The Evidence

CHOOSING ARTWORK
for the Built Environment

Inspired by Biophilic Research that connects us to the Natural World.

KURT JOHNSON
PHOTOGRAPHY

Art creates an emotion, and emotions contribute to human health and wellness. The following researchers have spent lifetimes gathering evidence to support this theory.

Why? To create positive results for ANYONE'S JOURNEY TO WELLNESS.

Our species has evolved for more than 99% of its history in adaptive response to the natural world.

Kellert, 2015

Stephen Kellert

"Godfather of Biophilia"

Stephen Kellert was a social ecologist and senior research scholar at Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. He was instrumental in pioneering the field of "biophilia" and biophilic design, a discipline that aims to improve human health and well-being by promoting connections between people and nature in the built environment. For more than three decades, Kellert helped to develop the leading thoughts on biophilia.

Today's natural habitat is largely the built environment, where we spend 90% of our time.

Kellert, 2015

Biophilic design seeks to satisfy our innate need to affiliate with nature in modern buildings and cities.

— Kellert, 2015

Sidney Regional Medical Center, Sidney, NE
Gallery Wrapped Canvas

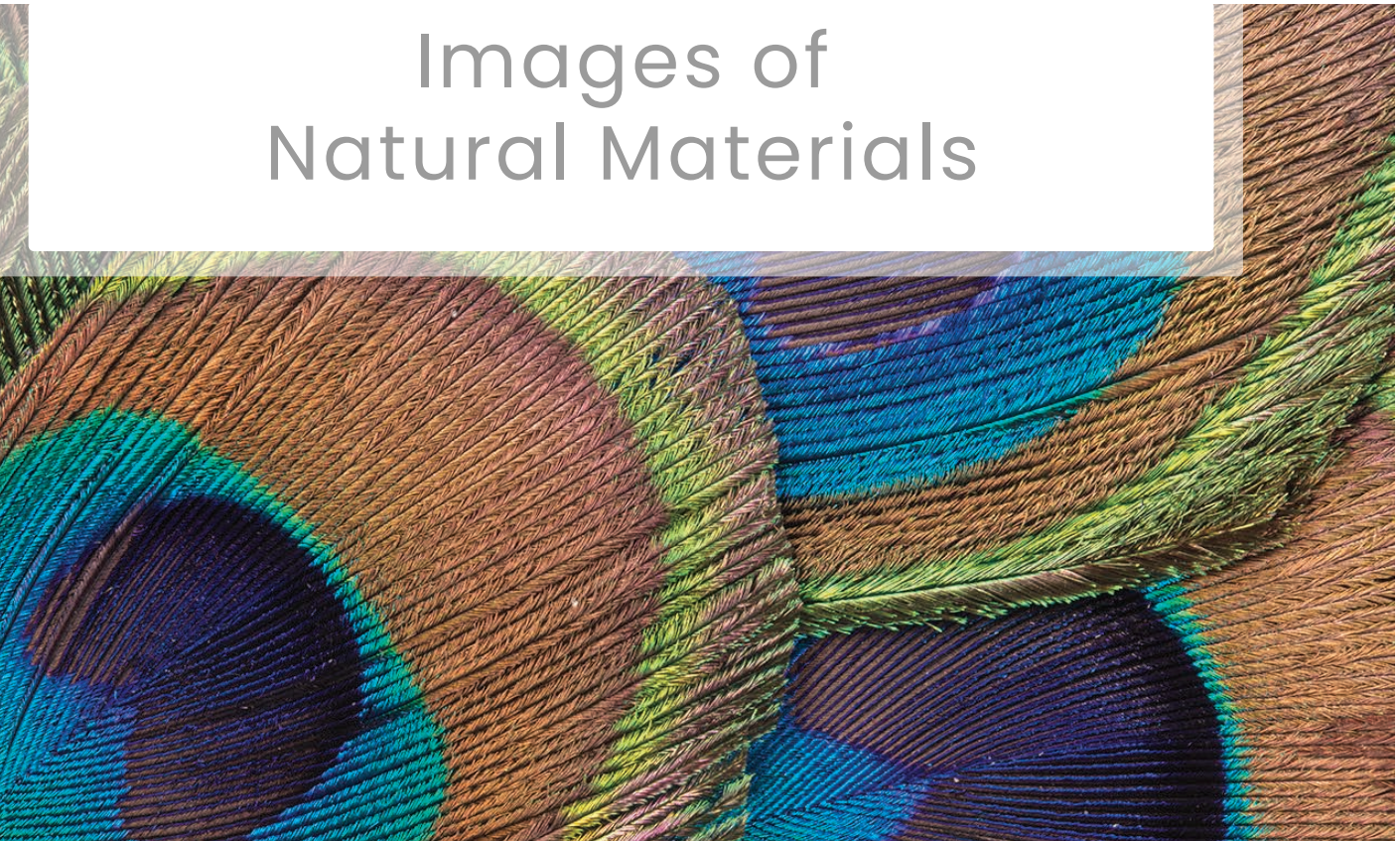
The use of nature art is among several strategies to create indirect experiences of nature in the built environment.

