



**S**taten Island SEEN presents New York City's most rural, yet rapidly developing borough, an island unique in location and history from the 17th century to today. Paintings, drawings, prints, stereographic photos and an anaglyph 3-D video capture Staten Island's scenic beauty and, in microcosm, a view of a modern suburban United States. The Island's earliest painters were drawn to the beauty of its woods, wetlands, and vantages towards the sea, as contemporary artists are intrigued by its deserted industrial remnants, crammed parking lots, strip malls, and tract housing, but it is the Island's character in taut balance between country and city that they all pursue and preserve for us.

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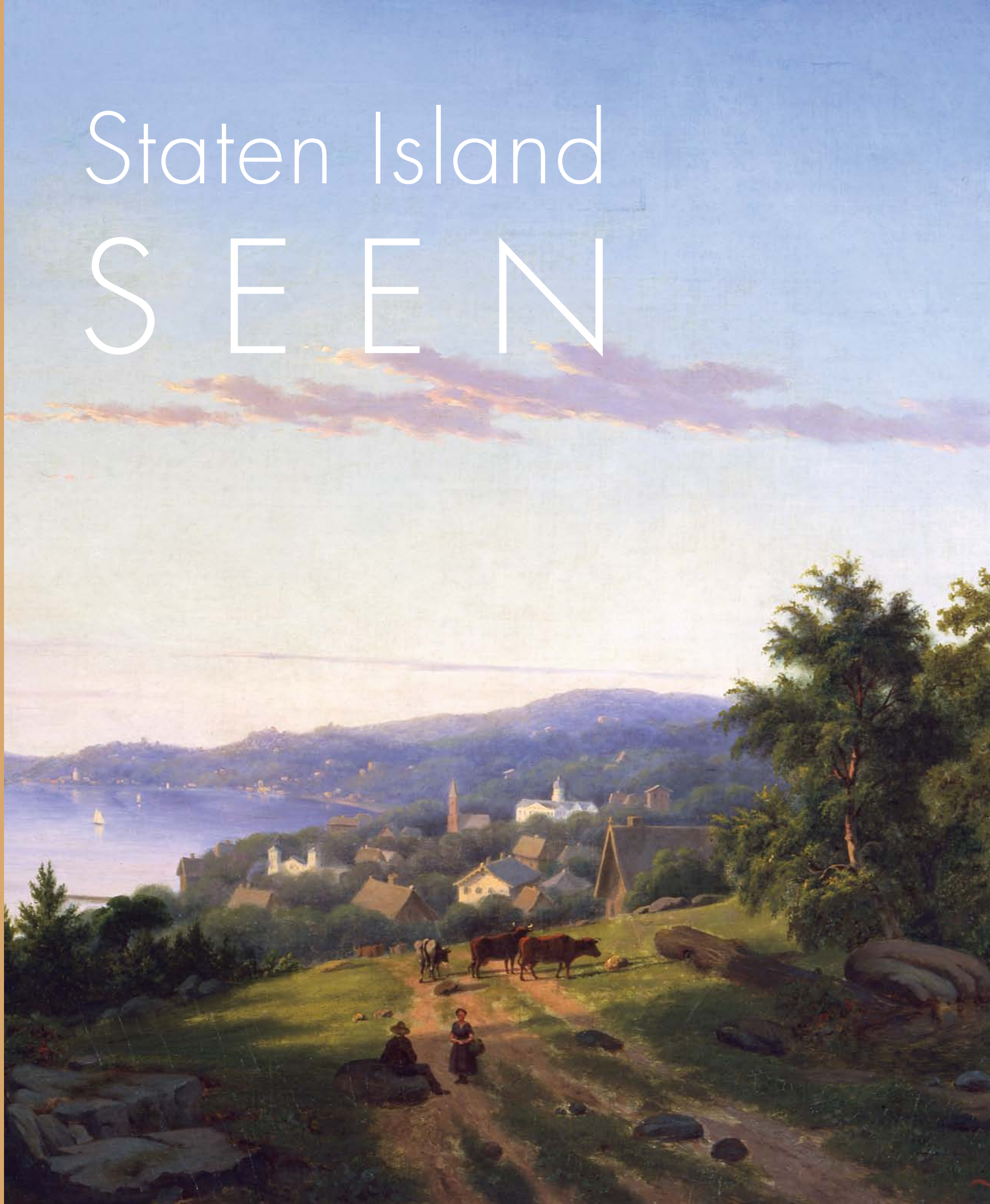
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Staten Island SEEN

Staten Island Museum

# Staten Island SEEN





*God might have made a more beautiful place than Staten Island,  
but He never did.*

George William Curtis  
Editor of *Harper's Monthly* and Livingston resident



Staten Island



Staten Island  
SEEN

Staten Island Museum  
New York

This catalogue is being published in conjunction with the exhibition *Staten Island SEEN*, organized by the Staten Island Museum, September 19, 2015 -September 30, 2016.

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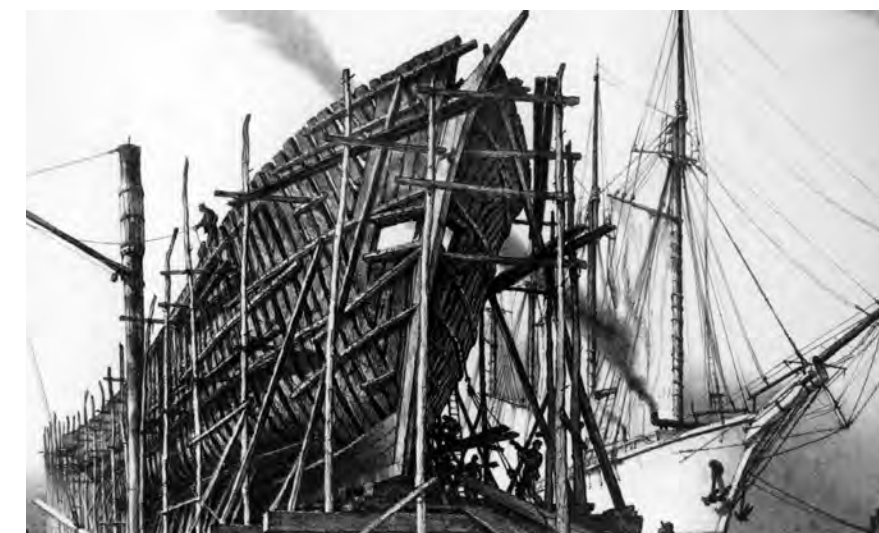
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## FOREWORD

Vision is at the center of Staten Island SEEN.

A

artists' visions of Staten Island are the basis of this exhibition, but the vision of a singular individual, Elizabeth Egbert, is at the heart of this enterprise and everything inside and outside the new Staten Island Museum at Snug Harbor.

Elizabeth Egbert was a sculptor, educator, and administrator who saw what this Museum could be, and pushed it into the 21st century toward greater goals for its future. Elizabeth envisioned opening the Museum at Snug Harbor with exhibitions that would highlight the strengths of its art collection: *Opening the Treasure Box*, featuring some of the finest pieces from our world art collection, and *Staten Island SEEN*, with representative works from our collection of 19th and 20th-century landscapes. The Museum's art collection which had languished in relative obscurity, sporadically presented in small glimpses, is now available to visitors for an extensive period of display. We are thankful for Elizabeth's patience, perseverance, and audacity in bringing these works out of bins and into the public eye. *Staten Island SEEN* could not have happened without the inauguration of a new facility, long promised but difficult to realize. The establishment of the Staten Island Museum's growing presence at Snug Harbor is a direct achievement of Elizabeth's 12 years of unwavering dedication, in partnership with the Museum's Board of Trustees and staff.

Cheryl Adolph  
Interim President & CEO

Opposite  
Cat. 37 Morgan Taylor. *Staten Island, the Bayonne Bridge and New Jersey from Red Hook, Brooklyn*, 2011. Detail

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND LENDERS

The Staten Island Museum gratefully acknowledges the support of the National Endowment for the Arts for two major grants that made this exhibition possible. Additional funding was provided by the Achelis & Bodman Foundations; the Henry Luce Foundation; New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; the New York Community Trust; the Staten Island Foundation; and, Victory State Bank. We also thank Furthermore: a program of the J. M. Kaplan Fund for a grant toward this publication. Elizabeth Egbert's far-reaching vision for the future of the Staten Island Museum can't be stressed enough. We mourn her loss and that she did not live to see this new phase of the Staten Island Museum realized.

The Museum thanks the conceptual contributions of Ralph Appelbaum Associates toward the design of *Staten Island SEEN*. RAA provided the blueprint that helped our in-house exhibition designer, Donna Pagano, achieve an elegant consistency for all of our inaugural exhibitions.

The Museum acknowledges the editorial contributions of Dan Icolari and Dorinda Wegener to the exhibition text, some of which are repeated in this catalogue, and the literary research of Dr. Marguerite Maria Rivas.

The exhibition would be incomplete without key loans: we thank Marlborough Gallery, New York, and the assistance of David Robinson in obtaining the loan of Richard Estes's painting *Staten Island Ferry Docking in Manhattan*. Other lenders include the West Publishing Company, a division of Thomson Reuters, and we thank Gretchen DeSutter who helped obtain Paul Caranicas's extraordinary painting, *Staten Island Bridge over Dizzy Bunker*. We also thank Mr. Rex Auchincloss; Ms. Lea Cloud; the George Adams Gallery; Dr. Jonathan D. Wall; Diana Horowitz, and Hirschl and Adler Fine Arts; and, the Noble Maritime Collection. Cynthia Mailman loaned her triptych from the *Eco-Illuminations* series; and, Bill Murphy his watercolor, *Along the Arthur Kill*. We are indebted to the artists who made works expressly for this exhibition, all are acknowledged in the catalogue and exhibition labels. Special mention should be made of the artists who generously donated their work to enrich our collection: Peter Van Dyck, Amer Kobaslija, and Diana Horowitz; Norman Turner, who sadly passed away in 2015 before the Museum opened, donated his wonderful work, *Scribner Avenue*. Max Leason generously donated several works by his late father, Percy Leason.

Barnett Shepherd's support has helped the Museum in innumerable ways, and includes not only his scholarly essay in this catalogue but a donation in support of the conservation of the original frame for Jasper Cropsey's masterpiece, *Looking Oceanward from Todt Hill*. Filmmakers Marylou and Jerome Bongiorno made extraordinary efforts to realize their 3-D video, which is a culminating component of *Staten Island SEEN*.

Finally, we are thankful for the tireless efforts of the Staten Island Museum's staff and exhibition team: the late Elizabeth Egbert, Executive Director and CEO; Cheryl Adolph, Acting Interim Director; Diane Matyas, Vice President of Exhibitions and Programs; Robert Bunkin, Curator of Art; Donna Pagano, Manager of Exhibitions; and, Audrey Malachowsky, Collections Manager and Registrar. Lighting Design: Technical Artistry, New York, New York. Exhibition Fabrication: 1220 Exhibits, Inc., Nashville, Tennessee. Art Conservators: Rhonda Feinman, Custom Frames, Inc., Woodside, New York. Reiger Art Conservation: LLC, New York, New York; Halina McCormack, Staten Island, New York; and, Sherman Art Conservation, Sea Cliff, New York. Audio Tour Producer: David Tarnow, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.



Cat. 19 Louis George Bouché. *New York Harbor (Seen) from Staten (Island)*, 1943. Detail



## INTRODUCTION

It's fitting that the inaugural exhibition of the new Staten Island Museum at the Snug Harbor Cultural Center should be a landscape exhibition. The setting of the Museum's building suggests the picturesque grounds of an august 19th-century institution: Sailors' Snug Harbor completed the first building in 1833 and by the end of the century boasted a complex of impressive edifices, facilities and extensive acres that encompassed a dairy, a farm, a hospital, dormitories, staff housing, a mansion for the director (called "Governor"), a cathedral, a chapel, a mortuary, a theater, a greenhouse and other structures. Today, although reduced, it is still a rich complex of landmark buildings, gardens, wetlands and woods. In 1898 there was more transit to Snug Harbor than in the present time. The sounds of ships, small water craft, horse-drawn carriages, electric streetcars, and the approximately one thousand men who lived there would have made this a much noisier place than it is today!

Snug Harbor sits on a prospect overlooking the Kill Van Kull, and we can imagine the beautiful views that awaited the "Snuggies" each day, awakening to the near shore of New Jersey. In the course of the 20th century that view evolved and reflects the ever-encroaching presence of industry's gas tanks, smokestacks and even a wind turbine, which began operation in 2012 and was temporarily shut down in 2015. What we see today is not the romantic view that Snug Harbor residents saw a century ago.

What would New Jerseyans see from their shore in 1898? They would have seen a rapidly developing community along Staten Island's North Shore: housing complexes, hotels, factories, breweries and other establishments getting denser and denser from the Narrows to New Brighton. Staten Island's interior remained quite rural, but its shores were fair game for land speculators and industrialists.

Cat. 22 Anthony Toney. *Afternoon on a Hill*, 1956. Detail



*Staten Island SEEN* focuses on the local landscape all through the borough but reflects the evolution of western landscape painting in general. Through the vision and in the brush strokes of fifty-one artists, we explore this place and how artists viewed it, along with a changing culture that gave new vitality to the landscape genre. None of the artists in *Staten Island SEEN* developed in a vacuum. All, including the self-taught artists, were exposed to artistic influences from abroad or from commercial imagery. Many, especially those from earlier years, were born in Europe, and came to America fully formed as artists. A native son, Jasper Francis Cropsey (1823-1900), also looked to the Staten Island landscape as subject matter throughout his career. His late effort, *Looking Oceanward from Todt Hill* (Cat. 16) of 1895, closes the circle from his earliest Rossville landscapes to the sublime landscapes of the Hudson River School, which glorified the American Wilderness as a visualization of Manifest Destiny.<sup>1</sup>

The exhibition looks at Staten Island from three perspectives: first, offshore views, which take in Staten Island's coastline and adjacent land masses, often from the Bay of New York, and are among the earliest views of Staten Island; then, views from coastal Staten Island, looking out to the broad expanse of harbor and ocean or toward New Jersey; and, finally, views focused inland, where even today the landscape painter can find rural areas where forests and ponds contrast with track housing, highways, industrial parks and shopping malls. Staten Island's 60.2 square miles is a microcosm of the United States.

