

Discover Art

WITH NEWFIELDS

Ease into Art and Nature



John Wesley Hardrick (American, 1891–1968), *Untitled Landscape* (detail), date unknown, oil on board, 23-3/4 x 30 in. Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields, Jacob Metzger Memorial Fund, 82.159 © John Wesley Hardrick.

→ ABOUT THE ARTIST

- John Wesley Hardrick was an African American painter who lived his entire life in Indianapolis, Indiana. He studied at the Herron School of Art under fellow Hoosier artist William Forsyth.
- During the Great Depression, Hardrick supported his family in many ways. Notably, he sold his paintings out of a taxi and often asked his passengers to pose for him.

→ MINDFULNESS

- This guide prompts a mindfulness practice, using artwork as a technique to center oneself and explore one's creativity.
- Mindfulness is the practice of becoming conscious of the present moment, while accepting the thoughts and attitudes that may arise without judgement and with patience. Mindfulness can help to relieve anxiety and stress, as well as improve concentration and one's self-acceptance.
- When you've completed this practice, try these mindfulness techniques with other works of art in the IMA galleries, and in natural settings in the Garden and the Art and Nature Park at Newfields.

“The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.” - Marcel Proust

→ LETTING GO

- Begin by paying special attention to the present moment, without judgement. Close your eyes and take three deep breaths. Then, intentionally take in your environment. What can you see? What do you hear? What do you smell? Notice what your hands and feet are doing. What does that feel like? Focus on these senses as you begin to settle into your space. If your mind wanders, return to the present moment with patience, gently letting go of your thoughts.

→ BEGINNER'S MIND

- Next, turn your attention to the painting. Look at the painting as if it is your first time seeing art. In this state of mind, let go of any preconceptions you have of art, let go of any expectations, and be open to new possibilities.
- Examine the painting slowly, section by section and as a whole. When you think you know something about the painting, give it a moment and do not assume your first instinct is correct. Ask yourself simple questions, such as: “Why is it that way?” “How does that work?”

- Spend 5 minutes taking in the painting and the present moment. What have you learned about the painting? How does the painting make you feel? How would you describe this painting to someone who has never seen art?

→ CONNECT

- Now, imagine that you are in the painting. Are you sitting, standing, crouching? Are you in the trees or by the shoreline? What sounds can you hear? Is it warm or cold? What can you smell? Use [this ambience video](#) on YouTube for inspiration. Spend at least 5 minutes examining the painting and using the ambience to imagine an atmosphere within the painting. If your mind wanders, acknowledge the thought, and slowly bring your attention back to the painting.
- Now, close your eyes and imagine once more your atmosphere within the painting. What is your view? Are you standing on the left side of the stream looking into the trees? Are you wading in the stream looking down at the rocks and moving water? Draw inspiration from this atmosphere and use it to create. Write a poem about how this atmosphere makes you feel, create a sketch of your view, write a melody inspired by the bird calls or other sounds. Do not question your skill level or creativity. Create with a beginner's mind and accept with non-judgment what comes.



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