— Kellert, 2015

Brookings Health System, Brookings, SD
Gallery Wrapped Canvas

Images of Nature

Images of Natural Materials



Images of Natural Colors

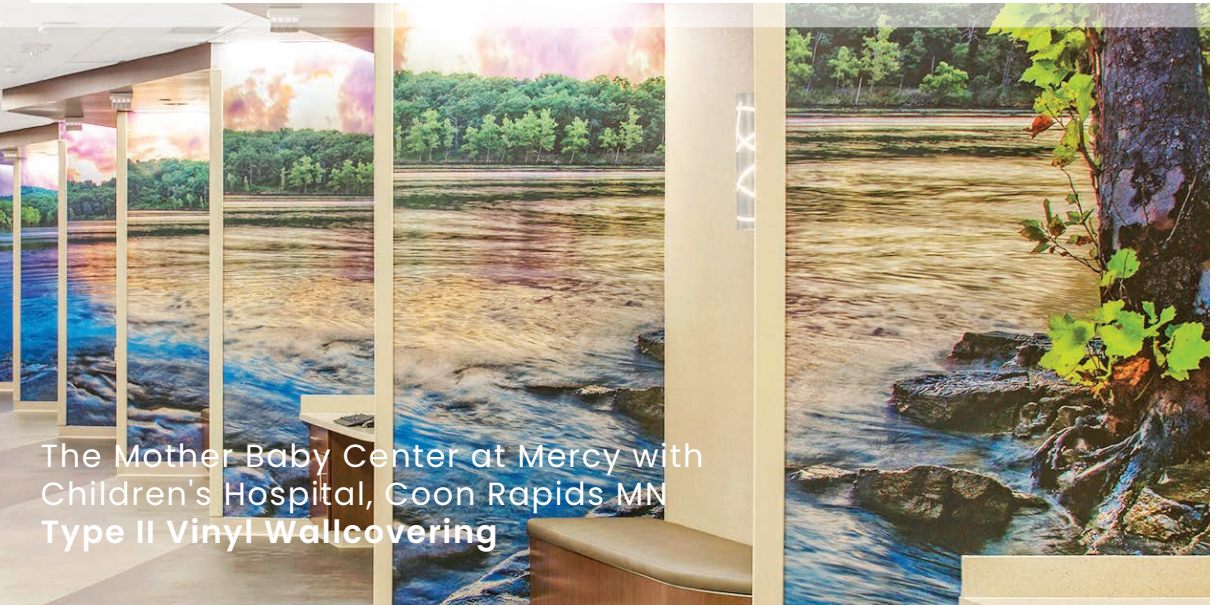
Images of Natural Light & Air

Images of Natural Shapes and Forms

Images of Natural Age, Change, and the Patina of Time

Fulton State Hospital
Behavioral Health, Fulton MO
Wall Protection

Images to Support Wayfinding



The Mother Baby Center at Mercy with
Children's Hospital, Coon Rapids MN
Type II Vinyl Wallcovering

The Mother Baby Center at Abbott
Northwestern and Children's Minneapolis, MN
Type II Vinyl Wallcovering

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Faith Regional Health Services
Norfolk, NE
Type II Vinyl Wallcovering

Lexingtopn Regional Health Center
Lexington, NE
Type II Vinyl Wallcovering & Gallery Wrapped Canvas

INTERNATIONAL WELL BUILDING INSTITUTE™

The WELL Building Standard is a performance-based system for measuring, certiyfing and monitoring features of the built environment that impact human health and wellbeing.

The WELL Building Standard Addresses 10 Concepts

- Air
- Water
- Nourishment
- Light
- Movement
- Thermal Comfort
- Sound
- Materials
- Community
- **MIND**

At **Kurt Johnson Photography**, our focus is on the WELL MIND, influencing cognitive and emotional well being through our nature photography.

Research suggests nature art promotes restoration if it has the following characteristics:

Ulrich, Gilpin, 2003

The Mother Baby Center at Abbott Northwestern and Children's Hospital, Minneapolis, MN
Type II Vinyl Wallcovering