*Staten Island SEEN* doesn't attempt a chronological history of the island as illustrated by art, but the exhibition's sub themes put the changing landscape into context. Staten Island was a stronghold of loyalists during the American Revolution, and provided a garrison for the British Navy. It was also the location for the only peace conference (Tottenville's Conference House, now a National Historic Landmark). We can see how Staten Island participated in the burgeoning industrialization of New York, its harbor, and maritime industries, still very much a part of the borough's unique identity. We can also see it as a place of leisure and amusement with its extensive beaches, the former glory of its summer mansions and villas, the place where tennis and cricket were introduced and as the early location for silent Westerns. The Post-World War II building boom also is very evident in the increasing density of housing, especially after the opening of the Verrazano Narrows Bridge in 1964, and the concomitant highways that created arteries for the car culture that Robert Moses and his fellow "visionaries" saw as the tide of the future.

Opposite  
Cat. 34 Bill Murphy. *Along the Arthur Kill*, 2008

Staten Island exists within a counterculture that also supported ecology and nature preserves, led by some of the same people who organized the Staten Island Museum. Today we can celebrate a major reclamation of the Freshkills Landfill (see Rackstraw Downes's painting of the site, *Freshkills Landfill from the Carteret Side of the Arthur Kill* [Cat. 41], not many years ago an odoriferous garbage dump, the largest on the East Coast, which is now being converted into one of New York City's largest public parks. However, the methane-emitting trash under girding of this park still percolates beneath the ground, with strategically located valves for the release of the gas.

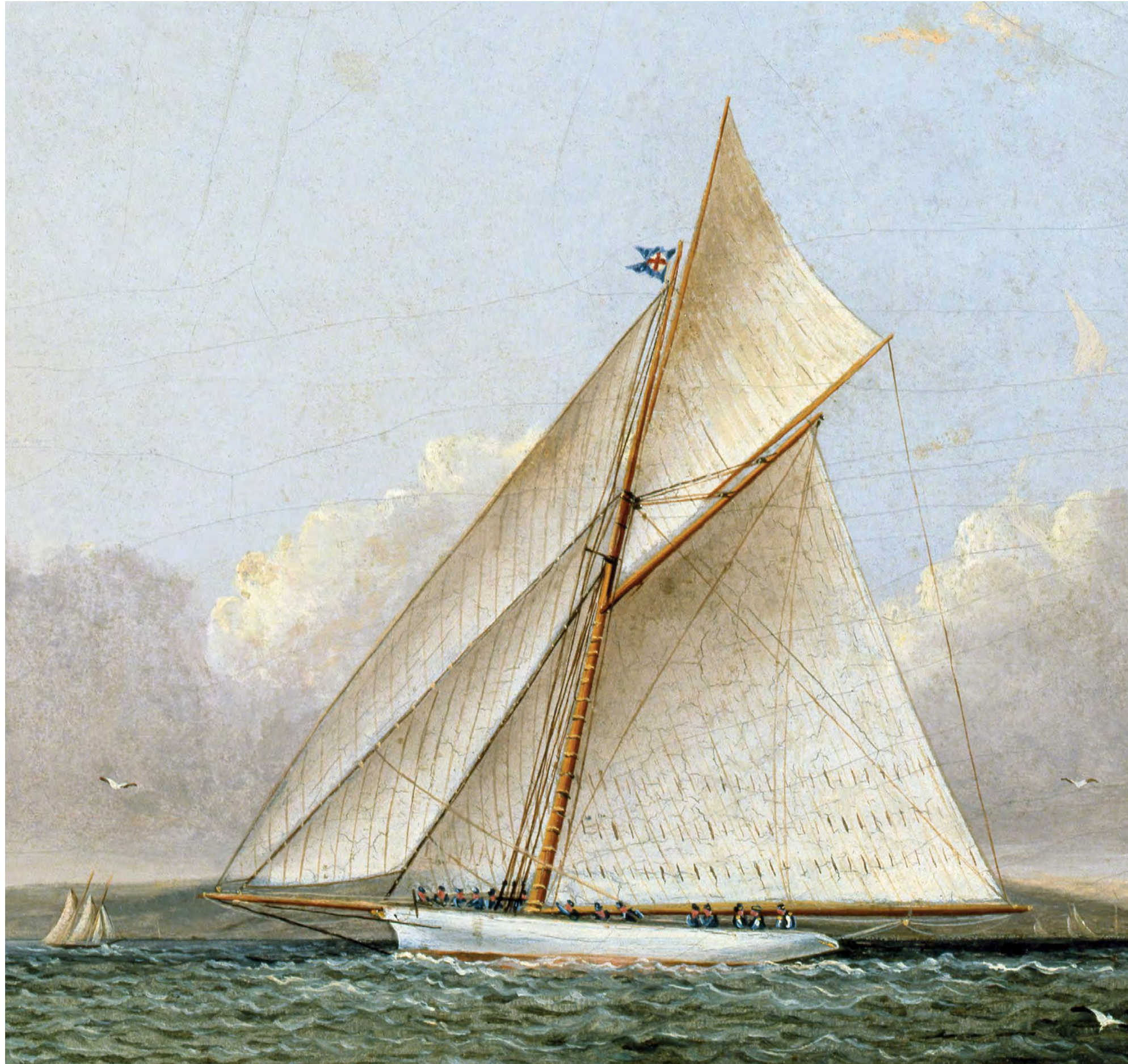


Contrary to Staten Island's popular mythology—the "Forgotten Borough", the "Mafia Haven", "New York's least diverse borough" (which was never true), and "land that time forgot"(!), Staten Island has always been a dynamic place, and artists have recorded its dynamism as well as its stillness, its blights and its beauties. *Staten Island SEEN* presents all these ways of seeing that come as much from the personalities of the artists as from the character of the place.

Robert Bunkin  
Curator of Art

Note

<sup>1</sup> Manifest Destiny was the guiding principle behind Westward Expansion of the United States; that divine providence "required" the country to expand "from sea to shining sea". Virgin territory was often the subject of Hudson River painters, even though the name seems to restrict them to the eastern seaboard. These painters often used large, panoramic formats, painted in a meticulous style, reveling in the vastness of nature and its splendor.



## Staten Island SEEN 1679-1895

### Barnett Shepherd

**S**taten Island's topography has long been admired for its great variety and beauty. The bluffs at the Narrows, that great passageway between New York Harbor's Lower Bay and Upper Bay, have offered a special allure ever since New York's earliest settlement, as have the distant hills of Staten Island's northern and eastern shores seen from Manhattan.

While living on Staten Island in 1843, Henry David Thoreau wrote to his family that "...the country is so fair that it seems rather too much as if it were made to be looked at." A European traveler, quoted in 1844, wrote that he wanted "...to float off Staten Island to Europe to give his countrymen an idea of the scenic beauties of America: the rest of the continent might be swallowed up in the ocean for what he cared—this little island comprised in miniature everything that was characteristic about it!" Admiration of Staten Island's landscape (and of American scenery in general) reached a high point in the 19th century. European artists crossed the ocean to record our scenery for the Old World.

The Hudson River School of painters, our first native tradition of fine art, emerged in the 1820s from this love of the natural beauty and grandeur of our young nation's scenery. Leisure travel to enjoy the scenery provided the background to the Hudson River School and much other 19th-century American landscape painting. The love of scenery was reinforced by the prevalent idea of seeing God's presence in the natural world. As New York became a crowded metropolis, rural Staten Island became a convenient destination to enjoy the wonders of unspoiled scenery. Our own naturalist William T. Davis (1862-1945), founder of the Natural Science Association, precursor of the Staten Island Museum, was a disciple of this love of nature and Staten Island's scenery.

Opposite  
Cat. 8 James Edward Buttersworth. *View of Upper Bay (looking toward Staten Island)*  
ca. 1860-1870. Detail

*Staten Island SEEN* celebrates the American landscape, using many works from the Staten Island Museum’s outstanding collection. This essay concerns thirteen images that date from 1679 to 1895. Many of these early works focus on the Narrows, the strategic tidal straight that forms the entrance to New York’s Upper Harbor, separating Brooklyn and Staten Island. The international importance of the Narrows guaranteed its inclusion in all early pictorial surveys of the North American continent.

Many of the images described in this essay are topographical art, precise depictions of a place that provided essential information before the age of photography. Jasper Danckaerts (1639-ca.1703), a Labadist missionary, recorded with his pad and pen a view of the Narrows including Long Island (today’s Bay Ridge) and Staten Island (1679) (Cat. 1). Danckaerts included not only Staten Island’s forested hills, but also plentiful fishes and birds, providing an accurate record for his religious community in France. The Labadists were a small pietistic Protestant sect which originated in France in the 17th century.

A century later the unknown artist who drew the same scene—*The Narrows*, (1777) (Cat. 2), wanted navigators to recognize the distinct topography of the entrance to New York Harbor. This print was made for *The Atlantic Neptune*, the first marine atlas of North America.



Above

Cat. 2 Artist unknown. *The Narrows*, (between Red and Yellow Hook, on Long Island, & the East Bluff of Staten Island) Bearing S.b.W. from *The Atlantic Neptune*, 1777. Joseph Frederick Wallat Des Barres (born Swiss, died, Nova Scotia, 1721 - 1824) Colored engraving, 8.5 x 20 inches

Opposite

Cat. 1 Jasper Danckaerts. *View of New York Harbor from Najak (now Fort Hamilton)*, 1679

During the American Revolution Archibald Robertson (ca.1745-1813), a Lieutenant-General in the British Engineering Corps, ventured up Fort Hill (above today's Tompkinsville) to draw a dramatic wide-angle view of Staten Island's rolling fields, the Narrows, the British fleet anchored at the Watering Place, and the arrival of the *Eagle*, Lord Richard Howe's ship (1776) (Cat. 3). Robertson wrote down the date and significance of the occasion. His beautifully conceived drawing is a careful depiction of Staten Island's topography. His vantage point and the framing elements he added were nourished by the tradition of picturesque drawing he had been taught at the English naval academy.

*The Narrows (From Fort Hamilton)* (1838) (Cat. 5), engraved by Robert Wallis (1794-1878) from a drawing by William H. Bartlett, was published in London in 1840 as No. 62 in *American Scenery*. It, too, is a topographic work showing Fort Hamilton and Fort Lafayette in Brooklyn, with Staten Island in the distance. Wallis probably enriched the foreground with picturesque activity, including a herd of sheep, a shepherd and a rider on horseback, to achieve a lively impression of an actual scene. Bartlett was a British artist who made detailed drawings of America during several lengthy visits in preparation for *American Scenery*. The book was a best seller in Europe and was reprinted several times.



Above  
Cat. 5 Robert Wallis. *The Narrows from Fort Hamilton, Brooklyn (After William Henry Bartlett)*, 1838. Detail

Below  
Cat. 3 Archibald Robertson. *View of the Narrows between Long Island & Staaten Island [sic] with our fleet at anchor & Lord Howe coming in - taken from the height above the Watering Place, Staaten Island[sic] 2th July 1776*

Opposite Above  
Cat. 5 Robert Wallis. *The Narrows from Fort Hamilton, Brooklyn (After William Henry Bartlett)*, 1838  
Hand-colored steel plate engraving, 8 x 11 inches. Published by George Virtue (ca. 1793-1868), London

Below  
Cat. 4 Artist unknown. *View from Brooklyn Overlooking Narrows and Staten Island*, ca. 1840-1850



Over the years Bartlett's published views were copied and modified by engravers and painters, often under their own names. Their reproductions were made without the inconvenience of visiting the actual site. *View from Brooklyn Overlooking the Narrows and Staten Island* (ca. 1840-1850) (Cat. 4), by an unknown artist is a copy of Wallis's engraving *The Narrows (From Fort Hamilton)* (Cat. 5). William Rickarby Miller (1818-1893) was an accomplished English painter and watercolorist. His 1853 wood engraving *The Narrows, from Staten Island, New York* (ca. 1853) (Cat. 7), is a view from Pavilion Hill, Tompkinsville that also shows picnickers on the grounds of the Pavilion Hotel. G.W. Barrows, a self-taught artist, made a charming painting based on the Miller wood engraving, also called *The Narrows from Staten Island* (ca. 1855-1865) (Cat. 6).

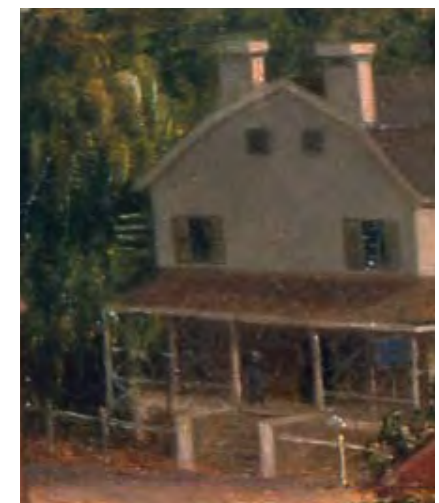


Above  
Cat. 7 William Ricarby Miller. *The Narrows, From Staten Island, New York* from *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion*, October 1, 1853, ca. 1853. 7 x 9 inches

Opposite  
Cat. 6 G. W. Barrows. *The Narrows from Staten Island*, ca. 1855-1865

Early 19th-century artists also ventured inland, away from the busy scenes of the waterfront and the Narrows, to record Staten Island's topography and development. Two charming paintings illustrate rural and small-town life. John Bradley's *Mille Farm* (1835) (Cat. 11) illustrates the flat landscape of Staten Island's South Shore. The earliest depiction of a Staten Island farm, it was commissioned by Andrew Mille, the farm's owner. Little is known of the artist except that he was born in Great Britain. Apparently an itinerant painter, he resided briefly on Staten Island in the 1830s. His portraits of four members of the Totten family are in the collection of the Staten Island Historical Society. *Mille Farm* is remarkable for its completeness, showing barns, hayricks, fences and animals. Oxen were used for heavy farm work. The house, with its spring eave and shed dormers, common Staten Island features, faces Prince's Bay. At the water's edge the family boat rests on the beach. More than half of Bradley's painting is given to the sky with its rosy clouds, demonstrating his familiarity with fine art. The farm became Wolfe's Pond Park, one of Staten Island's largest parks.

