Joslyn Art Museum  
Comprehensive Study Lesson Plan  
*Created by Josie Langbehn, Sue Oles & Laura Huntimer*

**NEBRASKA ARTISTS**

**Focus:** Keith Jacobshagen

**Objectives – Students will:**
- Understand the value of Nebraska through Jacobshagen's paintings.
- Discover their own world through observation and journaling.
- Create studies in light and space inspired by Jacobshagen's landscapes.

**Common Core Standards** available on online version at [www.joslyn.org/education/teachers/thursdays-for-teachers](http://www.joslyn.org/education/teachers/thursdays-for-teachers)

**Resources:** Check out the [Teacher Support Materials](http://www.joslyn.org/education/teachers) online, and [http://www.joslyn.org/education/teachers](http://www.joslyn.org/education/teachers) for additional resources

**Suggested Materials:** Jacobshagen teaching poster, images of artworks by Jacobshagen, landscape images, watercolor supplies, journals, map of Nebraska, compass (math)

**Vocabulary:** horizon line, landscape, light, minimalism, perspective, plains, prairies, radius, regional, space, synthesis, typography, values

**Procedure:**
- **Engage:** Select any artwork, and have students write about a memory it evokes.
- **Art Talk:** Now study a Jacobshagen painting for a discussion about memories it evokes. Talk about his process – how he takes it all in and makes it a part of his heart.
- **History:** Who is Keith Jacobshagen, and what is his story? Refer to the lecture led by the artist at the February 2014 Thursdays for Teachers as well as the teaching poster and additional information in Teacher Support Materials.
- **Aesthetics 1:** Defining the culture of Nebraska. Look at *Rain in Augusts, Platte Valley* and talk about perspective. Ask students why Jacobshagen’s style is to typically show a low horizon line. Then reveal that his father was a pilot, and he used to fly with him. Discuss how that changes their understanding of the artist's compositions.
- **Aesthetics 2:** Synthesize. Jacobshagen takes his observations when studying the landscape in the field, and back in the studio he synthesizes what he saw so rather than a painting representing a specific location, it is a synthesis of multiple experiences. He wants the synthesis of paintings to be in deep space. Have students discuss this process and result. Are these works of fiction?
• **Production 1:** Sequences – Studies in light and space through landscape. Using *A Golden Year* installation at the Bemis Center for the Contemporary Arts as inspiration, have students create deep space starting with simple watercolor studies. Refer to the workshop led by Jaim Hackbart at the February 2014 Thursdays for Teachers.

• **Production 2:** Jacobshagen carefully observes the landscape. Go outside, and give students a specific time to simply observe (suggested times per grade levels: K-5 (2) min, 6-8 (5) min, 9-12 (10) min). Students should write or draw what they see. Be quiet and no screens/technology. Come back the next day or in a week and do the same exercise to observe how it has changed. Students should discuss their findings with each other.

• **Close:** The artist is respectful of the nature of Nebraska and through his paintings; allowing students to know we have a future. Using a post-it note, have students write a one-word thought for the future. Post on the wall as a reminder for them.

**Extensions:**

• **Cultural Connections:** Values. Consider the potential for differences in values between Nebraska and other locations. Take a look at Jacobshagen’s perspective and consider how much value he places in Nebraska whereas there others do not – even calling it “flyover county.”

• **Fine Arts 1:** Abstractions Inspired by Landscapes. Show students various images of landscapes and have them combine and layer different forms and colors from a selected landscape to create a new abstract version of a place. Refer to the workshop led by Bethany Kalk at the February 2014 Thursdays for Teachers.

• **Fine Arts 2:** Where’s your place? Jacobshagen’s is outdoors in Nebraska. Have students determine their place and construct a picture from their unique perspective. Use the Language Arts extension as part of this project.

• **Language Arts:** Jacobshagen describes his journals as "... a place of refuge, confession and discovery. I believe that in many ways writing has become as much a part of who I am, as has painting. And like painting, writing has given back to me a chance for a richer sense of life and identity." Give students a journal and have them write for a day documenting everything they see. Then try to make some words concrete with a vision from their heart.

• **Math:** Jacobshagen is known to keep to a 60-mile radius around Lincoln for the landscapes he depicts. Have students take a map of Lincoln and use a compass to draw that radius. List all the towns (including Lincoln) along with their populations that fall in that radius. Then have students randomly select other cities across the United States and compare and contrast their findings.