Images of
Calm Moving Water
KURT
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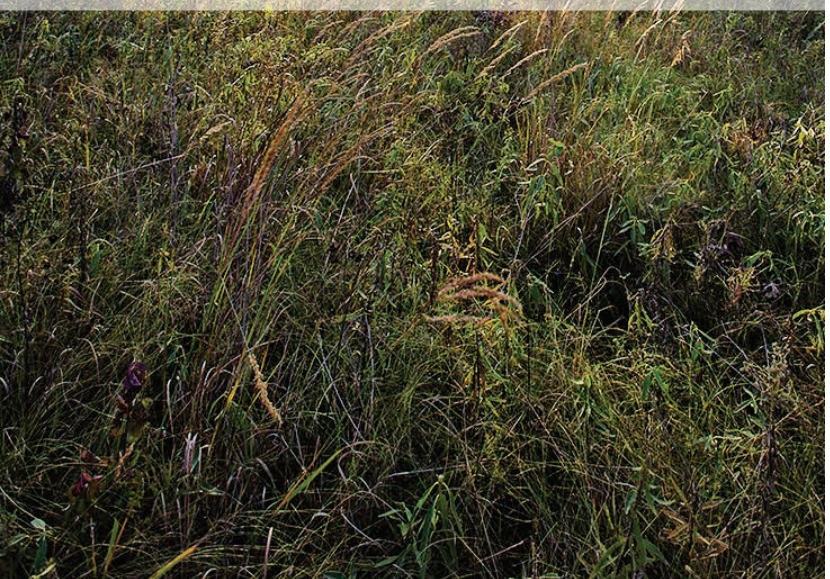
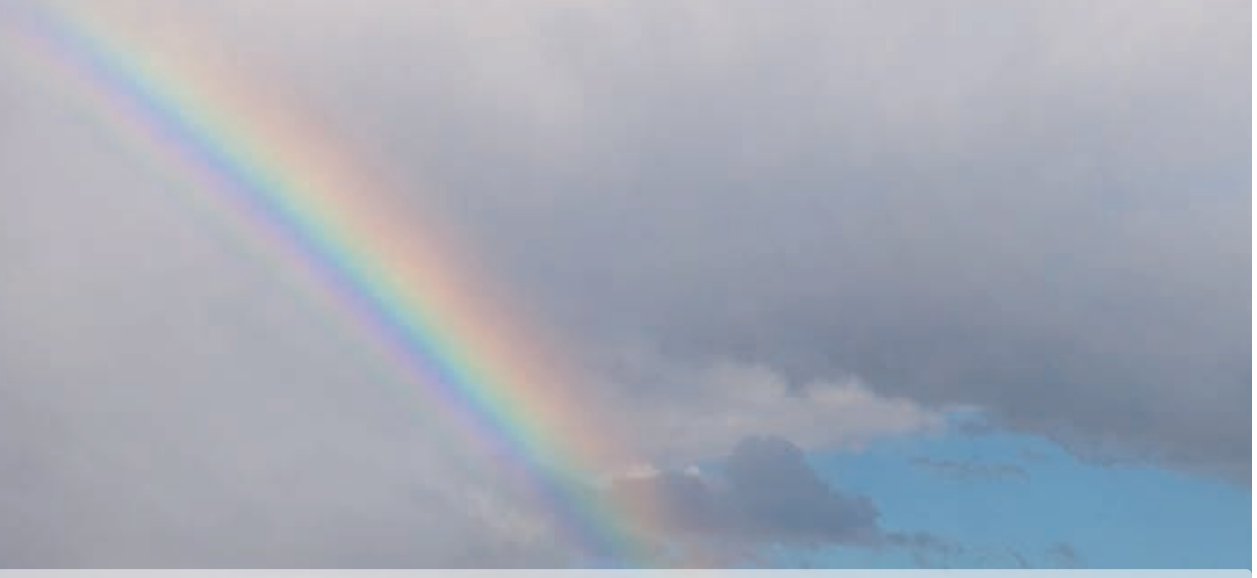
Images of Verdant Foliage, Flowers

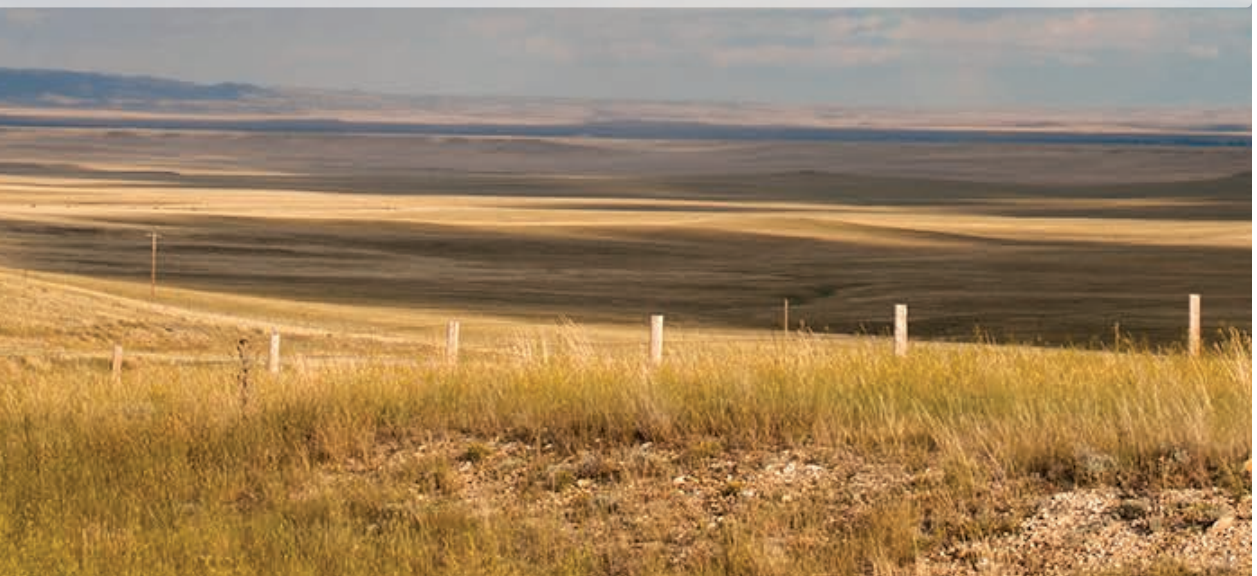
Images with Foreground
Spacial Openness
KURT
JOHNSON
PHOTOGRAPHY

Images of Trees with Broad Canopies





Images with Park-Like or Savannah-Like Properties



Ulrich: The scientific evidence is clear and convincing. Viewing nature scenes plays a key role in creating a healing environment that improves patient outcomes. Research shows that nature art can:

1. Reduce stress and anxiety.
2. Lower blood pressure.
3. Reduce need for pain medication.
4. Increase patients' trust and confidence.
5. Be a positive distraction for patients, visitors, family members, and staff.
6. Decrease length of hospital stays.