C. Winter's *Village of Richmond* (1851) (Cat. 12) is a delightful representation of the Richmond County seat at Staten Island's geographical center. The painting carefully depicts the village's buildings, including the Third County Courthouse and St. Andrew's Church. Directly in the center is Richmond County Hall, a tavern and watering place for mid-19th century Staten Islanders. Winter, too, was apparently an itinerant artist. He came, went, and disappeared with only this engaging painting as a signed and dated record of his visit. The tiny man depicted on the Richmond County Hall porch might represent the inn's proprietor, who may have commissioned the painting.



Above  
Cat. 12 C. Winter. *Village of Richmond*, 1851

Right  
*Village of Richmond*. Detail

Opposite  
Cat. 11 John Bradley. *Mille Farm, Staten Island*, 1835



The next three paintings were created in the second half of the 19th century by recognized fine artists born and trained in Europe. More than topographical works, they are fine art, heightened records of a specific place. These sophisticated paintings show weather conditions and light at different times of day. They were strongly influenced by European landscape painting to appeal to the American art market.

*View of the Narrows from Staten Island* (ca. 1855-1858) (Cat. 13) is by William Frederick de Haas (1830-1880). Born in Rotterdam, Holland, he studied there before immigrating to New York City in 1854. De Haas's view from the hills of New Brighton is less concerned with the topography of Staten Island than with creating a beautiful scene with European-like drama and composition. A romantic dirt road, including cows and European-style peasants, draws the viewer into the picture, a composition that derives from Dutch landscape painting. The artist does not represent the Quarantine Hospital or the buildings of Tompkinsville in correct perspective. His mountains are far taller than Grymes Hill. With a dark foreground and luminous afternoon sky, he created a stunningly beautiful painting.

Cat. 13 Mauritz Frederik Hendrik De Haas.  
*View from the Narrows*, ca. 1855-1858



*New York from Staten Island* (1873) (Cat. 14) is by Hermann Fuechsel (1833-1915). Born in Brunswick, Germany, he studied at the Düsseldorf Academy with Karl Friedrich Lessing, an important landscape painter. The Düsseldorf Academy style affected many American painters, particularly in their preference for intricate naturalistic detail and subdued color. In Düsseldorf he met American painters Albert Bierstadt and Worthington Whittredge, who befriended him. He came to live in New York in 1858. This landscape shows the genteel estate community of Clifton as seen from Grymes Hill. Like de Haas, Fuechsel reflects upon European art, creating a misty view of the bay with distant views of New Jersey and Manhattan. This painting also draws the viewer in with a country road, peopled by two fashionable ladies on an early autumn stroll.

The composition is a variant of an 1871 painting, now in the collection of the New York Historical Society (1978.35). That work shows the same scene in summer foliage, and without the two strolling women. Several other details differ in the two versions, particularly the vertical tree to the right of the fence here, is located to the left in the earlier work.

Cat. 14 Hermann Fuechsel. *New York from Staten Island*, 1873



*Early Morning on South Beach, Staten Island* (1873) (Cat. 15) is by Edward Moran (1829-1901). A man on horseback herds cattle as the sun sets in the west (despite the title). The unusually low horizon gives full emphasis to the brilliantly lit western sky. Edward Moran is known for his marine subjects, like the one in this exhibition. Born in England, he immigrated with his parents to the United States in 1844. He studied painting in Philadelphia with James Hamilton and other landscape painters. By 1857 he had established a studio in Philadelphia with his brother Thomas. The artist's abilities to show light effects and a mood of reverie are emphasized here.

Danckaerts, Robertson, Bartlett, Miller, Bradley, de Haas, Fuechsel and Moran were all born in Europe. Jasper Francis Cropsey (1823-1900) was Staten Island's first native-born artist to achieve wide acclaim. Like all members of the Hudson River School, Cropsey was a close observer of nature. He wrote notes on his preliminary drawings made at the site to record the exact colors and features of the landscape. While intent upon recording actual scenes, he lifted his paintings to a level beyond topographical concerns. Cropsey, like other well-known artists of his time, glorified the American landscape and found moral lessons in nature's grandeur. A prolific artist, Cropsey has more than 2,000 paintings to his credit and is represented in the collections of all major American museums. He is listed



Cat. 15 Edward Moran. *Early Morning on South Beach, Staten Island*, ca.1874

among the painters of the second generation of the Hudson River School. Ever Rest, the Cropsey home and studio, and the Gallery of Art, a museum of Cropsey's art, are owned and operated as public museums by the Newington-Cropsey Foundation in Hastings-on-Hudson in New York's Lower Hudson Valley.

Jasper Cropsey was born on a farm near Rossville. His parents and grandparents were also born on Staten Island. His father, Jacob, was a sailor who became a farmer. Jasper attended local schools, showing artistic ability early on. In 1837, at age 14, he left Staten Island to become an apprentice to Joseph Trench, an architect in Manhattan. After returning home in 1842, Cropsey opened an architectural office in Manhattan at the age of 19. He designed two Staten Island churches, the New Dorp Moravian Church and an Episcopal church, St. Luke's, Rossville (demolished). Soon he left architecture behind to devote himself to painting. After his marriage in 1847 to Mary Cooley, the couple spent two years in Europe. There he painted European and American scenes for European patrons. A second trip to Europe, when he was based in London, lasted from 1856 to 1863. Returning to America, he resided in Manhattan and later upstate at Warwick, and, finally, in Hastings-on-Hudson.

Cropsey's twenty-five Staten Island paintings and drawings illustrate the love he held for Staten Island and the time he spent here recording its landscape. Among his Staten Island subjects are farms, views from Todt Hill looking both towards the ocean and inland, Prince's Bay from Richmond Hill, the Narrows from Grymes Hill, and views from Ward's Point.

*Looking Oceanward from Todt Hill* (1895) (Cat. 16) is a large, majestic, wide-angle scene from near the hilltop toward what became the golf course of today's Richmond County Country Club. In the foreground a farmer and his dog lead cows down the hill homeward. The late afternoon sun behind the viewer casts the foreground into shadow as a full moon rises just above the horizon. In the middle distance, still lighted by the sun, field hands are loading a horse-drawn wagon with hay. Todt Hill Road cuts across the area. The prominent house among the roadside buildings may be Far View, the former Benedict estate. In the far distance below the hill, we see the flat plain of Great Kills and beyond that Lower New York Bay. On the far right horizon we see Monmouth County, New Jersey, and Coney Island on the far left.

Cropsey's painting, while glorifying native scenery, also conveys comforting moral values of work and home. The vastness of the scene is a foil to man's finitude. While de Haas's and Fuechsel's people seem to be at one with nature, Cropsey's tiny people appear humble in the vastness of God's creation. *Looking Oceanward from Todt Hill*, can be seen as a religious painting, displaying the security of home and work in the face of an infinite universe. A late work, it is the creation of an elderly man still in touch with the vision of his youth and the love of his homeland.

The painting was exhibited at the National Academy of Design in New York City in 1898 with the title *Todt Hill, Staten Island*. The Academy was a bastion of conservatism. Many older painters of the Hudson River School were still revered and exhibited there, even though the movement had largely fallen from favor. By 1895 Cropsey's detailed linear style was considered provincial when compared to the softer poetic style coming from younger artists in both America and Europe. For example, Frederick William Kost's (1861-1923) painting *Cedar Grove Beach, Staten Island* (ca. 1890) (Cat. 25) shows the softer, non-linear painting style known today as Tonalism. Kost was an accomplished artist who lived on Staten Island from childhood until 1901. At the same time Paul Cézanne (1839-1906), the Post-Impressionist father of modern painting, was applying patches of clear color and no lines to create scenes of Mont Sainte-Victoire near Aix-en-Provence, his native city in southern France.



*Looking Oceanward from Todt Hill* was probably in the estate of Maria Cropsey, the artist's widow, at the time of her death in 1906. Public taste in scenery painting had changed to favor the loose application of paint and non-didactic subject matter, which continued into the first half of the 20th century. For 40 years Cropsey's painting was hanging without critical notice in Aubrey Pierce's barroom on 125th Street in Harlem. In 1946 it was acquired by the Old Print Shop. The Staten Island Museum purchased it then with funds raised by public subscription.

Fine works of art have many meanings, both for the artist and for the viewer. For Staten Islanders the scenes in this survey have a very personal meaning. We are proud to have them in our midst. We can enjoy them and be thankful to those who have preserved them for us.

Cat. 16 Jasper F. Cropsey. *Looking Oceanward from Todt Hill*, 1895

#### Notes

1 Two pairs of paintings looking from Todt Hill indicate Cropsey's special interest in its expansive views. These paintings have not been found but are recorded in contemporary literature. *Morning, Looking Oceanward from Todt Hill* and *Afternoon, Looking Inland from Todt Hill*, both dated 1846, make up the first pair. A second pair with similar titles was made in 1866. The titles suggest Cropsey's interest in the passage of a day and the effects of changing light. Barnett Shepherd, "Jasper Cropsey's Staten Island Paintings, Drawings, and Architecture." *Staten Island Historian*, Summer 1983, pp. 1-12; and Barnett Shepherd, *Staten Island Scenery: Paintings, Prints, Drawings and Photographs, 1679-1900*. The Staten Island Historical Society and the Staten Island Museum, 2013. 221 pages.

2 Many thanks to Kenneth Maddox, art historian of the Newington-Cropsey Foundation, for this information. In 2013 the Foundation published *Jasper Francis Cropsey, Catalogue Raisonné: Works in Oil. Volume One: 1842-1863*. 465 pages.

*It is not possible to describe how this bay swarms with fish, both large and small, whales, tunnies and porpoises, whole schools of innumerable other fish, which the eagles and other birds of prey swiftly seize in their talons when the fish come up to the surface, and hauling them out of the water, fly with them to the nearest woods or beach, as we saw.*

Jasper Danckaerts & Peter Sluyter: *Journal of Jasper Danckaerts, 1679-1680*. Translated by Henry C. Murphy, originally published in 1867 under the title: *Journal of a voyage to New York and a tour in several of the American Colonies in 1679-80*, by Jaspar Dankers and Peter Sluyter; edited by Jameson, J. Franklin, published, 1913, New York, C. Scribner's Sons





When walking in the interior there, in the midst of rural scenery, [with] little to remind me of the ocean, I have suddenly, through a gap, a cleft, or a 'clove road' as the Dutch settlers called it, caught sight of a ship under full sail, over a field of corn, twenty or thirty miles at sea.

Henry David Thoreau, 1847

## Staten Island SEEN 1900-2013

### Robert Bunkin

Staten Island's corn fields are gone but today's visitor can still experience something like Thoreau's walk in parts of Staten Island's Greenbelt. Representations of Staten Island's varied landscape reflect the general trends in art of the 19th and 20th centuries. Landscape painting and representation in general, were "problematized" in the 20th century with the introduction of abstraction. The tradition of Albertian perspective,<sup>1</sup> developed during the Renaissance, and the classical landscape that developed out of this, dominated landscape conventions for well over 400 years. European modernism and the quest for absolute painting seen in abstraction, defied these conventions, and called them into question. Despite the profound questioning of the entire enterprise of representation in the wake of photography and the development of abstraction, landscape and other forms of representational painting continue to flourish. All the artists who are included in *Staten Island SEEN* worked within a long-standing tradition, one going back to the early Renaissance, when "pure" landscape began to emerge as an independent genre. They also acknowledge the fundamental changes in artistic vision and ambition that occurred in the past century, which still inform current art-making practices. This exhibition focuses our attention on landscape paintings, not only as representations of a specific place but first and foremost as works of art.

The places and historical moments that are represented in *Staten Island SEEN* are divided thematically and each of these themes presents Staten Island as a living, breathing place in constant flux: The Bay; Villages and Farms; Industrialization/Urbanization; Land Use; Neighborhoods; Bridges and Connections; Ecology/Land & Water Use; Inside-Out and a "Conclusion", which is open-ended.

Highlights of works in *Staten Island SEEN* made before 1900 are discussed in Barnett Shepherd's essay. Here we address works in the exhibition made in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Opposite  
Cat. 48 Stephanie Pierce. *Discordant Wave/Material Noise*, 2012

Johan Peter Eggers's (1855-1907) *View of Tottenville Bluff Looking Towards South Amboy* represents Raritan Bay at Staten Island's southernmost tip. Although it was painted in 1904, it is more connected to romantic views of the early 19th century. Eggers, born and trained in Denmark, worked from a pictorial formula developed by German and Scandinavian painters during the Biedermeier period (ca. 1815-1848). In that era moonlit landscapes were particularly popular, evoking a haunted reverie that was long out of fashion by the time Eggers painted this picture.

Representations of the landscape began to change profoundly in the 19th century with the development of photography. Photography's mechanical and chemical means of image production put representation into the hands of a much vaster number of people than ever before. Even with the limits of the early processes, the daguerreotype and the calotype, photography flourished and spread around the world. This had a dual impact on painters: it enabled them to use photography as an image-capturing tool that surpassed the human eye in its objectivity, and it challenged the position of artists as the specialists in image production. Many historians have acknowledged photography as a milestone in the history of art, and can be directly credited with some of the subsequent trajectory of picture making.

Impressionism, that quintessentially French style, spread to the United States with American painters who had direct contact with these works in France. Mary Cassatt (1844-1926), although not primarily a landscape painter, was an American expatriate who participated directly in the Impressionist experiment. She was also instrumental in bringing Impressionist paintings to the United States through her close connections with collectors.

A group of "American Impressionists" coalesced in the United States and combined Impressionist techniques with the Tonalism<sup>2</sup> of James Abbott McNeill Whistler (1834-1903). Painters like John Henry Twachtman (1853-1902), Julian Alden Weir (1852-1919) and Frederick Childe Hassam (1859-1935) all studied in Paris and eventually adapted a facture that comes from Impressionism, with its accretion of loose hatch-like strokes of vividly colored paint to capture the forms of nature dissolved in light and air. The landscape was no longer rendered in clarity and detail, but was suggested or essentialized.

