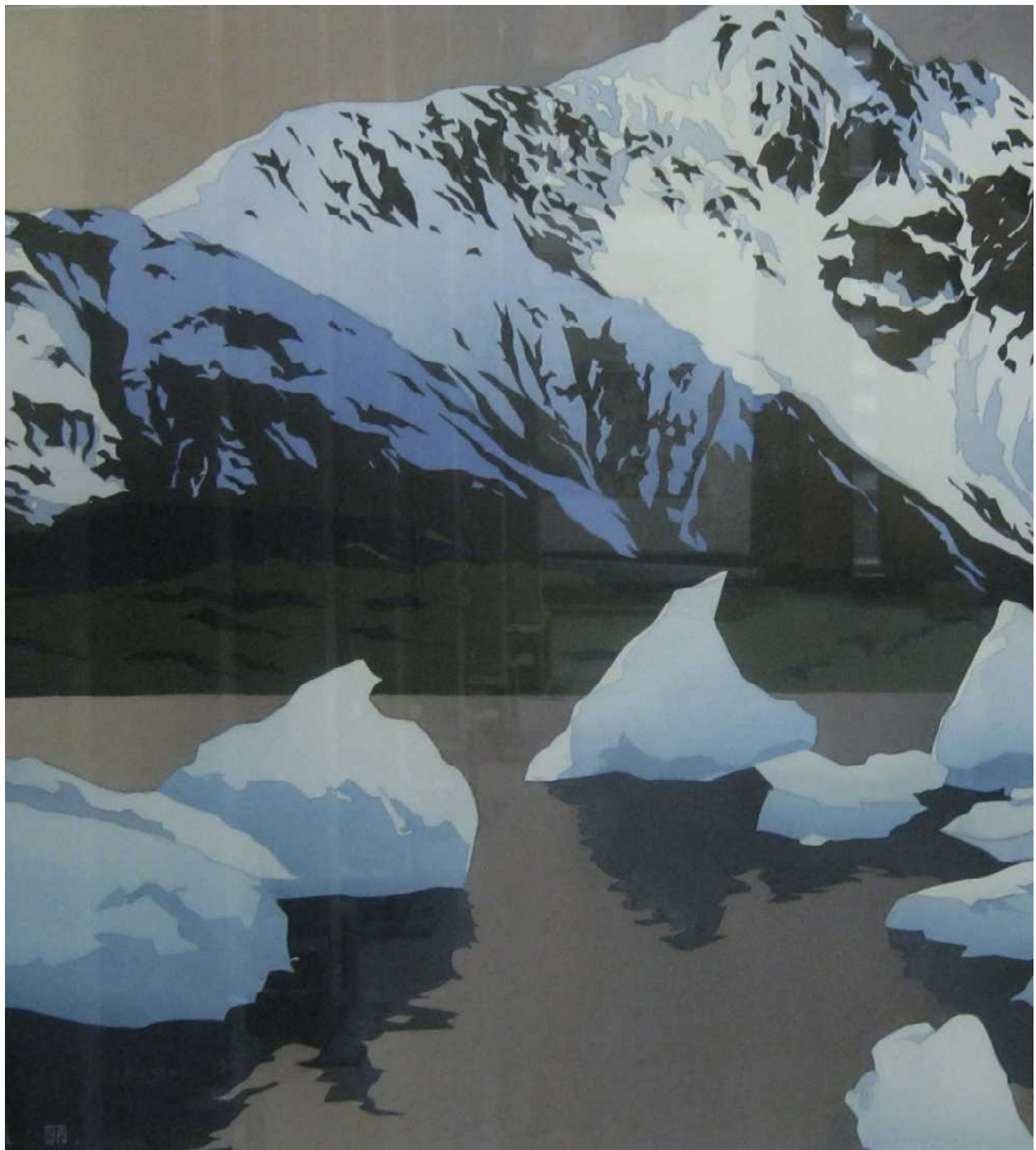


ANCHORAGE MUSEUM

MUSICAL SOUNDSCAPES
GRADES K-6



BYRON BIRDSALL
GLACIER BAY ICE, 1979

Watercolor, paper
1979.100.001



ACTIVITY AT A GLANCE

Learn how soundscape ecologists make recordings of nature and study the sounds to learn more about the health of the ecosystem. Listen to music by artist Stuart Hyatt that incorporates sounds from the natural environment to help tell the story of a place. Learn more about Stuart Hyatt and his creative process. Listen to the soundscapes of your favorite outdoor location and consider what musical arrangement would tell the story of your place.