"Patient's sense of hope and well being decreases when viewing only white, sterile walls; whereas patients who view nature photos experience an increase in their sense of hope and well being."

Several studies have found that hospital patients respond more positively to nature art and representative images than to stylized or abstract art.

— Ulrich, Simons, Losito, et. Al., 1991; Hathorn, Nanda, 2006

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Nature art has also been found to help reduce mental health patients' anxiety and agitation in healthcare settings.

Nanda, Eisen, Zadeh, Own, 2011

Children in hospital settings prefer representational nature art to abstract art. A study showed that children highly rate nature images with bright colors, water features, and nonthreatening wildlife.

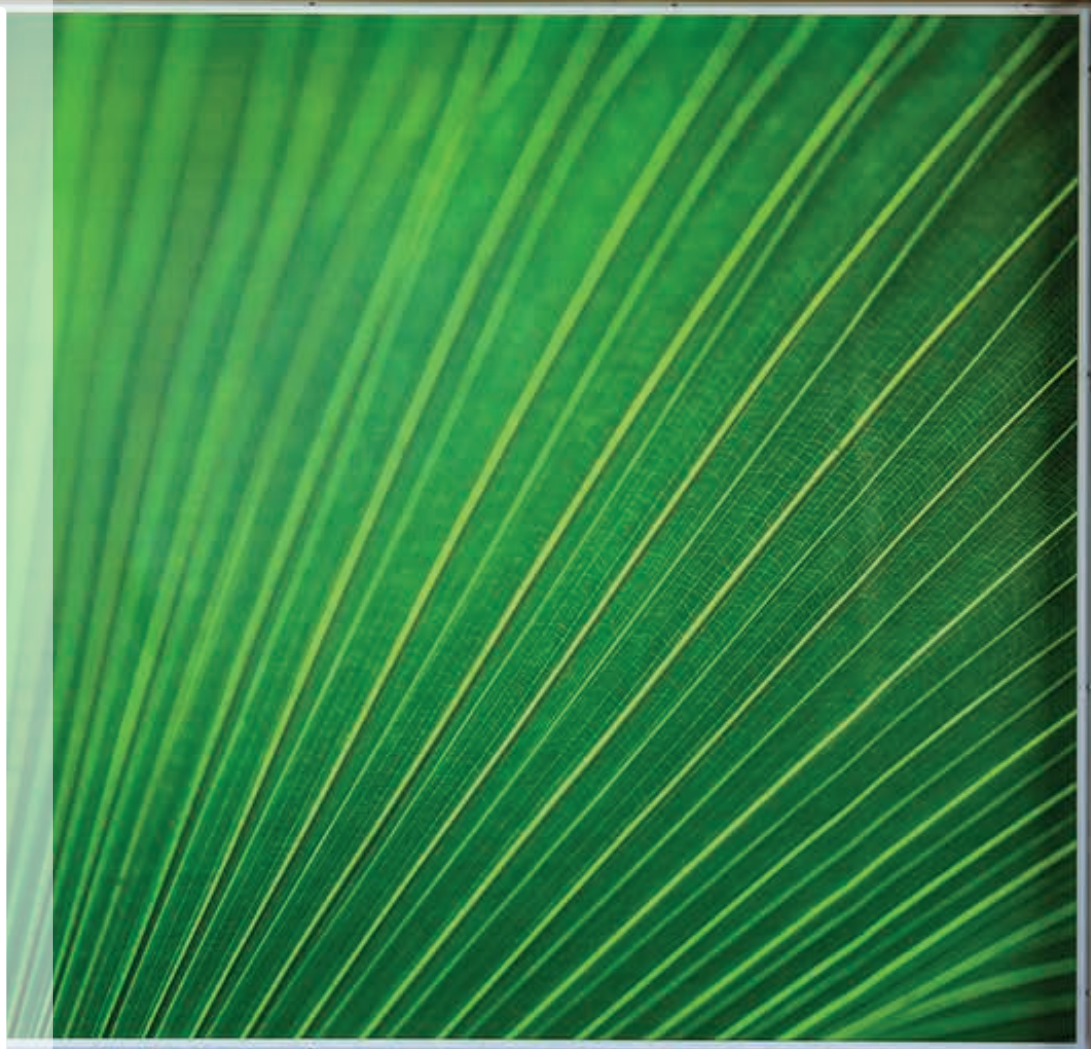
Eisen, 2005

A study shows careful selection of colors can help increase contrast sensitivity and eliminate glare, both of which are important to the aging or impaired eye.
Marberry, Zagon 1995
KURT JOHNSON
PHOTOGRAPHY

Exposure to nature scenes and murals has been found to decrease pain for **burn patients, cancer patients** and those undergoing procedures.