Even a "second generation" Hudson River School painter like Jasper Cropsey seems to have accepted a looser facture in his late work *Looking Oceanward from Todt Hill* (Cat. 16), despite his continued reliance on classical landscape formulae that were largely passé by 1895.<sup>3</sup>

Cat. 10 Johan Peter Eggers. *View of Tottenville Bluff Looking Towards South Amboy*, 1904



VIEW OF TOTTEVILLE BLUFF LOOKING TOWARDS SOUTH AMBOY

This view of Gravesend Bay, Brooklyn, from Shore Acres, Staten Island, could almost pass for a view of the French Riviera, despite the presence of factories and smokestacks on the shore. It conveys the warmth of the day in May on which it was painted. The work also demonstrates how French Impressionist painting influenced its creator, particularly the work of Claude Monet and Pierre August Renoir. Schnakenberg saw Impressionist works (mostly loaned by the Parisian dealer Durand-Ruel) and the latest European art at the historic Armory Show of modern art in 1913. By this time Impressionism was widely appreciated in the United States by collectors and artists and that experience inspired the 21-year-old Schnakenberg to become a full-time artist.

Between 1905 and 1920 Expressionism, Cubism, Futurism, Constructivism and other radically experimental movements proliferated in Europe, an incomparably innovative period. Many believed that World War I would usher in a new era. There was a fevered optimism that supported surprisingly popular expectations that this “war to end all wars” would result in a new order of peace, prosperity, democracy, and an end to the old order of inherited privilege, exploitation and social immobility. The duration and devastation of this war resulted in powerful disillusionment and a sense of failure. As a result a “return to order” can be seen in the rejection of modernism by many artists in the wake of the war and was manifested by a return to realism or a veneer of classicism imposed upon avant-garde postures.

Cat. 42 Henry Ernest Schnakenberg. *The Bay From Shore Acres*, 1919



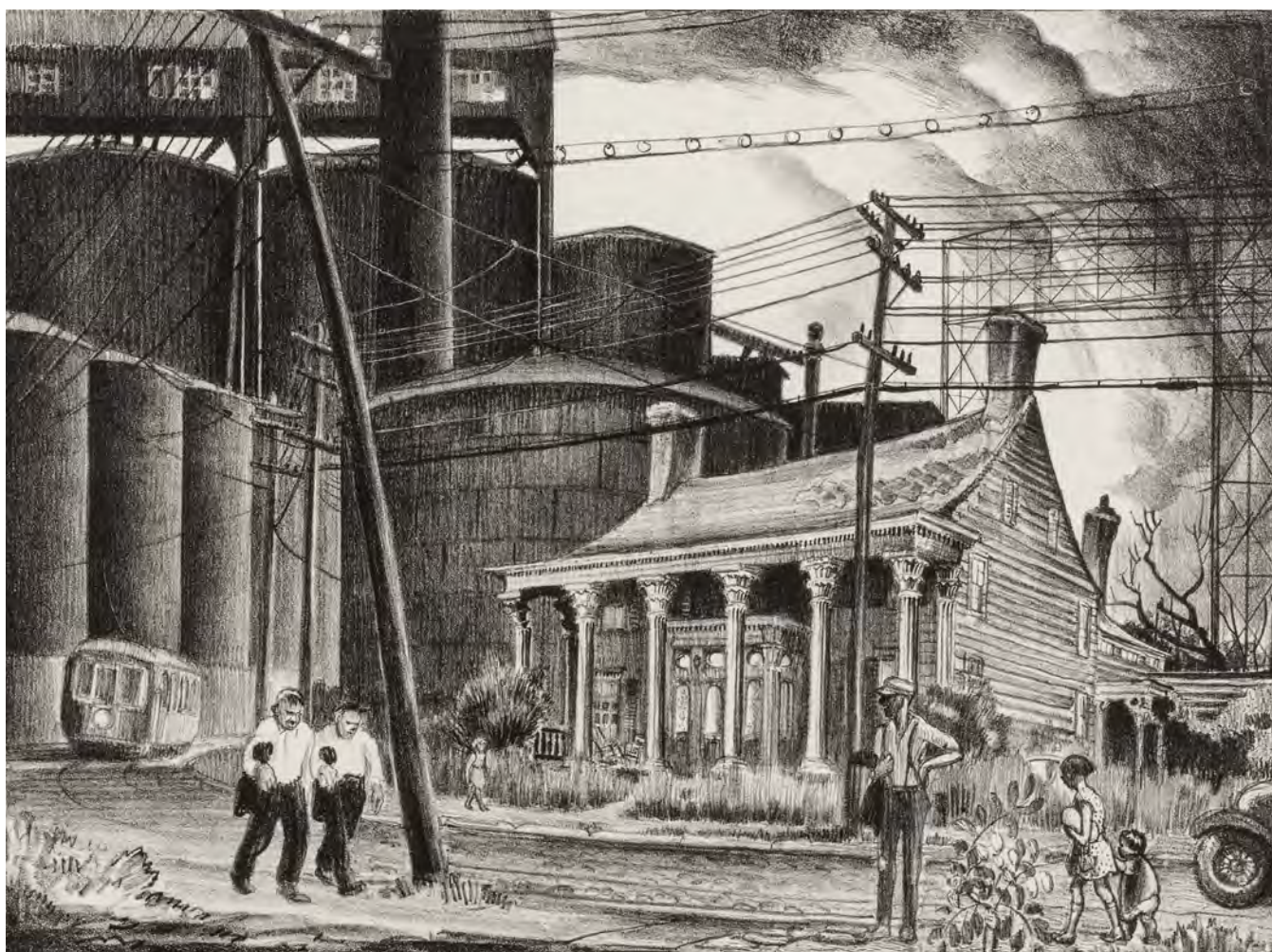
THE BAY FROM SHORE ACRES



## THE FROZEN POND

Ferdinand Busing's *The Frozen Pond*, with its wintry palette of cool blues and whites and powerful use of verticals, also shows an awareness of early 20th-century innovations. However, both Schnakenberg and Busing were committed to a more traditional vision, portraying space, light and volumetric forms, rather than the flattening and abstraction from nature that was part of the most radical art of the same era.

Cat. 24 Ferdinand Busing. *The Frozen Pond*, ca. 1920s



THE SURVIVOR, S.I. (STATEN ISLAND SHORE)

Mabel Dwight's lithograph, *The Survivor* is fairly typical of the kind of social-conscious work that was being made in America by many painters and printmakers, including the Regionalists. *The Survivor* delivers an explicit message of industry and new technology eclipsing the genteel reminder of an earlier age. In contrast to Dwight's Precisionist contemporaries, such as Charles Demuth, Elsie Driggs and Charles Sheeler, who adapted a Cubist-inflected, clean, linear style that presented industry as a new paradigm of the sublime, Dwight doesn't romanticize industry, but sees it critically and in relation to human activity. It's also significant that the print was made in the year of the stock market crash, which resulted in the Great Depression.

At the root of much landscape painting was, and remains, the practice of *plein air* painting, that is painting outdoors directly from the motif. Although artists as early as Albrecht Dürer sketched outdoors in the early 16th century, the idea of completing a work of art "on the spot" really was developed by British watercolorists between the late 18th and early 19th centuries. One can see the beginnings of a rougher paint handling in the works of Turner and Constable (although their "finished" paintings were largely worked in the studio from sketches). This sketch technique was adapted by European artists in their efforts to represent the fleeting aspects of nature more accurately. Constable, himself, considered landscape painting as a fusion of science and poetry.<sup>4</sup> The Barbizon painters of the early-to-mid-19th century, such as Corot, Rousseau, Diaz, and Harpignes all advocated working directly from the motif, although they, too, would bring the raw data of the sketch to their studios and work them up into "compositions." Jongkind, Boudin and Courbet form a kind of bridge to Impressionism, by which time the "cult" of *plein air* was well established. This didn't mean that every work was entirely painted outdoors directly from the motif, but much of the work was done in this manner. Sometimes entire paintings were made on the spot, final retouches and finishing could be added in the studio, but the first-hand experience of light, air and space became primary. Painters sought the impression of the scene, rather than a detailed descriptive inventory.

*Plein air* painting continues to this day, and many of the artists in *Staten Island SEEN* work in this vein: Louis Bouché, Rackstraw Downes, Nicolas Evans-Cato, Diana Horowitz, Percy Leason, Andrew Lenaghan, Ginger Levant, Stanley Lewis, Morgan Taylor, and Peter Van Dyck all made their paintings largely on the spot.

Cat. 17 Mabel Dwight. *The Survivor, S.I. (Staten Island Shore)*, 1929





## SCRIBNER AVENUE

Norman Turner (1939-2015) painted on the spot but his work is more about the experience of painting and the disjunction of time and markmaking than about the transcription of visual information into a coherent representation of the landscape. Turner acknowledges Cézanne's "slippages"—his deliberate simplification of forms, and practice of building form with discrete, anti-illusionistic slabs of color, set next to each other. Cézanne's method resulted in a kind of double-space—the classic perspectival deep space of traditional landscape, at odds with a lateral space of the picture plane. The illusion of depth is never such that we lose sight of the fact that we are looking at a flat surface covered with pieces of color.

Here, Turner bursts through the restrictive rectangle, allowing his field of vision and lines of force to determine the shape of the canvas, which is always rectilinear but not a simple four-sided figure. Color is also more saturated, synthetic, and marks are more emphatic. Coherence takes a back seat to a kind of modernist picture-making that is essentially subjective.

Cat. 31 Norman Turner. *Scribner Avenue*, 1993



## BLAZING STAR CEMETERY, STATEN ISLAND

Like Norman Turner, Brian Brooks presents a landscape built on color and his personal perspective that shapes the canvas of *Blazing Star Cemetery*. Both Turner and Brooks go directly to the motif, spending hours working outdoors, but Brooks constructs his works in the studio in an attempt to broaden the field of vision. Movement, even if it is only the movement of the head, up-and-down and side-to-side, becomes an important part of the work. Brooks's work is composited, the seams are part of the process, and there is a sense of discontinuity: the eye stops at the edges of the various pieces of paper that make up the overall image. Color is essentially naturalistic but keyed up, and the paint is slathered on.

Cat. 50 Brian Brooks. *Blazing Star Cemetery, Staten Island*, 2014



## FRESHKILLS LANDFILL FROM THE CARTERET SIDE OF THE ARTHUR KILL

Rackstraw Downes (1939-) has been exploring the phenomena of spatial perception in his work for over 40 years. At first glance his paintings seem almost photorealist, the level of detail and crispness of vision is confoundingly intricate, but then we notice the curvature of the horizon, and the extreme horizontality that goes beyond the conventional *paysage*<sup>5</sup> format. Approaching closely, we also notice the very “handmade” qualities of the paint surface. Indeed Downes, a supremely conscious student of art history and of modernism in particular, has been dedicated to working directly from the motif for years, in many seasons, and many environments that don’t fit at all with traditional ideas of the picturesque or the sublime landscape. This is well exemplified by a series of paintings he made at the Fresh Kills Land Fill (a.k.a “the dump”) in 1990. Here is a landscape of desolation, the product of urban waste, polluted, reeking,

and consuming the natural wetland. This landscape is not ingratiating and Downes makes no attempt to romanticize or even comment upon it in any overt way. In the sketch here, we can also look over Downes’s shoulder, as he begins with a toned ground and a grid to help him get his bearings with the scene before him. Downes develops his highly detailed paintings from a complex and rigorous preparatory process, which involves smaller-scaled oil sketches and preparation drawings. Such practices were considered utterly passé under the tenets of modernism, which advocated an appearance of spontaneity and large forms. Even Downes’s insistence on working directly on the spot goes beyond the sketch practices of earlier *plein air* painters.

Cat. 41 Rackstraw Downes. *Freshkills Landfill from the Carteret Side of the Arthur Kill*, 1990



MY DELI, ALL TIRE CO., PARKED CARS, AND HOUSES,  
TARGEE STREET TRIANGLE, STATEN ISLAND

Over the course of two days, Stanley Lewis (1941- ) painted *My Deli, All Tire Co., Parked Cars, and Houses, Targee Street Triangle, Staten Island*. The purely descriptive title gives us a sense of his desire for specificity but it's really the conjunction of forms and colors that jostle one another in this semi-urban scene, one so typical of Staten Island and of the United States in general that got his painterly juices flowing. The paint *is* juicy, generously laid on with palette knife and brush. We are keenly aware of the tactile experience of the painted surface, as opposed to the illusionistic rendering of metal, grass, and the plastic of the storefronts, foliage and cars. Like Downes, there is a slight curvature to the horizon line but the paint handling is not as cool, albeit just as descriptive. Both Downes and Lewis began as abstract painters under the powerful sway of Abstract Expressionism and reductive trends of the early 1960s, when they were students. Lewis retained the appearance of spontaneity in his brushwork.

Cat. 30 Stanley Lewis. *My Deli, All Tire Co., Parked Cars, and Houses, Targee Street Triangle, Staten Island*, 2013



ALONG THE ARTHUR KILL

We are presented a disorienting view of the Arthur Kill by Bill Murphy (1952- ), whose vertiginous painting shows us this shore from an acute angle, high up on the Bayonne Bridge. We are made aware of the spherical nature of our planet. Murphy's almost square format encompasses a vast space that projects outward toward the shore, the water, and inward towards us, experiencing the barrier of the bridge's structure which keeps us from keeling over into the precipitous space. The painting also makes us keenly aware of the "islandness" of Staten Island. The transparency of watercolor communicates the "wateriness" of its environment. There are very few true verticals or horizontals to stabilize our view: thrusting diagonals and curves dominate, directing our eyes deep into space. This is very much a construction based on sketches and aided by photographs that the artist took. Just from a practical point of view, the artist could not have made such a large work on the spot. The washed-up detritus on the shore and the industrial environment evoke the wastes of our consumer culture, inundating the landscape.