GLACIER BAY ICE

Begin by looking closely at *Glacier Bay Ice* by Byron Birdsall.

If investigating the artwork with another person, use the questions below to guide your discussions. If working alone, consider recording thoughts on paper:

CLOSE-LOOKING

Look closely, quietly at the artwork for a few minutes.

OBSERVE

Share your observations about the artwork or record your initial thoughts

ASK

- *What do I notice about the artwork?*
- *What colors and materials does the artist use?*
- *What sounds does the artwork evoke?*
- *What does it remind you of?*
- *What more do you see?*
- *What more can you find?*

DISCUSS

USE [20 Questions Deck](#) for more group discussion questions about the artwork.

LEARN MORE

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Byron Birdsall (1937- 2016) is known for his watercolor paintings depicting dramatic Alaskan landscapes. Birdsall came to Alaska in 1975 and was self-taught. He spent 50 years as an artist in Alaska, traveling widely throughout the state. In addition to watercolor landscapes, Birdsall also painted watercolor still-lives, animals, and period pieces depicting moments in Alaskan history.





VOICES OF GLACIER BAY SOUNDSCAPE PROJECT

Listen closely to the [Glaciers Soundscape Gallery](#), from the *Voices of Glacier Bay Soundscape Project* in Glacier Bay National Park.

If investigating the sounds with another person, use the questions below to guide your discussions. If working alone, consider recording thoughts on paper:

CLOSE-LISTENING

Listen closely, quietly to the sounds for a few minutes.

OBSERVE

Share your observations about the sounds or record your initial thoughts.

ASK

- *What do I notice about the sounds?*
- *What sounds can I identify?*
- *How would you describe the sounds?*
- *What do the sounds remind you of?*
- *What more do you hear?*
- *What more can you find?*

DISCUSS

USE [20 Questions Deck](#) for more group discussion questions about the music.

LEARN MORE

ABOUT SOUNDSCAPE ECOLOGY

Soundscape ecologists are people who study soundscapes. They use the sense of hearing as a way to understand a particular environment and observe how the unique soundscape may change over time. Studying soundscapes allows scientists to gain greater insight about an environment by providing information about that place that they may not otherwise observe.

INVESTIGATE:

[Australian Broadcasting Corporation Science introduction to soundscape ecology](#)

[Learning resources from Global Soundscapes: Mission to Record the Earth](#)

[Sounds of Your Place lesson plan from the Anchorage Museum](#)

LISTEN:

[Voices of Glacier Bay Soundscape Project, from Glacier Bay National Park](#)



CREATING A SOUND MAP K-2

MATERIALS

Pencil
Paper
Clipboard

DIRECTIONS

1. Look at Byron Birdsall's *Glacier Bay Ice* as you listen to the [Glaciers Soundscape Gallery](#) from the *Voices of Glacier Bay Soundscape Project*. Ask: *How do the sounds and the artwork fit together? How does the artwork help me change what I think about the sounds?*
2. Choose a location outdoors where you can sit or stand while listening silently to the sounds around you. Look at the area around you and brainstorm sounds you might hear.
3. Close your eyes and listen closely to the sounds around you for 1 minute.
4. Open your eyes. Write or draw the sounds you heard to create a sound map.
5. Repeat this process of listening closely for a minute and recording what you hear 2-3 more times.
6. Return inside and share your sound map with others. Ask: *how are your sound maps similar? How are they different?*

CREATING A SOUND MAP 3-6

MATERIALS

Paper
Pencil
Clipboard

DIRECTIONS

1. Look at Byron Birdsall's *Glacier Bay Ice* as you listen to the [Glaciers Soundscape Gallery](#) from the *Voices of Glacier Bay Soundscape Project*. Ask: *How do the sounds and the artwork fit together? How does the artwork help me change what I think about the sounds?*
2. Choose a location outdoors where you can sit or stand while listening silently to the sounds around you. Look at the area around you and brainstorm what sounds you might hear.
3. Draw a large circle on your paper. Place a dot at the center of the circle. This dot represents where you are sitting.
4. Listen for five minutes and create a sound map. As you listen, record the sounds you hear on the paper relative to where you are sitting. If you hear a sound from in front of you to the left, record the sound in front and to the left of the center dot representing you on the paper. Use words or sketches to record the sounds.
5. Return inside and share your sound map with others. Ask: *how are your sound maps similar? How are they different?*





WHAT IS THE CITY HIDING?

Listen closely to *What is the City Hiding?* by Stuart Hyatt.