However, images of water are inappropriate in radiology areas where procedures must be performed with the patient's bladder full. Or, scenes of the sun or desert might cause anxiety for burn patients.

Hathorn, Nanda, 2008



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Waiting is often the number one complaint of patients.

Larger images have been found to have a more positive impact on patients in waiting areas.

Devlin, Anderson, Hession-Kunz, 2020

The Mother Baby Center at Abbott Northwestern and Children's Hospital, Minneapolis, MN
Type II Vinyl Wallcovering

KJP SUGGESTIONS

Cancer Treatment Centers

- **Bright colors**
- Images that serve as a positive distraction
- Verdant foliage
- Landscapes with open foreground

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Senior Living

- **Colors for wayfinding**
- Architectural touchstones
- Appropriate bright colors for aging eyes
- Indigenous photography

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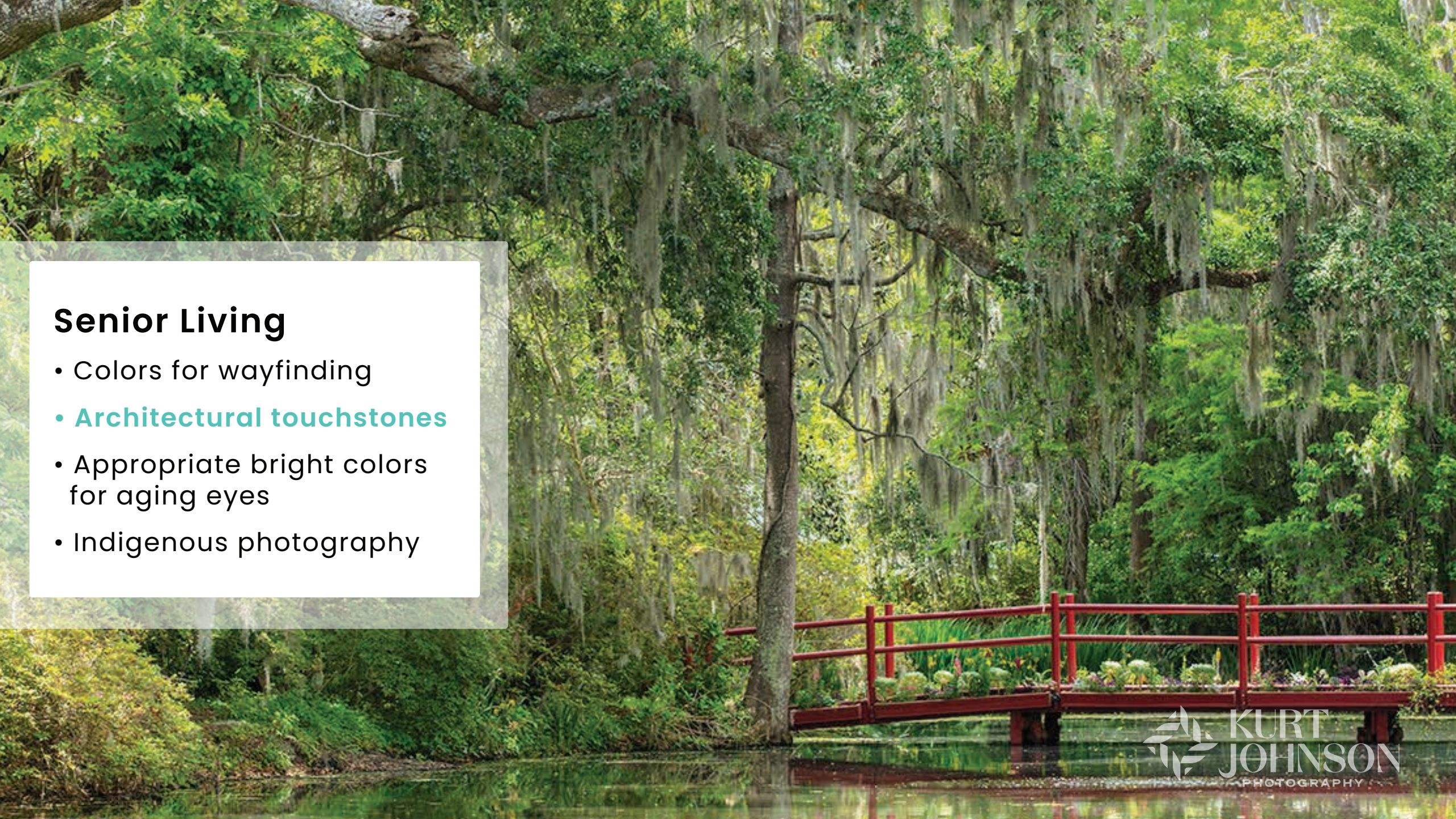
Fulton State Hospital
Behavioral Health, Fulton MO
Wall Protection



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Mother/Baby

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Midwest Fetal Clinic, Minneapolis MN
Film on Glass

The Mother Baby Center at Mercy with Children's Hospital, Coon Rapids MN
Type II Vinyl Wallcovering