Cat. 34 Bill Murphy. *Along the Arthur Kill*, 2008



## NEW YORK HARBOR AND THE NARROWS

Sarah Yuster, like Bill Murphy, frames a vast space for us to view on the Island but her perspective is much calmer. We stand on a promontory at dusk, the sweep of land and sky has a romantic feeling, the prospect unified by the dying light, the setting sun still tinting the clouds. Here Yuster is responding to her own previous evocations of this very scene, and to Cropsey's panorama (Cat.16). It is as much a construction as Murphy's painting *Along the Arthur Kill* (Cat.34), and it really doesn't represent a literal transcription of the landscape. Yuster had to join several viewpoints to arrive at this landscape. Yet this painting harkens back to a gentler era. It isn't aggressively pushing us out into space, nor does it make us aware of the compromises between urban sprawl and intact nature. Here is a truce between human habitation and domesticated nature.



Cat. 54 Sarah Yuster. *New York Harbor and the Narrows*, 2013



AFTERNOON ON A HILL

Anthony Toney's painting, *Afternoon on a Hill*, was motivated by a "painting bee" of Staten Island landscapes, an open call to artists in 1956 for an exhibition at the Staten Island Museum the following year. The semi-abstract style of the painting reflects Toney's interest in combining recognizable subject matter with a geometric structure and analogous color harmonies that strike us today as very much of its period. His skillful handling of paint and Cubist tropes of transparency, with overlapping planes that read both as buildings and as pure geometry give the work its character. Toney keeps all the receding planes parallel to the picture surface, so that the image retains its modernist flatness. The painting's title was suggested by Edna St. Vincent Millay's eponymous poem *Afternoon on a Hill*.

Cat. 22 Anthony Toney. *Afternoon on a Hill*, 1956

### Afternoon on a Hill

*I will be the gladdest thing  
Under the sun!  
I will touch a hundred flowers  
And not pick one.  
I will look at cliffs and clouds  
With quiet eyes,  
Watch the wind bow down the grass,  
And the grass rise.*

*And when lights begin to show  
Up from the town,  
I will mark which must be mine,  
And then start down!*

Edna St. Vincent Millay (1892–1950)  
From *Renascence and Other Poems*, 1917  
In public domain



### A CORNER OF STATEN ISLAND

Like Anthony Toney, Alfred Crimi participated in the “painting bee” of 1956, during which he produced *A Corner of Staten Island*. The exhibition, *Portraits of Staten Island*, 1956, was held at the Staten Island Institute (a.k.a. Staten Island Museum) the following year. Toney’s painting received the purchase prize, and Crimi donated his painting eleven years later, in 1968. Crimi’s painting shows derelict ships submerged in the water, gulls, and a working dock. It presents a composite of various sites along Staten Island’s waterfront.

Cat. 35 Alfred De Giorgio Crimi. *A Corner of Staten Island*, 1956



NORTH SHORE

Nancy Bonior's ink on Denril work, *North Shore*, based on maps and text, is the most conceptual landscape in *Staten Island SEEN*. The touch of the brush dipped in diluted ink onto the non-porous surface creates the characteristic marks: lines of consistent thickness but varied density. The lines become paths, systems delimiting space in an abstract way, but maintaining a specific reference to place. Mapping is another convention for representing the landscape. It charts space, rather than depicting it. Maps imply travel. They allow us to navigate, rather than re-experience space. This is a coded landscape, resolutely flat, reduced to variants of the blue and black ink, and the frosty, translucent white of the Denril (a kind of synthetic vellum). Bonior's work relates as much to mapping as it does to modern art: Jasper Johns's map paintings, Brice Marden's *Cold Mountain* series, Joan Mitchell's early works and Jackson Pollock's drip paintings can be cited as antecedents.

After European modernism, photography has had the greatest impact on painting. Since its inception in 1839 (arguably earlier with Joseph Nicephor Niepce's first "successful" image of his rooftops in 1826, now in the University of Texas at Austin), artists have used photography as a source and for another kind of visual note-taking. Its monocular, instantaneous imagery captures the specifics of a scene with objective clarity and in flawless perspective, even though early photography was largely limited to black-and-white and modest in scale. Representation in painting was eclipsed by abstraction from 1910 to 1970, and in a spirit of revolt against this rejection a number of artists decided to reintroduce representation in the most prosaic way by explicitly relying on photography. This was, and in some quarters still is, frowned upon by many art schools and representational painters. In the late '60s many artists had to reinvent representation and wanted to make it new. Not only did they work directly from photographs but they looked to non-traditional motifs that reflected our contemporary experiences: subways, city streets, gas stations, diners, parking lots, the shiny newness of consumerist culture with the desultory anonymity of freeways and urban sprawl. The glossy color photo was a perfect match for the content of these new realist works, and the neutral, tight focus of photography gave them a means to create aggressively new images. Since painting had been reduced to process, Photorealism became a quasi-mechanical strategy for picture making from pictures, not from the art historical cannon but from the ordinary experience of the snapshot.

Cat. 32 Nancy Bonior. *North Shore*, 2013





STATEN ISLAND FERRY DOCKING IN MANHATTAN

Photorealism or Hyperrealism was born, and one of its inventors was Richard Estes, who has not wavered from this vision in the course of a career that now spans over 50 years. Estes is primarily known as an urban realist. He lives in New York, and his work has been associated with this city, despite significant forays into Antarctica, European cities and New England forests. A dense layering of transparency, reflection, and refraction is at the core of his works and this can be seen in a series of paintings he has made of the Staten Island Ferry. The gleam of sunlight on the brilliant yellow-orange of the ferry's exterior, so familiar to most Staten Islanders and many tourists is as much a motif as the buildings, sky, water, pilings and foam. The perspective funnels back into space and we sense the ever-forward movement of the ferry as it enters its slip. The sharp, clean edges of all the forms also give the painting a hyper clarity, which is reflected in the artist's meticulous brushwork. Under close scrutiny there is relatively little blending of tones, every color note is discrete, denying the impression of seamlessness that the work gives at first glance.

Cat. 40 Richard Estes. *Staten Island Ferry Docking in Manhattan*, 2008

Paul Caranicas's monumental *Staten Island: Bridge Over Dizzy Bunker* represents an abandoned gun emplacement in Fort Wadsworth, beyond which looms the Verrazano Bridge. Here we are in sight of many of the 19th-century landscapists' favorite spot on Staten Island—the Narrows, but we don't actually see this picturesque motif. Caranicas also gives us the space with an exaggerated foreshortening at the center of the image, the fish-eye view of a camera lens. There is a sense here of "swords being beaten into plowshares" in the contrast between the site of a weapon fallen into ruins and the glorious triumph of modern engineering—the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge. In fact the artist was engaged with a series of works around this time, which focused on abandoned bunkers built on ocean shores as defense measures during World War II.

Several self-taught artists are featured in *Staten Island SEEN*. In the early years of America, artists had little access to collections of fine art (inevitably European), and training was limited. If artists had the means, they would travel to Europe, and this trend continued from colonial times well into the 20th century, but there was a subculture of itinerants, autodidacts and amateurs who produced a large body of often charming and bold works that were as original in concept as they were free from the influence of academia or foreign trends. Some of these artists had limited exposure to art through popular reproductions, whether they were illustrations, chromoliths or calendar art.



STATEN ISLAND:  
BRIDGE OVER DIZZY BUNKER

Cat. 33 Paul Caranicas. *Staten Island: Bridge over Dizzy Bunker*, 1987

Victor Joseph Gatto (1890/3-1965) was a self-taught artist. He began painting at the age of 45, after visiting a Greenwich Village Outdoor Art Exhibition. He was impressed by the amount of money that could be earned from artwork and he felt he could do as well, or better. By the time he painted *John L. Sullivan's Beer Party at South Beach*, a painting based on a childhood memory, Gatto was gaining a reputation as a self-taught painter of some distinction. As a young man the artist was a professional boxer, so he took a keen interest in the subject of John L. Sullivan (1858-1918), who was the last bare-knuckle boxing champion, and the first gloved prize fighter. Swinburne Island featured in the distance of this painting, was built in the 19th century as a quarantine for immigrants with contagious diseases. Gatto lived in New York's Little Italy, and his neighbors included artists Willem and Elaine De Kooning, who encouraged his painting.<sup>6</sup> By the 1940s his works were being collected, even sought after. He said of himself: "I can paint any'ing [sic]—deep sea pitchers, jungles, wild horses, even heaven. An' I ain't no copy artist. I can paint it all outa [sic] my head."<sup>7</sup> Gatto built up the paint in his depiction of figures, creating a relief to the surface. The rest of the paint surface remained relatively flat.

Works by self-taught artists had, in fact, come into vogue in the 1930s and '40s. Prominent dealers of modern art were beginning to exhibit these works, presented as "American Primitives" or "Naïve artists". Today the terminology has changed to "Outsider Art", but the framework is the same. Sydney Janis was exhibiting the art of Morris Hirschfeld, while Otto Kallir was showing Anna Mary Robertson, better known as Grandma Moses. Horace Pippin, John Kane and others became artistic celebrities, and were exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art. Such artists were homegrown and free of influence, therefore, by definition they were quintessentially American. Their rural or working class backgrounds added an egalitarian aspect. Works like these could be understood by the "ordinary" person, and had particular appeal as the United States emerged from the Great Depression. The flatness of the works also seemed to echo the anti-illusionism that was part of the modernist credo.



JOHN L. SULLIVAN'S BEER PARTY AT SOUTH BEACH

Cat. 20 Victor Joseph Gatto. *John L. Sullivan's Beer Party at South Beach*, 1939



## AH! LINOLEUMVILLE

John Noble was the premier artist of Staten Island's waterways for over half a century. *Ah! Linoleumville* was commissioned by the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of the City of New York that celebrated 75 years since the consolidation of New York City's five boroughs in 1898.

The *Tolima* was built in 1920, the end of the greatest era of wooden shipbuilding, much of it at Staten Island's shipyards. The ship was lost at sea with all hands on April 30, 1931. *Linoleumville* was named after the American Linoleum Manufacturing Company, one of Staten Island's prime industries from 1873 to its closing in 1928. Two years after the factory shut down, there was a referendum to rename the area now known as Travis. Noble's prolific career as a lithographer and documenter of Staten Island's waterways was motivated by his nostalgia for an earlier era of tall ships. While many of his drawings and prints were produced in his famous houseboat studio, this print is a creative reconstruction of a scene that took place in the early 20th century.

*Her name was the Tolima. Here in the picture she stands cathedral-like, exposing the full glory of her unplanked, uncovered bones... these bones ... and planks of many a score of North American-built hulls represent the greatest wooden structures ever fashioned by the hand of man.<sup>7</sup>*

John Noble

Cat. 18 John A. Noble. *Ah! Linoleumville*, 1973



### NEW YORK HARBOR (SEEN FROM STATEN ISLAND)

Many artists have been attracted to Staten Island's scenic waterways: Louis Bouché's *New York Harbor (seen from Staten Island)*, painted in 1943, is an unromantic view near the mouth of the Kill Van Kull, looking across New York Harbor to Manhattan. Probably painted on the spot, it is typical of the artist's realistic style that he adopted after a period of experimentation with modernist styles. Pipes, bricks and other construction debris are strewn on the pale pink sand in the foreground.

Cat. 19 Louis George Bouché. *New York Harbor (seen from Staten Island)*, 1943



### CLOVE VALLEY FROM TODT HILL

Interstate Highway I-278 did not run through Clove Valley, when Australian émigré artist Percy Leason painted this scene. The landscape, accomplished on the spot in a single session, is an example of the artist's objective use of color and tone. Leason's apparent disregard for a picturesque choice of scenery anticipates the work of Rackstraw Downes by 20 years. Leason settled on Staten Island in 1939, was active in the Museum's Art Section, and was instrumental in acquiring the Jasper Cropsey painting (Cat. 16) in 1946 on view in this exhibition

Cat. 21 Percy Leason. *Clove Valley From Todt Hill*, ca.1949-1950s



VIEW OF GOETHALS BRIDGE

Ely Behar's watercolor, although titled *View of Goethals Bridge*, seems to depict the Bayonne Bridge, with its characteristic arch span. The bridge was designed by engineer Othmar H. Ammann, in partnership with Staten Island architect Cass Gilbert (who designed Staten Island Borough Hall and the Customs House, now the home of the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian, Heye Foundation, across the Harbor). The Bridge was completed (ahead of schedule!) in November 1931, and was named "the most beautiful steel arch bridge of 1931" by the American Institute for Steel Construction. Behar, based in Staten Island, probably painted this work not long after its construction. The watercolor also includes industrial activity in the foreground.

Cat. 36 Ely M. Behar. *View of Goethals Bridge*, ca. 1936



### CLOCKWORK

Painted on the spot at Morningstar Road, *Clockwork* looks toward Richmond Terrace and the Bayonne Bridge. Evans-Cato's urban landscapes explore the effects of light and space on a particular place. He has painted a number of New York City bridges, overpasses, and elevated trains. His oblique view of the Bayonne Bridge gives a sense of its scale as well as the New Jersey shore beyond, without showing the waters of the Kill Van Kull.

Cat. 38 Nicholas Evans-Cato. *Clockwork*, 2013



### STATEN ISLAND WATERFRONT

Diana Horowitz's urban landscapes explore the shapes and unique light of her native New York City. She grew up in Manhattan's West Village, one block from the Hudson River. Often painting in series at a site, she returns repeatedly to the same place to paint. *Staten Island Waterfront* shows the Atlantic Salt Company's site on Richmond Terrace at the mouth of the Kill Van Kull, seen from the water's edge near Snug Harbor. Two large salt mounds figure prominently here, bookending the abandoned U. S. Gypsum Plant (now the location of Gerardi's Farmers Market). Although the light is specifically New York's slightly hazy sunshine, the painting suggests the crystalline light and distilled tonal structure of Corot's Italian landscapes.

Cat. 46 Diana Horowitz. *Staten Island Waterfront*, 2012

Another contemporary painter who works on the spot, Andrew Lenaghan, explores New York's many aspects from seedy industrial zones to the residential areas of his Brooklyn neighborhood. *Boat Boneyard* was painted from a site near Blazing Star Cemetery, overlooking the "boneyard" of abandoned tugboats mired in the marshes of the Kill Van Kull, the same area where John Noble often worked. Brian Brooks's painting was also based on a site nearby, and it is interesting that the two artists, friends, made painting excursions together for their contributions to *Staten Island SEEN*, but with remarkably different results. Stylistic differences aside, most obvious is the fact that Brooks chose a view within the historic Blazing Star Cemetery, while Lenaghan sought a view outward from the shore to the surrounding wetlands.

