

An Artist's View of Painting in Maine with Global Warming

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Present Day



+ 2 Degrees

ABSTRACT

Maine has long been a place for artists to work because of its landscape of tall conifers, mountains, rocky seashores, and fast-moving clouds. Starting in the 1800's, with artists came to Maine to paint the forests, the sea and the skies. They sought the natural sublime. Thomas Cole, Winslow Homer, Edward Hopper, John Walker, Lois Dodd and Alex Katz are a few of the artists that sought this landscape. As the colors of Maine change with climate change, how will artists respond? This is an artist's conception of what might happen to the colors of Maine.

METHODS

The Environmental Change Model in Climate Reanalyzer was used to consider how vegetation and colors would change with +2 degrees of global warming. Climate Reanalyzer is a platform for visualizing climate and weather datasets. The site is coded and maintained by Dr. Sean Birkel through support from the Climate Change Institute and School of Earth and Climate Sciences of the University of Maine, and partial support from the National Science Foundation.
<https://climate-reanalyzer.org/clm/ccc/>

DISCUSSION

The colors of Maine are the deep blue-green of the conifers and the mountains covered with them, the clear ultramarine of the sky and the even darker ocean, the reds, oranges and grays of the rocks, the almost day-glo green of the lichens on dark trees showing on a rainy night, and the transparent whitish gray of the fog. If the temperature warms, when the temperature warms, how will this change? The vegetation is likely to change: the forests in the far north of Maine may change from mainly the blue-green conifers to mixed forests, and the mixed forests in most of the state may become warm broadleaf forests. Forests in Maine could look more like New Jersey or Delaware, a yellow-green vs the blue-green of our pines. Art could be a way to communicate the profound changes with global warming.