• **Science:** Typography. Nebraska is flat so have students try to imagine how Jacobshagen would depict another area. For example, what if he was from a mountainous region? Show the students why a flat state can be interesting.
Keith Jacobshagen (American, 1941), *Spreading Evening Sky with Crows*, 1988, oil on paper, 12 x 36 in.; 30.48 x 91.44 cm Gift of the Frederick Weisman Company, 1989.3
Keith Jacobshagen (American, born 1941), All Souls, 1994–95, oil on canvas, 38 1/8 x 36 1/8 in.; 96.84 x 91.76 cm. Museum Purchase with funds provided by David and Anne Rismiller, 1998.26
Keith Jacobshagen (American, born 1941), *Rain in August, Platte Valley*, 2005, oil on canvas, Museum purchase with funds provided by David and Anne Rismiller, 2005.31
Jean-Victor Bertin (French, 1767–1842), *Landscape*, ca.1802 oil on canvas, 5 ¾ x 18 ¾ in.; 38.73 x 46.35 cm Museum purchase, 1984.13
Gustave Courbet (French, 1819–1877), Coast Scene — Approaching Storm, ca. 1870 oil on canvas, 21 ¾ x 15 ½ in.; 55.25 x 39.37 cm Museum purchase, 1957.337
Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot (French, 1796–1875), *Château-Thierry*, 1855, oil on canvas, 13¾ x 23 in., 34.9 x 58.4 cm. Museum purchase, 1942.1
Gustave Doré (French, 1832–1883), *Mountain Landscape*, 1877 oil on canvas, 30 x 60½ in., 76.2 x 153.67 cm Gift of Mrs. Lily Javits, 1948.23
Claude Monet (French, 1840–1926), *Across the Meadow (A travers la prairie)*, 1879 oil on canvas, 32 x 39 ¼ in., 81.3 x 99.7 cm Gift of Mr. William Averell Harriman, 1944.79
Thomas Hart Benton (American, 1889–1975), *The Hailstorm*, 1940 tempera on canvas mounted on panel, 33 x 40, 83.82 x 101.6 cm Gift of the James A. Douglas Memorial Foundation (1971), 1952.11
Albert Bierstadt (American, born Germany, 1830–1902), *Storm on the Matterhorn*, 1886
oil on canvas, $53\frac{3}{4} \times 82\frac{3}{4}$, $136.5 \times 212.1$ cm
Gift of Mrs. Ben Gallagher, 1966.620
Thomas Birch (American, 1779–1851), St. Eustatia, n.d. oil on canvas, 20 x 30 in.; 50.8 x 76.2 cm Museum purchase, 1964.618
Thomas Birch (American, 1779–1851), St. Thomas Cole (American born England, 1801–1848), Stony Gap, Kaaterskill Clove, 1826–27 oil on panel, 17 7/8 x 25 3/8 in.; 45.4 x 64.45 cm Mr. and Mrs. Edwin S. Miller Bequest Fund, 1951.661
Daniel Huntington (American, 1816-1906), *Roman Ruins in Southern Italy*, 1848 oil on canvas, 43 3/8 x 63 3/4 in.; 110.5 x 160.66 cm Gift of J.L. Brandeis and Sons Co., 1952.97
Dale Nichols (American, 1904-1995), *Road to Adventure*, 1940 oil on canvas, 30 x 40 in.; 76.2 x 101.6 Museum purchase, 1942.80
Grant Wood (American, 1891–1942), Stone City, Iowa, 1930 oil on wood panel, 30⅜ x 40, 76.84 x 101.6 cm Gift of the Art Institute of Omaha, 1930.35
Albert Bierstadt (American, born Germany, 1830–1902), *The Trappers, Lake Tahoe*, n.d. oil on canvas, 19 ½ x 27 ¾ in.; 49.53 x 70.49 cm Gift of Mrs. Harold Gifford, 1961.430
Karl Bodmer (Swiss, 1809-1893), *White Castles on the Missouri*, 1833 watercolor on paper, 9 x 16 3/8 in.; 22.86 x 41.59 cm gift of Enron Art Foundation, 1986.49.176
Worthington Whittredge (American, 1820–1910), *Long’s Peak, Colorado*, 1866 oil on paper on canvas, 8 ¼ x 21 ½ in.; 20.96 x 54.61 cm Museum purchase, 1965.58
Thomas Moran (American (born England), 1837-1926), *The Grand Canyon of the Colorado*, 1913 oil on canvas, 25 x 30 in.; 63.5 x 76.2 cm Gift of Mrs. C. N. Dietz, 1934.10
Keith Jacobshagen: A Golden Year, installation. Photo courtesy of the Bemis Center for the Contemporary Arts
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