Cat. 28 Andrew Lenaghan. *Boat Boneyard*, 2013



BOAT BONEYARD





### VIEW OF THE BAY FROM STATEN ISLAND

Looking northeast toward Manhattan, Levant's view shows the back of Blue, a restaurant on Richmond Terrace across from Snug Harbor Cultural Center (and a short distance from the site of Horowitz's painting). The diffuse sunlight and soft brushwork give the scene a bucolic feeling. The Atlantic Salt Company is suggested in the distance. Levant retains a sketch-like finish and she scrubs diluted oil paint onto the canvas, giving it an almost watercolor-like transparency.

Cat. 23 Ginger Levant. *View of the Bay from Staten Island*, 2013



### STATEN ISLAND, THE BAYONNE BRIDGE AND NEW JERSEY FROM RED HOOK, BROOKLYN

Here Morgan Taylor opted to depict Staten Island from afar, like the earliest images of Staten Island made in the 17th and 18th centuries (see Cat. 1, 2 and 3). The arch of the Bayonne Bridge is a distant and distinctive landmark. The very low horizon emphasizes the sky, which gives the small painting a sense of vastness and also connects it to John Constable's beautiful English skies.

Cat. 37 Morgan Taylor. *Staten Island, the Bayonne Bridge and New Jersey from Red Hook, Brooklyn*, 2011



## NEW YORK HARBOR

**N**ew York Harbor was painted from the 95th floor of the North Tower of the former World Trade Center during Milewicz's participation in the World Views Artist Residency program. This was the last painting he completed during the residency in 1998. The yellow sky and yellow-orange water gives the painting an eeriness that in hindsight seems prophetic of the loss of this view because of the terrorist attacks of September 11th in 2001. Sculptor Michael Richards, one of fifteen artists in residence at the time, and the only artist in the building during the attacks, perished in the destruction, along with 2,748 others.<sup>11</sup> Despite its small size, Milewicz's view memorializes the lost site and presents a cosmic view, situating Staten Island in the vastness of space at the frontier between land and water.

Cat. 51 Ron Milewicz. *New York Harbor*, 1998



KISSAM AVENUE, OAKWOOD BEACH, NOVEMBER 15, 2012

Another work of tragic intensity is Amer Kobaslija's haunting painting *Kissam Avenue, Oakwood Beach, November 15, 2012*. It is one of ten new works especially painted for this exhibition, and it shows the epoch-defining path of destruction from Super Storm Sandy. Kobaslija's personal history, born and raised in Bosnia, living through the violence there, and later visiting Japan with his Japanese wife in the wake of the Tsunami and subsequent nuclear disaster, all contributed to his unique ability to render this scene of devastation. Kobaslija, who often works in series, was moved to paint an entire series of works based on his visits to the most storm-ravaged parts of Staten Island. This particular painting seemed to sum up the effects of the hurricane on Staten Island's shores. The brooding night sky and mangled bicycle in a puddle, drawn from his imagination, and not based upon the sketches and photos he took on the scene, intensify the mournfulness of the image. Kobaslija's masterful brushwork gives the painting a restless quality that makes all the elements in the painting quiver with nervous energy.

Cat. 53 Amer Kobaslija. *Kissam Avenue, Oakwood Beach, November 15, 2012, 2012*



THREE PAINTINGS FROM ECO-ILLUMINATIONS SERIES

Cynthia Mailman's triptych from her *Eco-Illuminations* series calls attention to another kind of tragedy: the loss of natural wetlands to pollution and overdevelopment, and consequent loss of flora and fauna. Mailman delivers a serious message in a delightful package: these works are inspired by the magnificence of late Gothic illuminated manuscripts, with their glorious use of gold leaf, vivid colors and meticulous depictions of landscape, plants and animals. Instead of the pious images typical of gothic illuminations, she substitutes views of Staten Island marshes and shoreline housing developments in the arched windows, and extirpated species of flora and fauna in the gilded borders. Here the artist acts as a bellwether, warning us of the results of our inattentiveness to the impact of progress, greed and desires on the fragile balance of nature.

Cat. 43, 44, 45 Cynthia Mailman. *Three paintings from Eco-Illuminations series, 1999-2002*  
 From left:  
*Extirpated Species/Whispering Reed Villas-Summer*  
*Exxon Oil-Extirpated Flora*  
*Turn of the Century-Wetlands-Disappeared Flora-Staten Island,N.Y.*



NORTH SHORE EDGE

With a similar trace of irony, Ned Gannon's *North Shore Edge* was painted when the artist lived on Staten Island. The scene is taken from a view from Richmond Terrace, literally across the street from Snug Harbor, looking through a stand of trees fronting the Kill Van Kull. All seems sylvan and sunny, except for the gas tanks that populate the opposite shore, and a jet making its approach to Newark Airport amidst a spiraling cloud. Gannon's light touch makes us wonder if there is an ulterior message in this work.

Most of the works in *Staten Island SEEN* respect the conventions of the rectangular frame, with the already noted exceptions of Norman Turner and Brian Brooks, who both chose to allow their fields of vision and the construction of the work to determine the outer shape of their paintings. The tradition of the rectangular format is almost as ancient as painting itself but was codified in Renaissance paintings: *figure* (vertical) format was dictated by works depicting the human figure, especially portraits, while *paysage* (horizontal) format was based upon landscape images. The four edges of the canvas, panel, or paper correspond to an ideal window frame, through which we look into the illusionary depth of the landscape. In some cases artists chose to represent the fictive space of the painting with a frame within the frame, that is, a window casement, presenting a further illusion that we are situated indoors, looking out. Two works in this exhibition exemplify this approach: Otto Charles Wigand's *Moon and Venus 5 a.m.* (Cat. 47) and Stephanie Pierce's *Discordant Wave/Material Noise* (Cat. 48).

Cat. 52 Ned Gannon. *North Shore Edge*, 2004



MOON AND VENUS 5 A.M.

Wigand's painting puts the viewer close to the sill, and we can imagine ourselves having opened the window on a balmy summer, early in the morning. We see the rising sun bathing the densely inhabited prospect with golden light. His patterned paint application may have been derived from his European sojourn, where he was exposed to Post-Impressionism.<sup>12</sup>

Cat. 47 Otto Charles Wigand. *Moon and Venus 5 a.m.*, ca. 1930



DISCORDANTWAVE /MATERIAL NOISE

Pierce's recent painting puts us further back in the room than Wigand's *Moon and Venus 5 a.m.* and we see its walls and windows, but we don't have a sense of exactly what the view is out of the windows. Instead the outside foliage and dappled light seem to merge with the interior, creating an envelope of light and space. Her active mark-making both dissolves and defines forms, suggesting a sense of temporal flux. A linguistic metaphor can be that Pierce thinks of the scene as a "verb", while Wigand (and other more traditional landscapists) thought of it as a "noun".

Cat. 48 Stephanie Pierce, *Discordantwave /Material Noise*, 2012

Lenora Paglia's pastel *Silver Lake Park, Evening* is a perfect example of the classic *paysage* format, utilizing a classical landscape composition: the darkened foreground, with foreground trees act as repoussoirs,<sup>13</sup> introducing our eyes into the luminous space of the pond and sky. Not surprisingly Paglia was consciously in dialogue with 19th-century Romantic landscapes when she worked on this piece, particularly the work of Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900), one of the masters of the sublime landscape of the American wilderness. Church sought landscape motifs all over the world, making works of awesome scale and topographical detail that were spectacles in their own right. Paglia, a trained painting conservator, was working on a Church painting, which directly inspired her series of twenty-five landscape pastels, each meant to represent a particular condition of outdoor light.<sup>14</sup> While Paglia's view of Silver Lake Park is formalized into a symmetrical composition, devoid of the human presence (except by implication, as it is a park and we see an apartment building in the background).

Cat. 27 Lenora Paglia.  
*Silver Lake Park, Evening*, 2005



## SILVER LAKE PARK, EVENING



## STAPLETON CORNER

A bustling street at dusk, *Stapleton Corner* is a typical neighborhood scene of people returning from work, stopping off to pick up some fruits and vegetables at the local greengrocer, walking the dog, meeting friends on the street, and making their purchases at the local wines and liquor store. Cecil Bell's works are filled with the human presence. In fact almost all of Bell's work deals with the human comedy. Bell, who moved to Staten Island in 1942, always had a sketchpad handy to make visual notes. This gives his scenes an immediacy that was advocated by his mentor, John Sloan (1871-1951).

Cat. 29 Cecil Crosley Bell. *Stapleton Corner*, 1944



John Sloan shared Cecil Bell's (1906-1970) satirical but affectionate view of humanity, which can be seen in Sloan's late etching *Wake on the Ferry*. Sloan took the ferry ride on many occasions, both on his visits to Cecil Bell and on excursions to seek out motifs. As early as 1907 Sloan visited Staten Island, particularly South Beach bathing spots, to observe people in unguarded moments of fun, relaxation and flirtation. He found South Beach far less crowded than Coney Island.<sup>15</sup> *Wake on the Ferry* shows the kind of humorous, anecdotal approach that Sloan and other urban realists took in their works. Sloan's illustrations for such radical publications as *The Masses* made a lasting impression on his attitude. This work also might be a sly comment on one of Sloan's own early masterpieces *Wake of the Ferry* of 1907.<sup>16</sup> In that melancholy painting he shows a lone woman leaning against the railing at the back of the Staten Island Ferry, with a stormy harbor ensconced in gray mists beyond. In the later etching the weather and setting are similar, but the scene is boisterous.

Cat. 39 John French Sloan. *Wake on the Ferry*, 1947



WAKE ON THE FERRY



## HYLAN PLAZA

Perhaps the site most familiar to us today is the suburban parking lot. Peter Van Dyck's painting *Hylan Plaza* is another exercise in *plein air* painting, but it's a sunny view of a Staten Island mall parking lot, with passersby, shopping carts, pigeons and billboards that represents a kind of "everytown" USA. Like his older contemporaries Rackstraw Downes and Stanley Lewis, there's no implicit message behind Van Dyck's choice of subject matter. And, like Lewis and occasionally Downes, Van Dyck adds inches to his paintings, if the composition seems to call for it. You can see these revisions to his format in seams that show additions to the original panel and traces of *pentimenti* in the placement of some of the pigeons. Modernism has allowed artists to reveal their process in a way that was unthinkable 150 years ago. Even in realist works such as Van Dyck's, we can never forget that we are looking at a painting, a handmade translation (really an abstraction) of visible reality.

Cat. 49 Peter Van Dyck. *Hylan Plaza*, 2013



ST. GEORGE TERMINAL, STATEN ISLAND FERRY, STATEN ISLAND  
STILL FROM SI3D, CITY SYMPHONY FILM IN 3D

With the exception of six late 19th and early 20th-century stereographic views (photographs using a special stereoptic camera) and Jerome and Marylou Bongiorno's 3-D video of Staten Island landmarks (a tribute to Charles Sheeler and Paul Strand's famous 1921 film *Manhatta*, a montage of New York City, inspired itself by Walt Whitman's poetry).



*Staten Island SEEN* presents a montage of handmade images of this rapidly changing place. The image on the right shows the same image in anaglyphic 3D with overlapped red and cyan images viewed through special anaglyphic spectacles, which produces a 3D effect.

Cat. 55, 56 Marylou Bongiorno and Jerome Bongiorno. *St. George Terminal, Staten Island Ferry, Staten Island*, still from *SI3D*, *City Symphony film in 3D*, 2015

Isaac Almstaedt maintained a photographic studio in Tompkinsville from 1873. He was a prolific landscape photographer, producing a series of stereographs known as "Staten Island Gems." Almstaedt's views were largely documentarian, but his sense of framing made these images picturesque, reflecting a late 19th century sensibility that showed the influence of painting on photography. This reciprocal influence: photography on landscape painting and painting on photography, becomes a subtext of *Staten Island SEEN*, even though photography isn't the main medium of the exhibition's investigation. The Bongiorno's 3-D video is part of their larger, ongoing project of *City Symphonies*, celebrating the often-overlooked places of the Greater New York area, which encompasses their home-base, Newark.

The entire series of 3-D videos is also an homage to the great filmic ode to New York City, *Manhatta*, by photographers Paul Strand and Charles Sheeler, released in 1921. The Bongiorno's utilize an early system called anaglyph 3-D, a process that was introduced as early as 1852 (for still images) and in 1889 for motion pictures. The system uses two images, like stereographs, but overlaps them into one image with slightly adjusted positions (hence the out-of-focus appearance of the images when seen without the aid of anaglyphic glasses). Assigning the left eye a red filter and the right eye a cyan filter, the brain merges the images and gives an illusion of depth perception. The viewer has an enhanced sensation of entering the landscape, which was the goal of landscape painters since the introduction of linear perspective by the architect Filippo Brunelleschi in the first half of the 15th century (one of the great "inventions" of the Renaissance, and a hallmark of Western art since then). The word SEEN in this exhibition's title is capitalized since it is the ultimate goal, and the obvious word play (scene/seen) brings us back to the very heart of the exhibition's intentions.