If investigating the music with another person, use the questions below to guide your discussions. If working alone, consider recording thoughts on paper:

CLOSE-LISTENING

Listen closely, quietly to the music for a few minutes.

OBSERVE

Share your observations about the music or record your initial thoughts.

ASK

- *What do I notice about the music?*
- *What sounds and musical genres does the artist use?*
- *How would you describe the music?*
- *What does it remind you of?*
- *What more do you hear?*
- *What more can you find?*

DISCUSS

USE [20 Questions Deck](#) for more group discussion questions about the music.

LEARN MORE

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Stuart Hyatt is a grammy-nominated artist and curator of the Field Works series living in Indianapolis, Indiana. Field Works challenges experimental musicians to create music inspired by and involving elements of Hyatt's field recordings. The aim of the project is to tell stories of human relationships with the natural world. Hyatt's creative works are interdisciplinary, often involving pictures or scientific literature to help tell the story, and use scientific data and field recordings. Hyatt received a grant from the National Geographic Society for a project in conjunction with the Anchorage Museum in 2021, *Remote Hymns*, a collaboration between musicians and scientists investigating geological sounds in the polar North.

INVESTIGATE:

[Stuart Hyatt's website](#)

[Interview with Bandcamp, September 2018](#)

[Article from Indianapolis Monthly, August 2020](#)

ABOUT THE ALBUM

What is the City Hiding? is from the Field Works album, *Pogue's Run*. *Pogue's Run* tells the story of Pogue's Run creek in Indianapolis—from its source, through Indianapolis, to join with the White River. The album begins with Hyatt's field recordings along Pogue's Run, and includes musical compositions by artists Eluvium, Benoit Pioulard, Marcus Fischer, Rafael Anton Irissari, and William Tyler, as well as Stuart Hyatt.

LISTEN:

Cedars—an album examining Earth's oldest forests and the complicated human relationship with nature

[La'āli'](#)

[The Sharp Smell of Cedar](#)



Fair State—an album meditating on the State of Indiana for its 200th birthday inspired by recordings made at the Indiana State Fair

[Ecology, by Stuart Hyatt and Julien Marchal](#)

Ultrasonic—an album investigating the federally endangered Indiana bat inspired by recordings of echolocation

[Dusk Tempi, by Eluvium](#)

[Sodalis, by Kelly Moran](#)

CREATING A MUSICAL SOUNDSCAPE K-2

MATERIALS

Pencil
Paper
Sound map

DIRECTIONS

1. Return to *What is the City Hiding?* by Stuart Hyatt for a second listen. Ask: *what natural sounds do you hear from Pogue's Run Creek? Why might these be important? What does the music sound like?*
2. Look at the sound map you created earlier. Brainstorm how to tell the story of your location using music. Ask: *what sounds from my sound map are important to tell the story of this place?*
3. Brainstorm music to add to the natural sounds to create a musical soundscape. Describe your musical choices on a new sheet of paper using words or drawings. Ask: *What should the music sound like? Should the music or the sounds from the sound map be louder?*
4. Share your musical soundscapes with others.

CREATING A MUSICAL SOUNDSCAPE 3-6

MATERIALS

Paper
Pencil
Sound map

DIRECTIONS

1. Listen again to *What is the City Hiding?* by Stuart Hyatt. Ask: *What natural sounds do you hear from Pogue's Run Creek? Why might these be important?*
2. Look at the sound map you created earlier. Brainstorm how to tell the story of your location using music. Ask: *what sounds from my sound map are important to tell the story of this place?*
3. Brainstorm how to tell the story of your location using music. Describe your musical choices on a new sheet of paper using words or drawings. Ask: *What sounds from the place should I include? What genre of music should I use? What feelings should a listener have listening to the music? How will I convey those feelings with music?*
4. Share your musical soundscapes with others.



KEY TERMS

<i>Album</i>	a collection of recordings issued as a single item on CD, record, or other recorded medium
<i>Ecosystem</i>	a biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment
<i>Genre</i>	category of music, and sometimes other forms of art, characterized by similarities in form, style, or subject matter
<i>Musical arrangement</i>	a composition adapted from the original instruments or voices than originally specified
<i>Environment</i>	the surroundings or conditions in which a person, animal, or plant lives; may refer to the natural world, especially as it is affected by human activity
<i>Sound map</i>	a physical representation of where sounds are heard in relation to the listener
<i>Soundscape</i>	all the sounds in a particular place
<i>Soundscape ecologist</i>	scientists who study soundscape ecology
<i>Soundscape ecology</i>	the science of studying soundscapes to better understand a place and the relationships between organisms and that place