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The Mother Baby Center at Abbott Northwestern and Children's Minneapolis, MN
Phenolic laminate

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- **Feminine, soft images**

Pediatric Centers

- Bright colors
- Non-threatening wildlife
- Waterscapes
- Representational art vs abstract art

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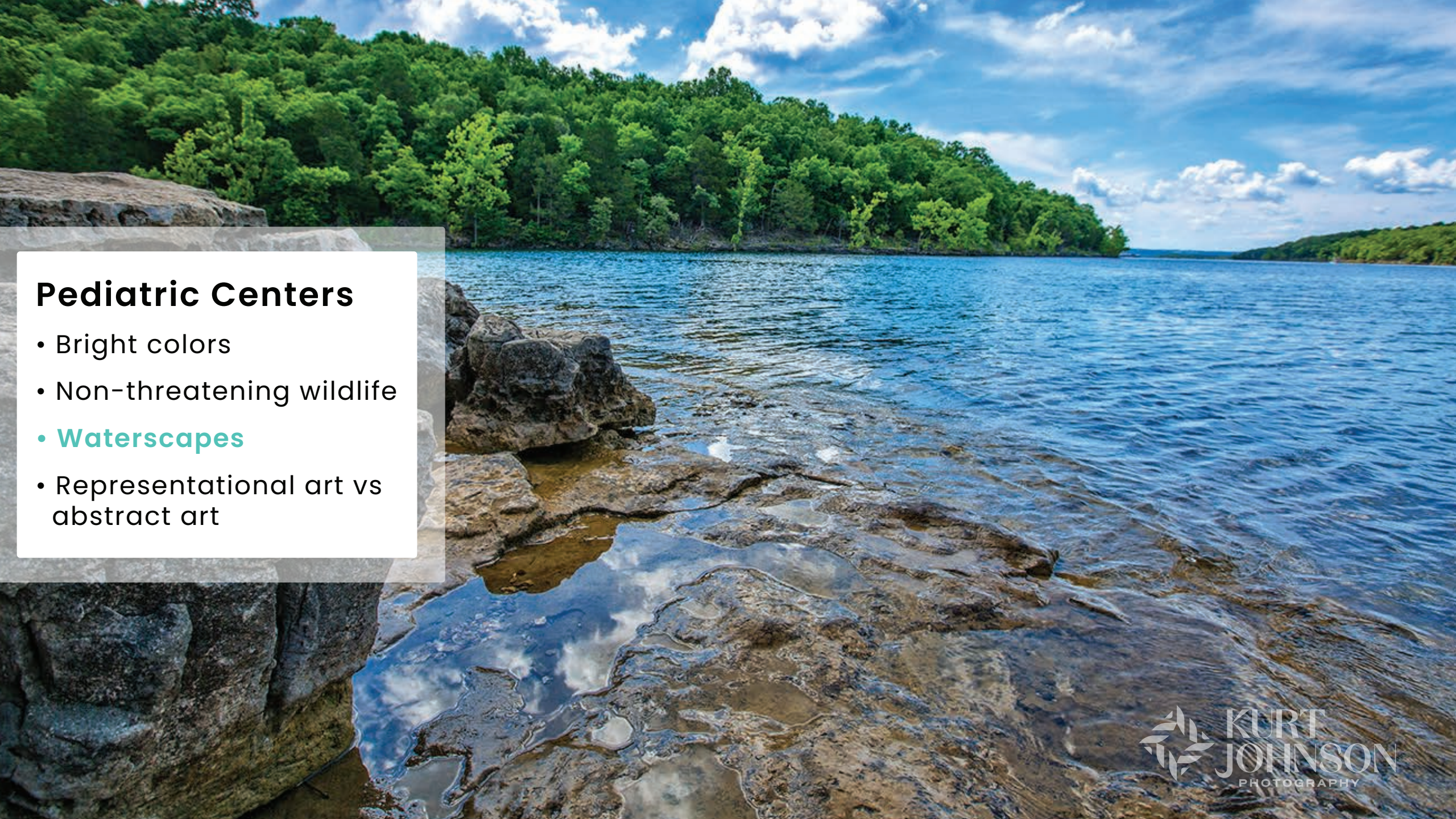