Cat. 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, ca. 1875-1885

Isaac Almstaedt

Top Left to Right:

*Clove Lake*

*Sailors Snug Harbor, New Brighton*

*View from Ward's Hill*

*View From Tyman's Building, Stapleton*

*The Narrows from Fort Hill*

*Midland Beach*



CLOVE LAKE



SAILORS SNUG HARBOR,  
NEW BRIGHTON



VIEW FROM WARD'S HILL



VIEW FROM TYMAN'S BUILDING,  
STAPLETON



THE NARROWS FROM FORT HILL



MIDLAND BEACH

## Notes

- 1 Leon Battista Alberti published his influential treatise *Della Pittura (On Painting)* between 1435-36. In it he enlarged on architect Filippo Brunelleschi's "discovery" of one-point perspective.
- 2 Tonalism was a parallel development with Impressionism. It describes works that used an over-all tonality, often with low-key colors that are harmonized into a color scheme. Edges are often blurred, with an overall atmospheric rendering. The exemplar of this approach was Whistler.
- 3 In this painting Cropsey relied on a symmetrical composition, with flanking repoussoirs that introduce the viewer into the vastness of space. This kind of composition was based on precedents established in the 17th century by such classical painters as Claude Lorrain and Nicholas Poussin.
- 4 "Painting is a science and should be pursued as an inquiry into the laws of nature. Why, then, may not a landscape be considered as a branch of natural philosophy, of which pictures are but experiments?", "The History of Landscape Painting", fourth lecture, Royal Institution (16 June 1836), from John Constable's *Discourses*, ed. R.B. Beckett, (Ipswich, Suffolk Records Society, 1970), p. 69.
- 5 *Paysage*, French for landscape, is a conventional horizontal canvas format, as opposed to Figure, a vertical format used for portraits and figure painting. These standardized formats are based upon the golden section for the relation of height to width.
- 6 Willem De Kooning (1904-1997) was a leading member of the Abstract Expressionists, his then wife Elaine (1918-1989), was a figurative expressionist and also wrote extensively on contemporary art.
- 7 Victor Joseph Gatto, "Joe Gatto, Primitive," Winthrop Sargeant, *Life*, November 8, 1948
- 8 The Museum of Modern Art presented several exhibitions of "folk", "popular" or "primitive" artists between 1933-1944. Gatto and others were included in *Contemporary Unknown American Painters*, Oct. 18-Nov. 18, 1939. The term "unknown" is a bit paradoxical, because all of the artists were identified by name, and some of them had already developed reputations.
- 9 Text published in a pamphlet, written by John Noble on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of New York City, 1973.
- 10 Which has been preserved and reconstructed at the Noble Maritime Museum, Snug Harbor Cultural Center.
- 11 The number 2,749 is based on the number of death certificates issued for the known fatalities, some 13 more people died after Sept. 11 from causes directly related. The actual number might be higher.
- 12 Otto Wigand worked in France from 1884- c.1890. He studied at the Academy Julian in Paris, and summered in Pont-Aven, Brittany where a colony of experimental painters was led by Paul Gauguin. He was also close to Arthur Wesley Dow, who advocated the use of Japanese flattened space and asymmetrical composition.
- 13 *Repoussoir*: a conventional means of framing space in a landscape painting using a mass, often foliage or a tree, in the extreme edges of the painting, to create a sense of spatial procession, much like the wings of a stage set.
- 14 Based upon Paglia's own account of the painting's background.
- 15 "This Staten Island resort had few visitors compared to Coney Island, and gave better opportunity for observation of individual behavior." Quoted from John Sloan in *So, Why Is This Art?*, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, 2002, Copyright 2002 Walker Art Center.
- 16 Sloan painted two versions of this work, one in the Detroit Institute of Arts, 61.165 and another version in the Phillips Collection, Washington DC, acquired in 1922.

My love for Staten Island grows stronger every year...  
I know that I could never be contented anywhere  
else—my home will always be there.

Arthur Hollick  
Staten Island Museum Co-founder, 1879



# CATALOGUE OF THE EXHIBITION

The places and historical moments that are represented in *Staten Island SEEN* are divided thematically and each of these themes presents Staten Island as a living, breathing place in constant flux: *The Bay*; *Villages and Farms*; *Industrialization/Urbanization*; *Land Use*; *Neighborhoods*; *Bridges and Connections*; *Ecology/Land & Water Use*; *Inside-Out* and a "Conclusion", which is open-ended.

## THE BAY



Cat. 1  
*View of New York Harbor from Najak (now Fort Hamilton), 1679*  
 Jasper Danckaerts (Dutch, 1639 - ca. 1703)  
 Pen and sepia ink on paper, 8 3/8 x 12 5/8 inches  
 Used with permission, Brooklyn Historical Society



Cat. 2  
*The Narrows, (between Red and Yellow Hook, on Long Island, & the East Bluff of Staten Island) Bearing S.b.W. from The Atlantic Neptune, 1777*  
 Artist unknown  
 Joseph Frederick Wallet Des Barres (born Swiss, died, Nova Scotia, 1721 - 1824)  
 Colored engraving, 8.5 x 20 inches  
 SIM 50-272B

Cat. 3  
*View of the Narrows between Long Island & Staaten Island [sic] with our fleet at anchor & Lord Howe coming in - taken from the height above the Watering Place, Staaten Island[sic] 2th July 1776*  
 Archibald Robertson (British, ca. 1745-1813)  
 Ink and wash on paper, 11.5 x 18.75 inches  
 Used with permission, New York Public Library Spencer Collection, MS 66



Cat. 4  
*View from Brooklyn Overlooking Narrows and Staten Island*  
 Artist unknown, ca. 1840-1850  
 Pastel and chalk on marble dust glued to board, 9.5 x 13.5 inches  
 Gift of Elliot R. Burgher  
 A1959.10



Cat. 5  
*The Narrows from Fort Hamilton Brooklyn (After William Henry Bartlett), 1838*  
 Robert Wallis (British, 1794-1878)  
 Published by George Virtue (ca. 1793-1868), London  
 Hand-colored steel plate engraving, 8 x 11 inches  
 Anonymous gift in memory of Marshall Esterly  
 A1985.3.2





Cat. 6  
*The Narrows from Staten Island*, ca. 1855-1865  
 G. W. Barrows (dates unknown)  
 Oil on canvas, 24 x 31 inches  
 Gift of the Museum Guild  
 A1974.5



Cat. 7  
*The Narrows, From Staten Island, New York from Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion*  
 October 1, 1853, ca. 1853  
 William Ricarby Miller  
 (born England, American, 1818-1893)  
 Wood engraving on paper, 7 x 9 inches  
 SIM 50-3



Cat. 8  
*View of Upper Bay (looking toward Staten Island)*  
 ca. 1860-1870  
 James Edward Buttersworth (American, 1817-1894)  
 Oil on canvas, 7.75 x 11.75 inches  
 Museum Purchase with the assistance of  
 Henry Schnakenberg  
 A1961.9.1



Cat. 9  
*Staten Island from New York Bay*, 1883  
 Edward Moran (born England, American, 1829-1901)  
 Oil on canvas, 12 x 18 inches  
 Museum Purchase with funds donated by  
 Henry Schnakenberg in memory of his mother  
 Elizabeth Gillespie Schnakenberg  
 A1956.32.1



Cat. 10  
*View of Tottenville Bluff Looking Towards South Amboy*, 1904  
 Johan Peter Eggers (born Denmark, American, 1855-1907)  
 Oil on canvas, 31 x 32.5 inches  
 Gift of Chris D. Olsen  
 A1956.58.1

## VILLAGES AND FARMS



Cat. 11  
*Mille Farm, Staten Island*, 1835  
 John Bradley  
 (born England, American, active 1832-1847)  
 Oil on canvas, 20 x 25 inches  
 Gift of Helen Crocheran Brown  
 A1951.4214



Cat. 12  
*Village of Richmond*, 1851  
 C. Winter (American[?], active ca. 1840-1850)  
 Oil on canvas, 29.125 x 36.25 inches  
 Gift of Gertrude Ostrander  
 A1947.3913



Cat. 13  
*View from the Narrows*, ca. 1855-1858  
 Mauritz Frederik Hendrik De Haas (born Holland, American, 1832-1895)  
 Oil on canvas, 26 x 36 inches  
 Anonymous gift in memory of Elizabeth Gillespie Schnakenberg.  
 A1953.4338



Cat. 14  
*New York from Staten Island*, 1873  
 Hermann Feuchsel (born Germany, American, 1833-1915)  
 Oil on canvas, 16.12 x 30.25 inches  
 Anonymous gift in memory of Elizabeth Gillespie Schnakenberg  
 A1954.41.1



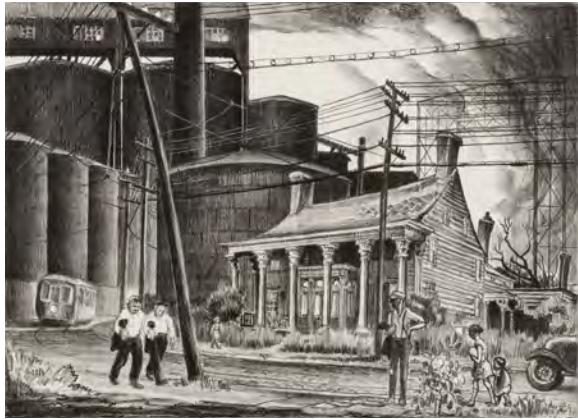
Cat. 15  
*Early Morning on South Beach, Staten Island*, ca. 1874  
 Edward Moran (American, 1829-1901)  
 Oil on canvas, 18.5 x 36.125 inches  
 Museum Purchase.  
 A1948.3924



Cat. 16  
*Looking Oceanward from Todt Hill*, 1895  
 Jasper F. Cropsey (American, 1823-1900)  
 Oil on canvas, 48 x 78 inches  
 Gift of a Committee of Donors  
 A1946.3595



# INDUSTRIALIZATION/URBANIZATION



Cat. 17  
*The Survivor, Staten Island Shore*, 1929  
 Mabel Dwight (American, 1876-1955)  
 Lithograph on paper, 12 x 19 inches  
 Museum Purchase  
 A1975.20.2



Cat. 18  
*Ah! Linoleumville*, 1973  
 John A. Noble (American, 1913-1983)  
 Lithograph on paper, 14 x 20.5 inches  
 The Noble Maritime Collection, Staten Island



Cat. 19  
*New York Harbor (seen from Staten Island)*, 1943  
 Louis George Bouché (American, 1896-1969)  
 Oil on canvas, 20 x 24 inches  
 Gift of Kraushaar Galleries, New York  
 A2012.3.1

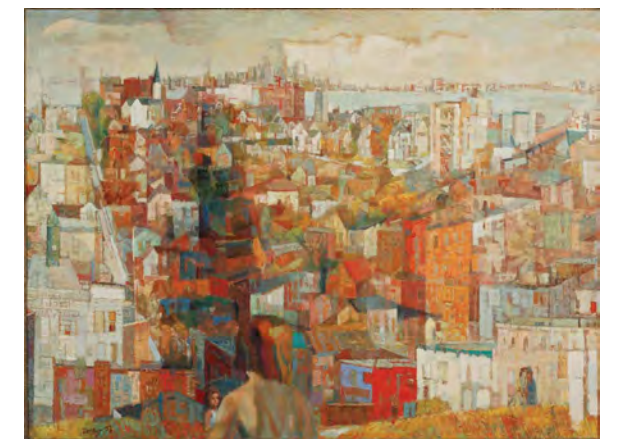
Cat. 20  
*John L. Sullivan's Beer Party at South Beach*, 1939  
 Victor Joseph Gatto (American, 1890-1965)  
 Oil on canvas board, 23.25 x 31.5 inches  
 Gift of Mrs. Henry L. Moses  
 A1959.67.1



Cat. 21  
*Clove Valley From Todt Hill*, ca.1949-1950s  
 Percy Leason (born Australia, American, 1889-1959)  
 Oil on board, 16 x 20 inches  
 Gift of Max Leason  
 A2012.6.1



Cat. 22  
*Afternoon on a Hill*, 1956  
 Anthony Toney (American, 1913-2004)  
 Oil on canvas, 36 x 48 inches  
 Museum Purchase Prize  
 A1957.15



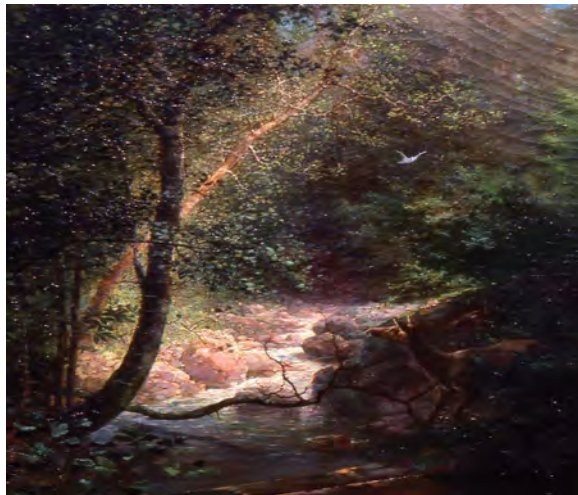


Cat. 23  
*View of the Bay from Staten Island*, 2013  
 Ginger Levant (American, 1957)  
 Oil on canvas, 12 x 16 inches  
 Lent by the artist with support from the  
 National Endowment for the Arts



Cat. 26  
*Cedar Grove Beach, Staten Island Winter*, ca. 1890  
 Frederick Kost (American, 1861-1923)  
 Oil on canvas, 28 x 24 inches  
 Gift of the Estate of Walter C. Schabelitz  
 A1960.17.6

## LAND USE



Cat. 24  
*Brook Scene Near Clove Lake*, ca. 1890-1899  
 Charles Schabelitz  
 (born Switzerland, American, 1844-1905)  
 Oil on canvas, 24 x 20 inches  
 Gift of the Estate of Walter C. Schabelitz  
 A1960.17.2



Cat. 27  
*Silver Lake Park, Evening*, 2005  
 Lenora Paglia (American, 1961)  
 Pastel on paper, 12.5 x 25.5 inches  
 Gift of the artist  
 A2006.4.1



Cat. 25  
*The Frozen Pond*, ca. 1920-1928  
 Ferdinand Busing (American, 1881-1962)  
 Oil on academy board, 18 x 25 inches  
 Gift of the artist  
 A1955.86



Cat. 28  
*Boat Boneyard*, 2013  
 Andrew Lenaghan (American, 1965)  
 Oil on MDF board, 24 x 32 inches  
 Lent by the artist and George Adams Gallery  
 with support from the National Endowment for the Arts

## NEIGHBORHOODS



Cat. 29  
*Stapleton Corner*, 1944  
 Cecil Crosley Bell (American, 1906-1970)  
 Gouache on cardboard, 22 x 30 inches  
 Gift of Agatha Bell  
 A1977.15.27



Cat. 30  
*My Deli, All Tire Co., Parked Cars, and Houses, Targee Street Triangle, Staten Island*, 2013  
 Stanley Lewis (American, 1941)  
 Oil on canvas mounted on panel, 17.75 x 32 inches  
 Lent by the artist with support from the National Endowment for the Arts



