

# What Does it Mean to Be American? Artists Respond

Reema Ghazi & Rachel Trinkley  
National Gallery of Art  
Washington, DC

# Our plan for today

## 1 | Teaching and Learning with Art

See Think Wonder

Artful Thinking

## 2 | Introduction to Uncovering America

Thematic image sets, texts, activities

## 3 | Roundtable Discussions

Curriculum connections

Posters and image sets

**When you think about the US West, what images and stories come to mind?**



J. M. WOOD, CHG.

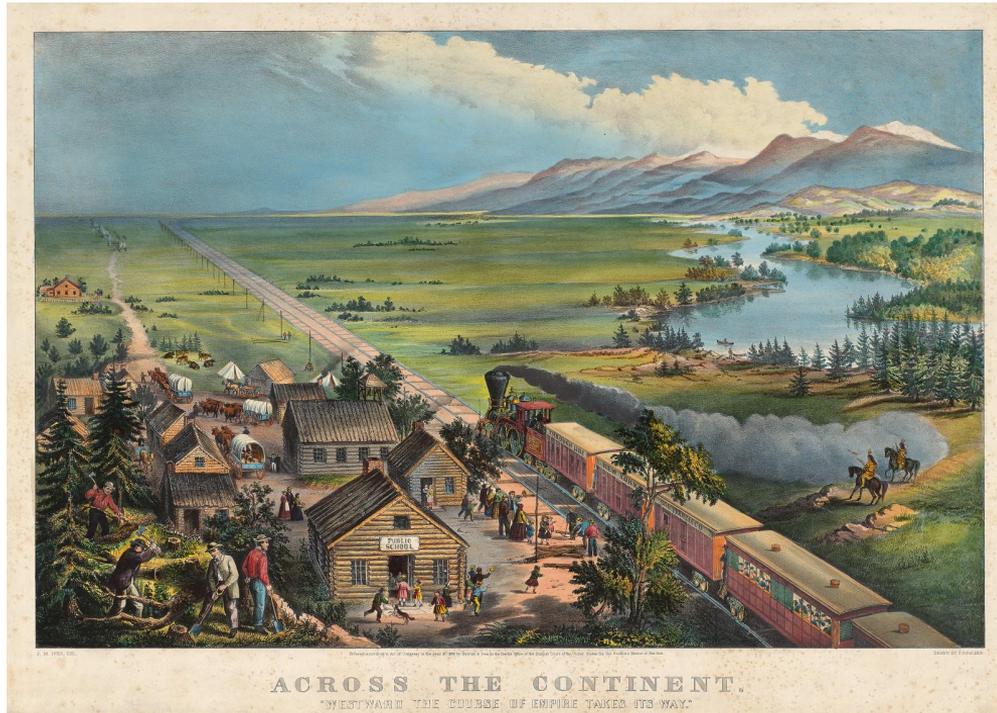
Reproduced according to Act of Congress in the year 1869 by the Secretary of the Interior in view for the Eastern Office of the Chief Clerk of the Treasury, under the American System of the West.

DESIGNED BY J. W. WOOD

# ACROSS THE CONTINENT.

"WESTWARD THE COURSE OF EMPIRE TAKES ITS WAY."