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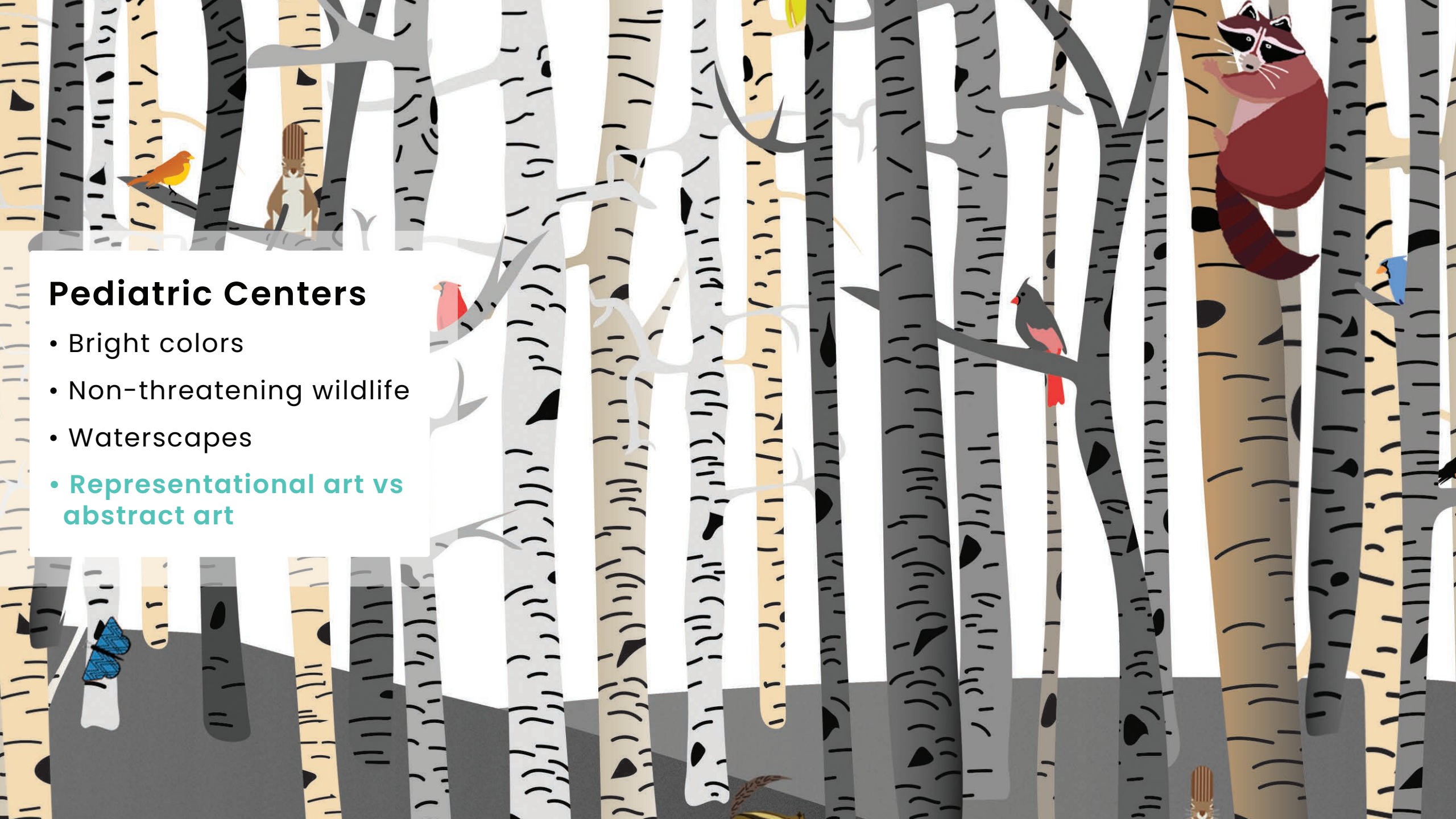

Pediatric Centers

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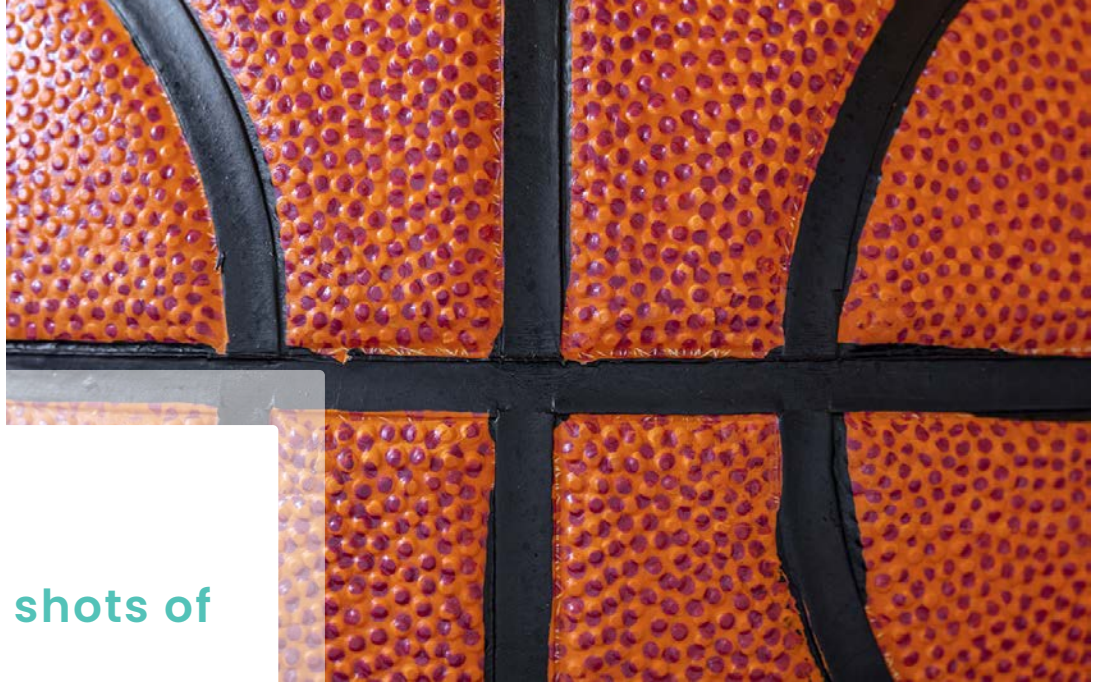
- Non-threatening wildlife
- Waterscapes
- **Representational art vs abstract art**