Cat. 31  
*Scribner Avenue*, 1993  
 Norman Turner (American, 1939-2015)  
 Oil on irregular canvas, 55.5 x 40.25 inches  
 Gift of the artist  
 A2011.9.1



Cat. 32  
*North Shore*, 2013  
 Nancy Bonior (American, 1947)  
 Ink, graphite, and gouache on Denril, 29.5 x 43 inches  
 Lent by the artist with support from the National Endowment for the Arts

## BRIDGES AND CONNECTIONS



Cat. 33  
*Staten Island: Bridge over Dizzy Bunker*, 1987  
 Paul Caranicas (Greece, b. 1946, American)  
 Oil on canvas, 40 x 80 inches  
 Lent by the West Publishing Company St. Paul, Minnesota, a division of Thomson Reuters



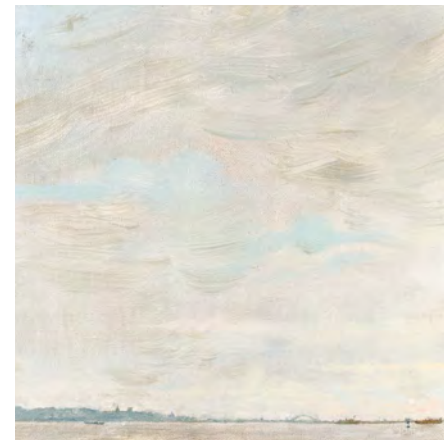
Cat. 34  
*Along the Arthur Kill*, 2008  
 Bill Murphy (American, 1952)  
 Watercolor on paper, 62 x 54 inches  
 Lent by the artist



Cat. 35  
*A Corner of Staten Island*, 1956  
Alfred De Giorgio Crimi  
(born Italy, American, 1900-1994)  
Oil on canvas, 24 x 51 inches  
Gift of A.D. Crimi  
A1968.9



Cat. 36  
*View of Goethals Bridge*, undated, ca. 1936  
Ely M. Behar (American, 1891-1951)  
Watercolor on paper, 14 x 20 inches  
Museum Purchase  
A1965.13.3



Cat. 37  
*Staten Island, the Bayonne Bridge and New Jersey from Red Hook, Brooklyn*, 2011  
Morgan Taylor (American, 1954)  
Oil on linen, 18 x 18 inches  
Museum Purchase  
A2012.8.1



Cat. 38  
*Clockwork*, 2013  
Nicholas Evans-Cato (American, 1973)  
Oil on linen, 8 x 11 inches  
Lent by the artist with support from the  
National Endowment for the Arts



Cat. 39  
*Wake on the Ferry*, 1947  
John French Sloan (American, 1871-1951)  
Etching on paper, 10 x 13 inches  
Museum Purchase  
A1959.30.1



Cat. 40  
*Staten Island Ferry Docking in Manhattan*, 2008  
 Richard Estes (American, 1932)  
 Oil on board, 23.125 x 16 inches  
 Courtesy Marlborough Fine Arts

## ECOLOGY/LAND & WATER USE



Cat. 41  
*Freshkills Landfill from the Carteret Side of the Arthur Kill*, 1990  
 Rackstraw Downes (born, England, American, 1939)  
 Oil on canvas, 7.5 x 54 inches  
 Private Collection

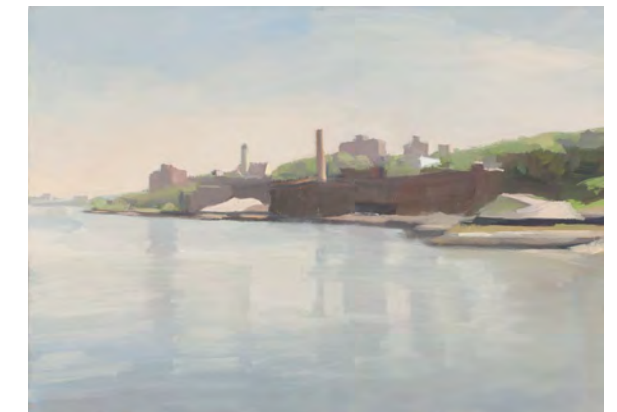


Cat. 42  
*The Bay From Shore Acres*, 1919  
 Henry Ernest Schnakenberg (American, 1892-1970)  
 Oil on canvas, 20 x 24 inches  
 Gift of Henry Schnakenberg  
 A1956.80.5



Cat. 43, 44, 45  
 Three paintings from *Eco-Illuminations* series:  
 From left:  
*Extirpated Species/Whispering Reed Villas-Summer*, 1999  
*Exxon Oil-Extirpated Flora*, 2000  
*Turn of the Century-Wetlands-Disappeared Flora-Staten Island, N.Y.*, 2002  
 Cynthia Mailman (American, 1942)  
 Acrylic, gouache, gold leaf on paper, each panel 16 x 23.125 inches  
 Lent by the artist

Cat. 46  
*Staten Island Waterfront*, 2012  
 Diana Horowitz (American, 1958)  
 Oil on linen, 9.75 x 13.75 inches  
 Lent by the artist, courtesy of the artist and Hirschl and Adler Gallery



## INSIDE-OUT



Cat. 47  
*Moon and Venus 5 a.m.*, ca. 1930  
Otto Charles Wigand (American, 1856-1944)  
Oil on canvas, 29.75 x 26.25 inches  
Lent by Dr. Jonathan D. Wall



Cat. 48  
*Discordantwave /Material Noise*, 2012  
Stephanie Pierce (American, 1974)  
Oil on canvas, 40 x 60 inches  
Lent by the artist with support from the  
National Endowment for the Arts

## CONCLUSION



Cat. 49  
*Hylan Plaza*, 2013  
Peter Van Dyck (American, 1978)  
Oil on canvas, 30 x 40 inches  
Promised gift of the artist with support from the  
National Endowment for the Arts



Cat. 50  
*Blazing Star Cemetery, Staten Island*, 2014  
Brian Brooks (American, 1961)  
Acrylic on paper mounted on board, 49 x 53 inches  
Lent by the artist with support from the  
National Endowment for the Arts



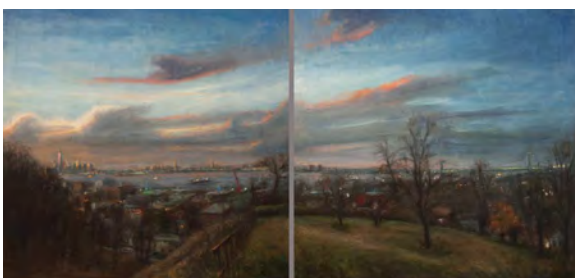
Cat. 51  
*New York Harbor*, 1998  
Ron Milewicz (American, 1963)  
Oil on panel, 8 x 16 inches  
Lent by Ms. Lea H. Cloud



Cat. 52  
*North Shore Edge*, 2004  
 Ned Gannon (American, 1974)  
 Oil on linen, 20 x 12 inches  
 Museum Purchase  
 A2005.3.1



Cat. 53  
*Kissam Avenue, Oakwood Beach*,  
*November 15, 2012*, 2012  
 Amer Kobaslija (born Bosnia, 1975;  
 lives in New York City/Gettysburg, PA)  
 Oil on Plexiglas, 11 x 20 inches  
 Gift in memory of Mirsad Kobaslija  
 Courtesy of the artist and George Adams Gallery  
 A2015.2



Cat. 54  
*New York Harbor and the Narrows*, 2013  
 Sarah Yuster (American, 1957)  
 Oil on canvas diptych, each panel 30 x 30 inches  
 Lent by the artist with support from the  
 National Endowment for the Arts

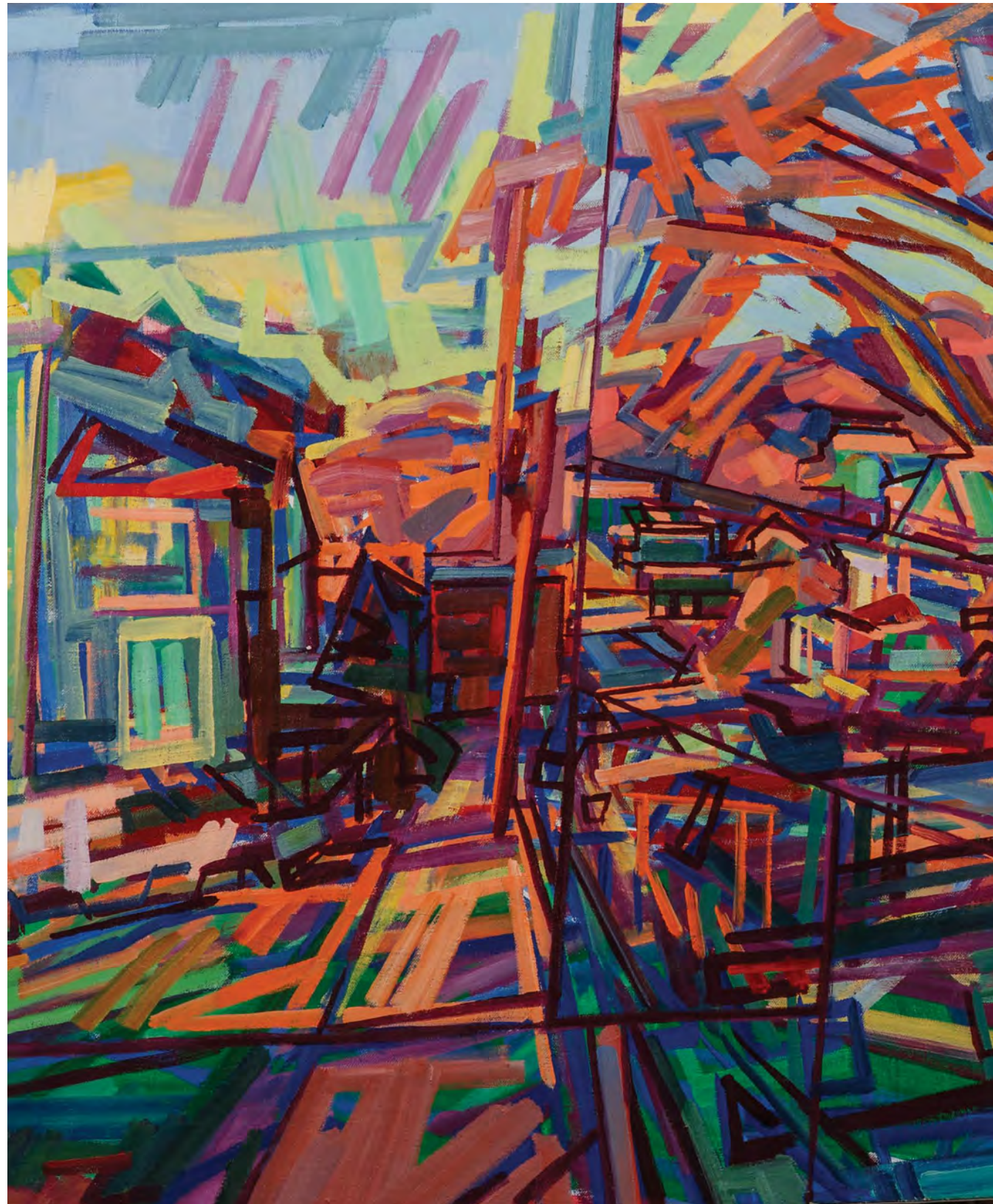


Cat. 55, 56  
*St. George Terminal, Staten Island Ferry, Staten Island*, still from *SI3D, City Symphony film in 3D*, 2015  
 Image copyright and courtesy of the artists, Marylou & Jerome Bongiorno.  
 Image on right shows the same image in anaglyphic 3D with overlapped red and cyan images, viewed through special anaglyphic spectacles, which produces a 3D effect.

SI 3D, Part of 3D City Symphony Series  
 Marylou Bongiorno & Jerome Bongiorno (American, 1962)  
 3D anaglyph video  
 Lent by the Filmmakers with support from the National Endowment for the Arts



Cat. 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62  
 From Left:  
*Clove Lake*, ca. 1875-1885, HP 1984.77.3  
*Sailors Snug Harbor, New Brighton*, ca. 1875-1885, HP 1984.77.22  
*View from Ward's Hill*, ca. 1875-1885, HP 1984.77.31  
*View From Tyman's Building, Stapleton*, ca. 1875-1885, HP 1984.77.32  
*The Narrows from Fort Hill*, ca. 1875-1885, HP 1984.77.173  
*Midland Beach*, ca. 1875-1885, HP1984.77.172  
 Isaac Almstaedt, (American, 1851-1921)  
 Stereographic photos, 4 x 6.6 inches  
 Staten Island Museum, Gift of Hugh Powell  
 HP 1984.77.173



## CONTRIBUTORS

Barnett Shepherd is Director Emeritus of the Staten Island Historical Society and an advisor to the Staten Island Museum. From 1981 to 2000 he served as Executive Director of the Staten Island Historical Society (Historic Richmond Town). He is the author of many scholarly articles and four books of Staten Island history, including *Staten Island Scenery: Paintings, Prints, Drawings and Photographs 1679-1900* (2013); *Sailors' Snug Harbor, 1801-1976* (1979); *Tottenville: The Town the Oyster Built* (2009); and co-author with Lois Mosley of *Sandy Ground Memories* (2003). He lives in the historic Judge Jacob Tysen House, owned by the Staten Island Historical Society and located in the Snug Harbor Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

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Robert Bunkin has been Curator of Art at the Staten Island Museum since 2011. Before that he taught global art history at several colleges, including Parsons School of Design, Borough of Manhattan Community College, and Wagner College. He has pursued his own work as a painter for over 40 years. As a freelance curator he co-developed *Fresco: A Contemporary Perspective* (1993); initiated *The Figure: Another Side of Modernism* (2000), both at the Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art, Snug Harbor. At the Staten Island Museum he has curated *About Faces: Portraits Past and Present* (2005) presented at the Newhouse Center, and the Museum's 2015 inaugural exhibitions, *Opening the Treasure Box: Bringing the World Home*, and *Staten Island SEEN*, among other curatorial projects.

Opposite  
Cat. 31 Norman Turner. *Scribner Avenue*, 1993. Detail



