

Big Starry Skies: Does out of Sight Mean out of Mind?

By Sarah Bedell, '24

This light pollution project uses art to bring awareness to the importance of the night skies to humans artistically, culturally, and historically. With the goal of tracing the importance of the stars to humans through time, we hope to remind the public of the long-standing significance of the cosmos to our species. Art is the medium; the evidence through which we worked to accomplish this goal. This project involved research and curation work of night sky artwork depicting or created in the Rocky Mountain West. We developed a virtual gallery/exhibit in relation to State of the Rockies' Dark Skies work.

We approached the topic of light pollution from an art history perspective to create a virtual museum exhibit. The Manual of Museum Exhibitions states that the purpose of a museum exhibition is to "transform some aspect of the visitor's interests, attitudes, or values affectively, due to the visitors' discovery of some level of meaning in the objects or content on display." In effort to inform and transform visitors' awareness, interests, attitudes, or values surrounding light pollution, we showcase in this exhibit, artwork from the Rocky Mountain West that features the night sky. This exhibit is meant to be an example of how the night sky opens our emotions and awe and how it continues to inspire artists in different ways. The artwork featured comes from museums across Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, and New Mexico. This virtual exhibit will exist on a website tied to Colorado College for educational purposes. The exhibit is planned to be launched in the summer of 2024 and is planned to be live for about five years. ▲

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Sarah Bedell '24 (she/her) majored in Museum Studies and minored in Performance Design. Sarah is an artist and explored how she can lend her creative eye to museum and theatre design in college. She is grateful for this opportunity to work with State of the Rockies to practice her curatorial skills and advocate for the importance of art.



[Link](#) to Sarah's virtual exhibit in slideshow form