing the information? Can you trust your sources? How is all this information stored or archived? When is it available to the masses?* (9-12)

Materials:

A computer with internet. A copy-machine with zoom capability. Paper and colored pencils.

Background for Teachers:

Jim Mangan is a photographer whose artwork, *TIme of Nothing*, is third-part to a trilogy series that portrays only the natural beauty of life; evoking ideas about the simplification of one's life without material possessions, and enabling us to see and appreciate what we already have in the world. His intensely large-scale photos are 'a homage to abstract expressionism,' (Mangan, Parkrecord.com) illustrating a painterly aesthetic without any manipulation by the artist's hand, except for the affect that comes with enlarging only the color and composition of the Great Salt Lake (see provided images).

Intended Learning Outcomes:

      i. Understand abstract painting and the meaning behind photography including content and subject matter or the process of recording.

      ii. Explore art-making using publicly sourced imagery and technology, and understand how your materials chosen to create a work of art relate to the artworks meaning.

      iii. Discuss and evaluate each students method of abstraction and how preexisting information can be used in a different context to create new meaning.

Instructional Procedures:

Introduce the artist, his work, and the definition of abstract expressionism. *What does the artwork look like? What techniques or processes were used to create the artwork? What function or affect does that have on the artwork and viewer? How is the original photograph significant to the artist and viewer? Does it change in the final artwork?*

Instruct students to find a photograph online that they will select a small portion of to copy, zoom-in, and then draw on a separate piece of paper. *What art elements are used to emphasize abstraction? What color, line, or shape used to render your final artwork?*