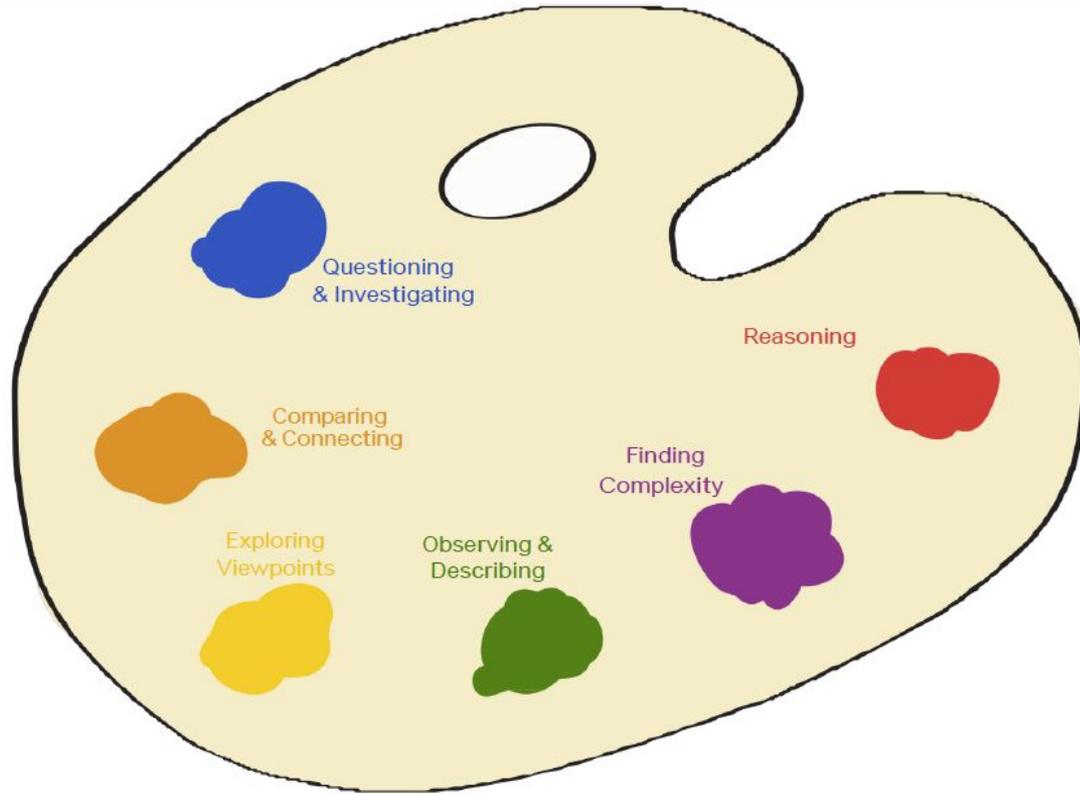
# What role did artists play in shaping public understandings of the US West?



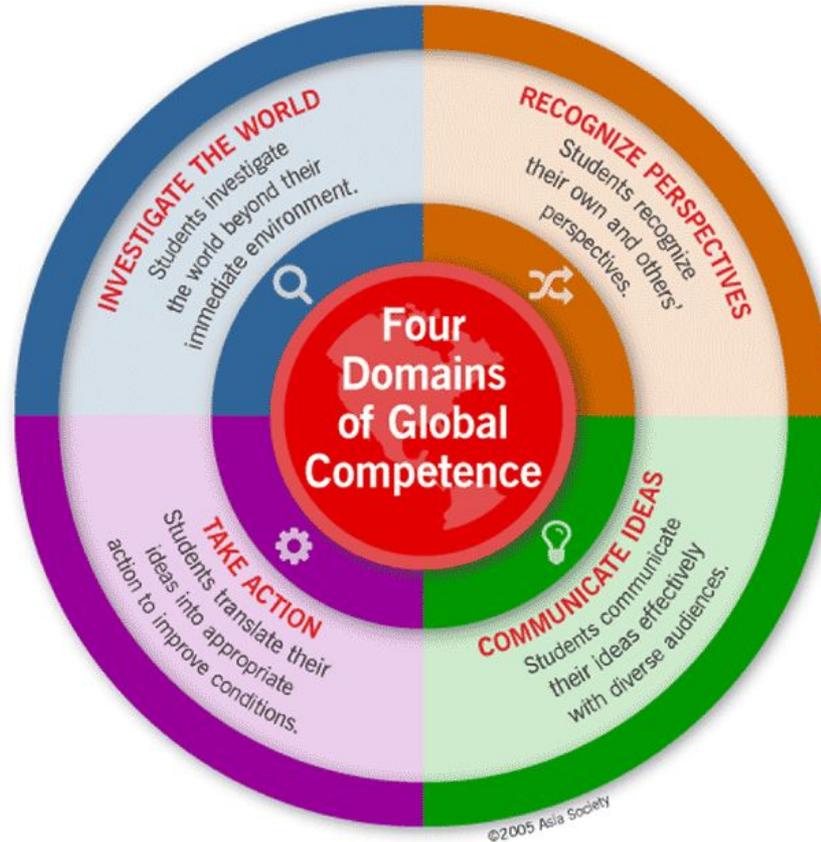
In what ways was the US settled and unsettled in the 19th century?