Orthopedic

- **Tight and detailed shots of sports equipment**
- Close cropped action shots



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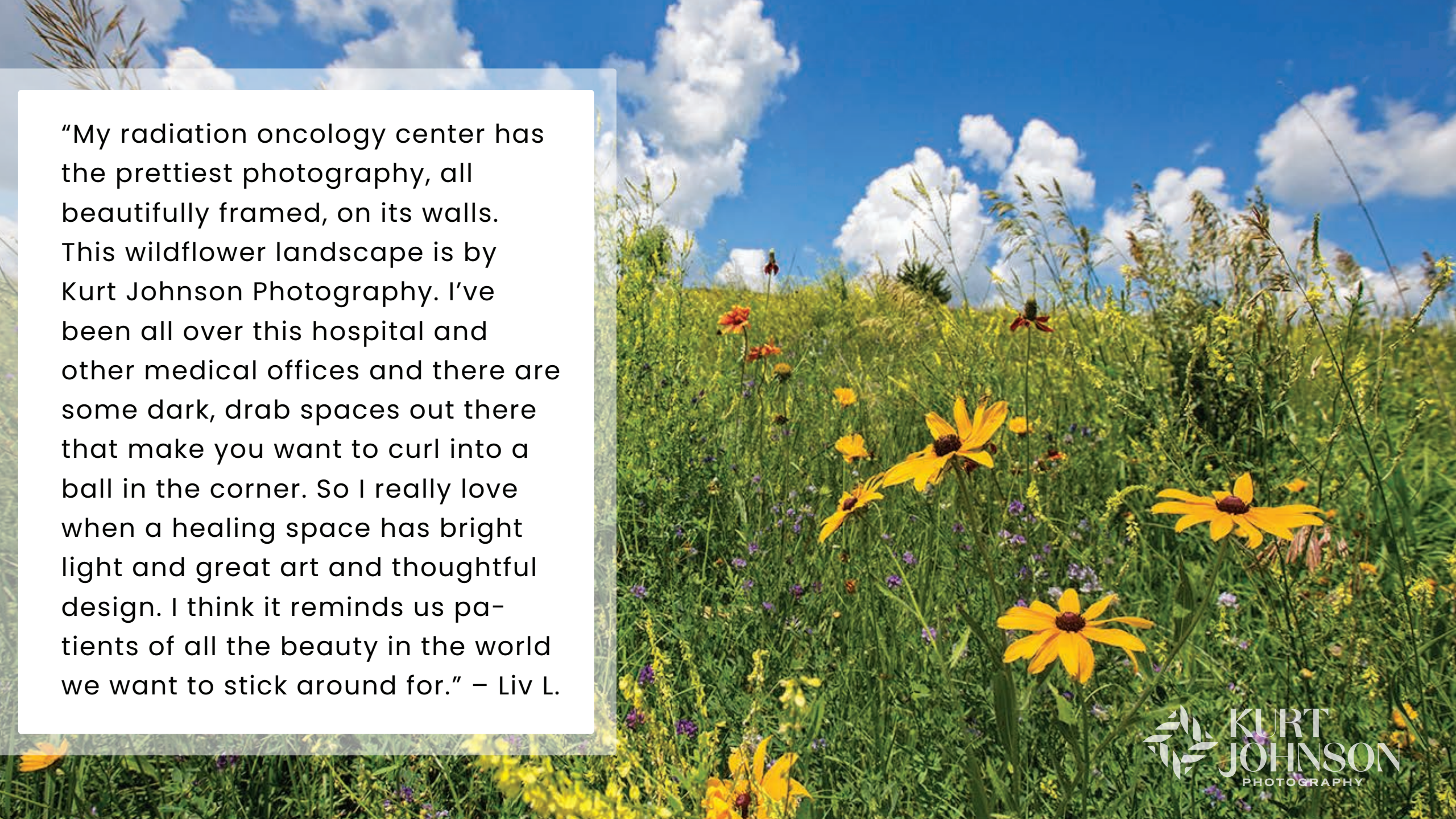

"My radiation oncology center has the prettiest photography, all beautifully framed, on its walls. This wildflower landscape is by Kurt Johnson Photography. I've been all over this hospital and other medical offices and there are some dark, drab spaces out there that make you want to curl into a ball in the corner. So I really love when a healing space has bright light and great art and thoughtful design. I think it reminds us pa-tients of all the beauty in the world we want to stick around for." – Liv L.

"And into the forest
I go, to lose my mind
and find my soul."

John Muir, Founder of the Sierra Club

“Nature images fulfill our need as humans to remain connected to nature in indoor spaces where we spend most of our time. Using the right kinds of nature imagery in healthcare settings can have numerous benefits to patients and the entire care team.” **KJP**

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Biophilic Research Suggests Choosing Nature Art for Positive Results in Built Environments.

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