Frances Flora Bond Palmer  
(James Merritt Ives, Currier and Ives)  
*Across the Continent: "Westward the Course of Empire Takes its Way"*  
1868, hand-colored lithograph

# Artful Thinking



# Global Competence Model



# How can art support the study of history and social studies?

Art serves as a primary source for historical investigation

Art is a powerful site for developing self-awareness and perspective taking

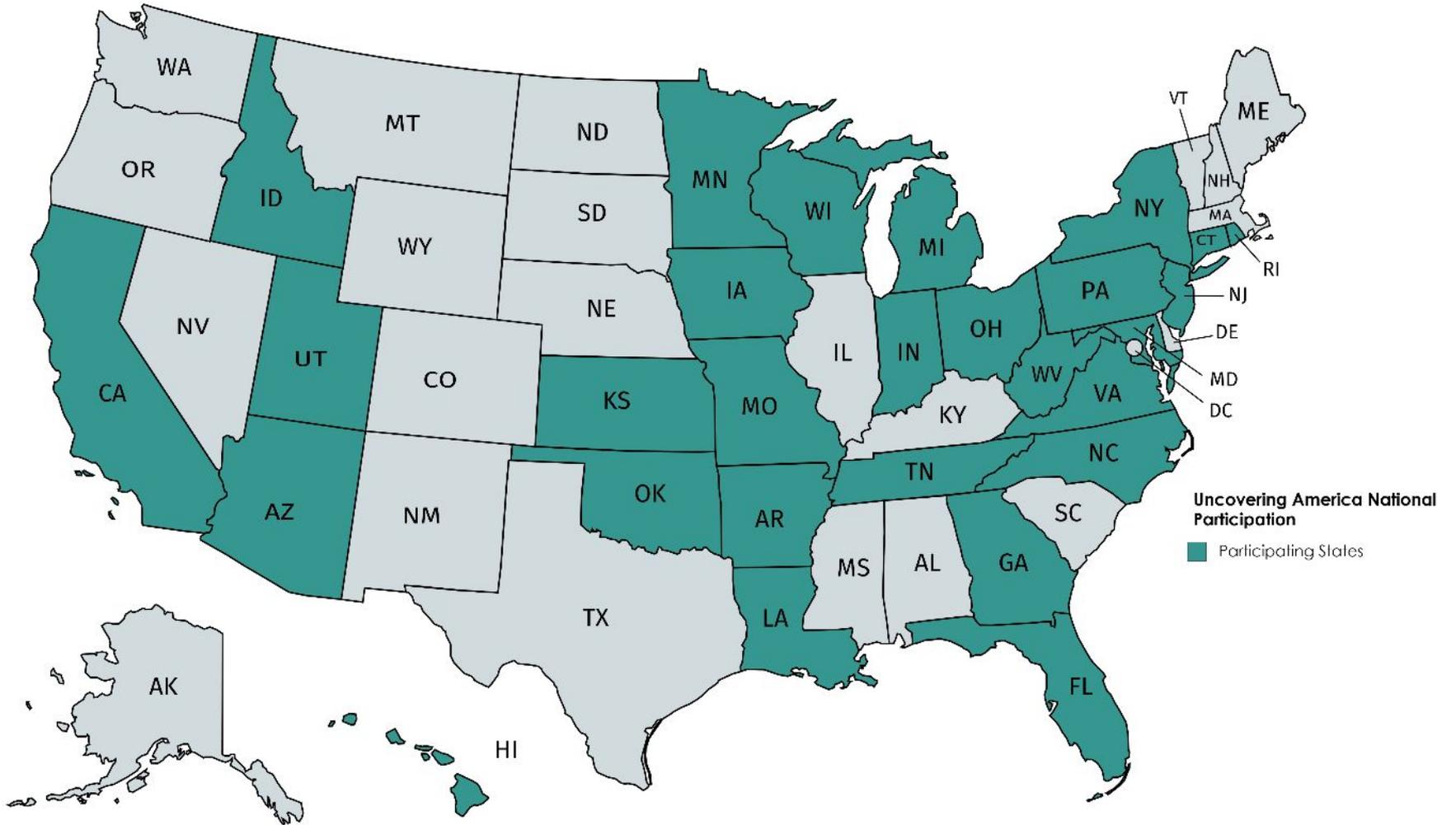
Art exists as a vehicle and arena for civic participation

# UNCOVERING AMERICA

National Gallery of Art



[www.nga.gov/uncoveringamerica](http://www.nga.gov/uncoveringamerica)



# Part 1 - Examine Image as Small Group

What questions does this work of art raise for you?

What do you think this work of art is about? What statement does it make?

What other contextual information would you need to further analyze this as a source?

## Dimension 1

Developing questions and planning inquiries

## Dimension 2

Applying disciplinary concepts and tools

## Dimension 3

Evaluating sources and using evidence

## Dimension 4

Communicating conclusions and taking informed action

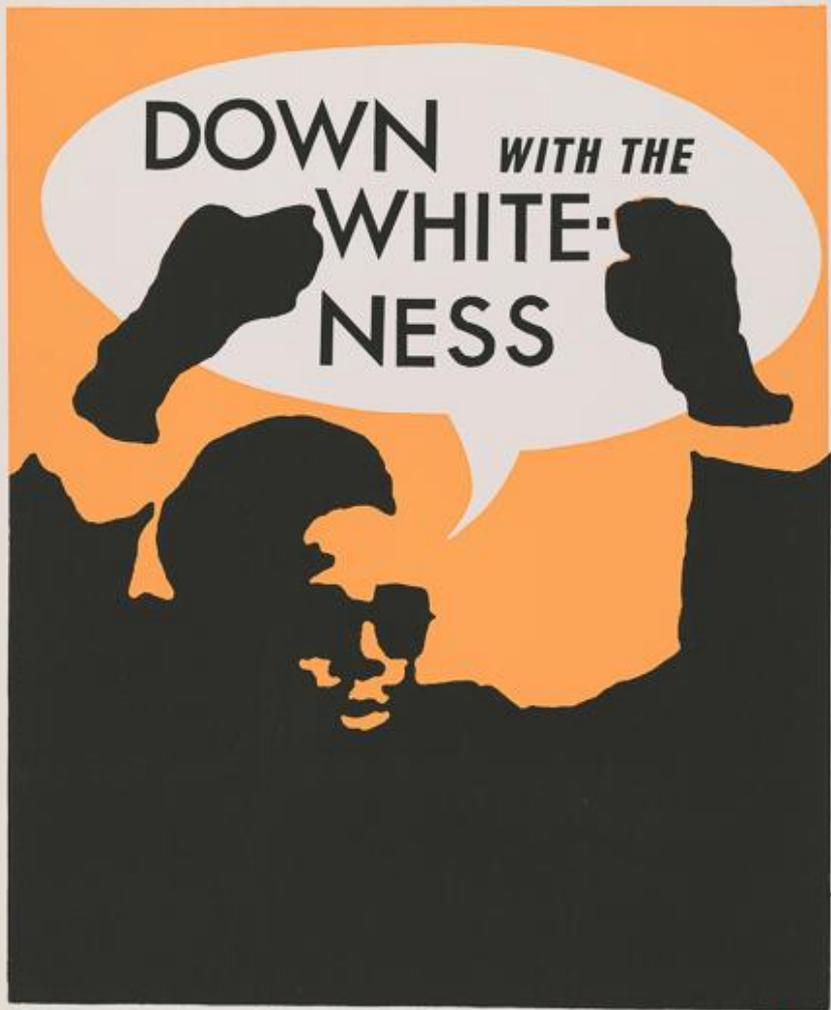
## Part 2 - Flip, Read, Discuss

How does this image/discussion connect to your teaching and concepts discussed by your students?

How might this work of art be used as **a primary source for historical investigation?**

How might it be used to **develop self-awareness or perspective taking?**

How might it **motivate civic participation and action?**



Rupert García

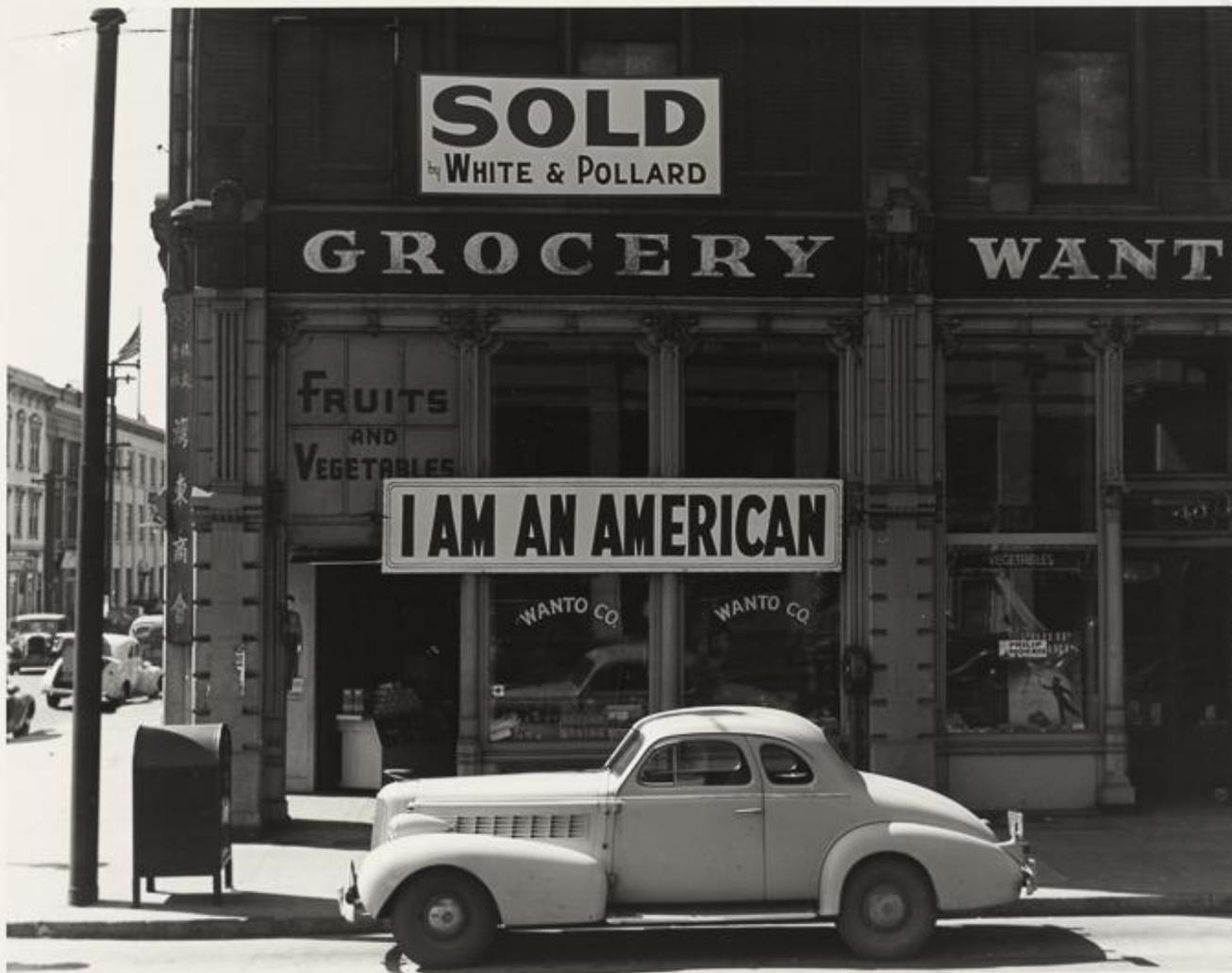
*Down with the Whiteness*

1969

color screenprint on wove paper

Barkley Leonard Hendricks  
*Sir Charles, Alias Willie Harris*  
1972  
oil on canvas





Dorothea Lange  
*Japanese-American  
owned grocery store,  
Oakland, California*  
1942  
gelatin silver print

James F. Ryder  
*Atlantic & Great Western  
Railway*  
1862  
albumen print



# Assessing learning with art

Successful student use of art in your history classroom might be:

- The ability to find evidence that could be used to develop further inquiry
- The ability to make and communicate an argument that is supported by evidence
- The ability to see an image as a product of a broader historical moment
- The rigor of questions asked, perspectives considered in looking at a work of art
- The ability to assess an artist's choices (subject, medium, platform/audience)
- Students become more accepting of multiple interpretations

New study: [The Impacts of Facilitated Single-Visit Art Museum Programs on Students Grades 4-6](#)

# Thank you!

Reema Ghazi

[r-ghazi@nga.gov](mailto:r-ghazi@nga.gov)

Rachel Trinkley

[r-trinkley@nga.gov](mailto:r-trinkley@nga.gov)

[classroom@nga.gov](mailto:classroom@nga.gov)

