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# INDUSTRIAL SUBLIME

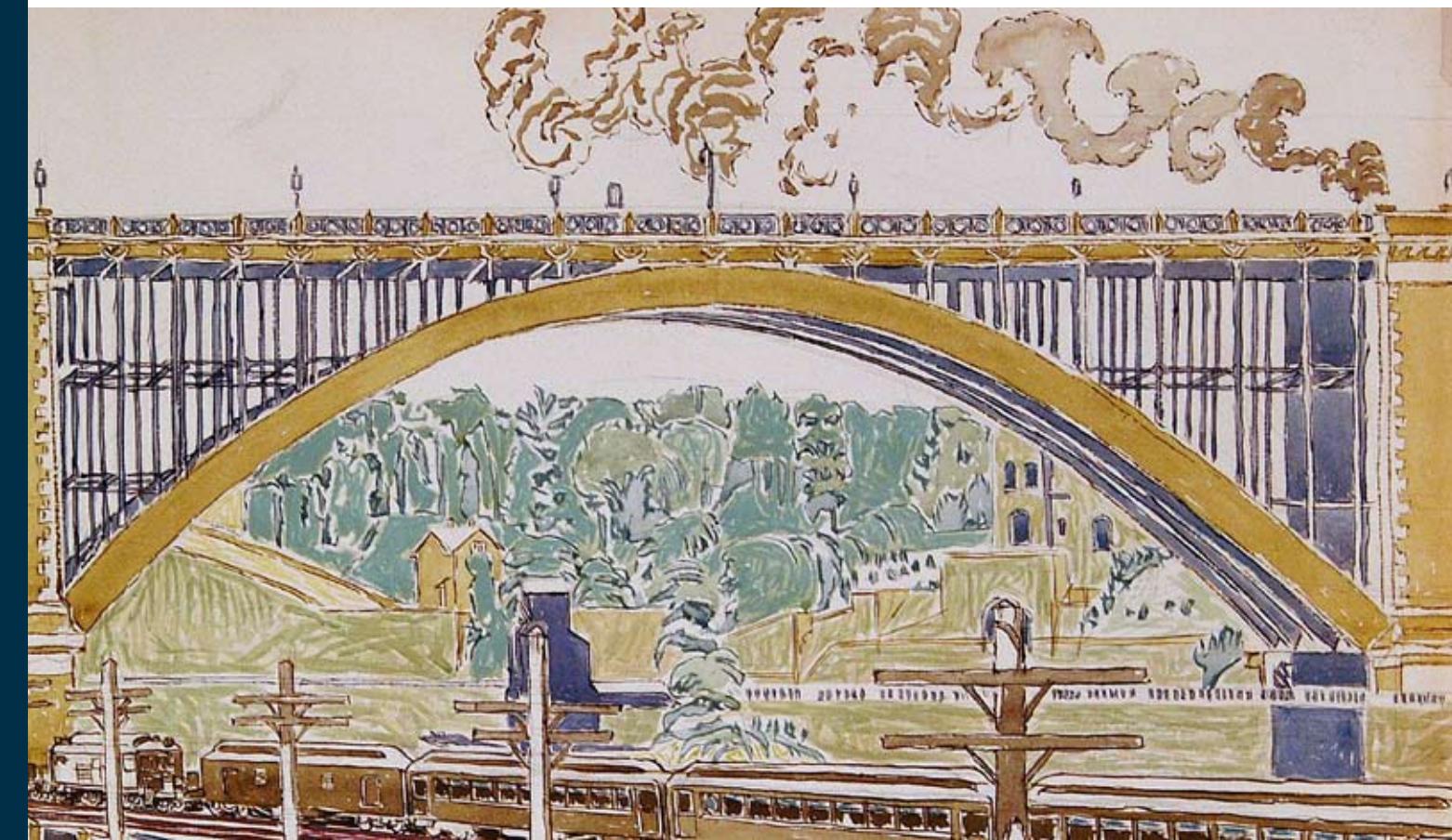
***Modernism and the Transformation of New York's Rivers, 1900-1940***



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## Foreword

Michael Botwinick

## Artists in the Exhibition

## Lenders to the Exhibition

## Acknowledgements

## Artists' Sites

**Introduction: A Woman's Perspective On the Industrial Sublime**  
Katherine Manthorne

**Rising From the River: New York City and the Sublime**  
Bartholomew F. Bland

**On the Fringe: Picturing New York's Rivers, Bridges, and Docklands, 1890-1913**  
Wendy Greenhouse

**Contested Waterfront: Environmentalism and Modernist Paintings of New York**  
Ellen Roberts

**Picturing Manhattan: Modernism, Urban Planning, and New York, 1920 - 1940**  
Kirsten M. Jensen

**Catalogue of the Exhibition**  
Kirsten M. Jensen and Bartholomew F. Bland

## For Further Reading

## Contributors

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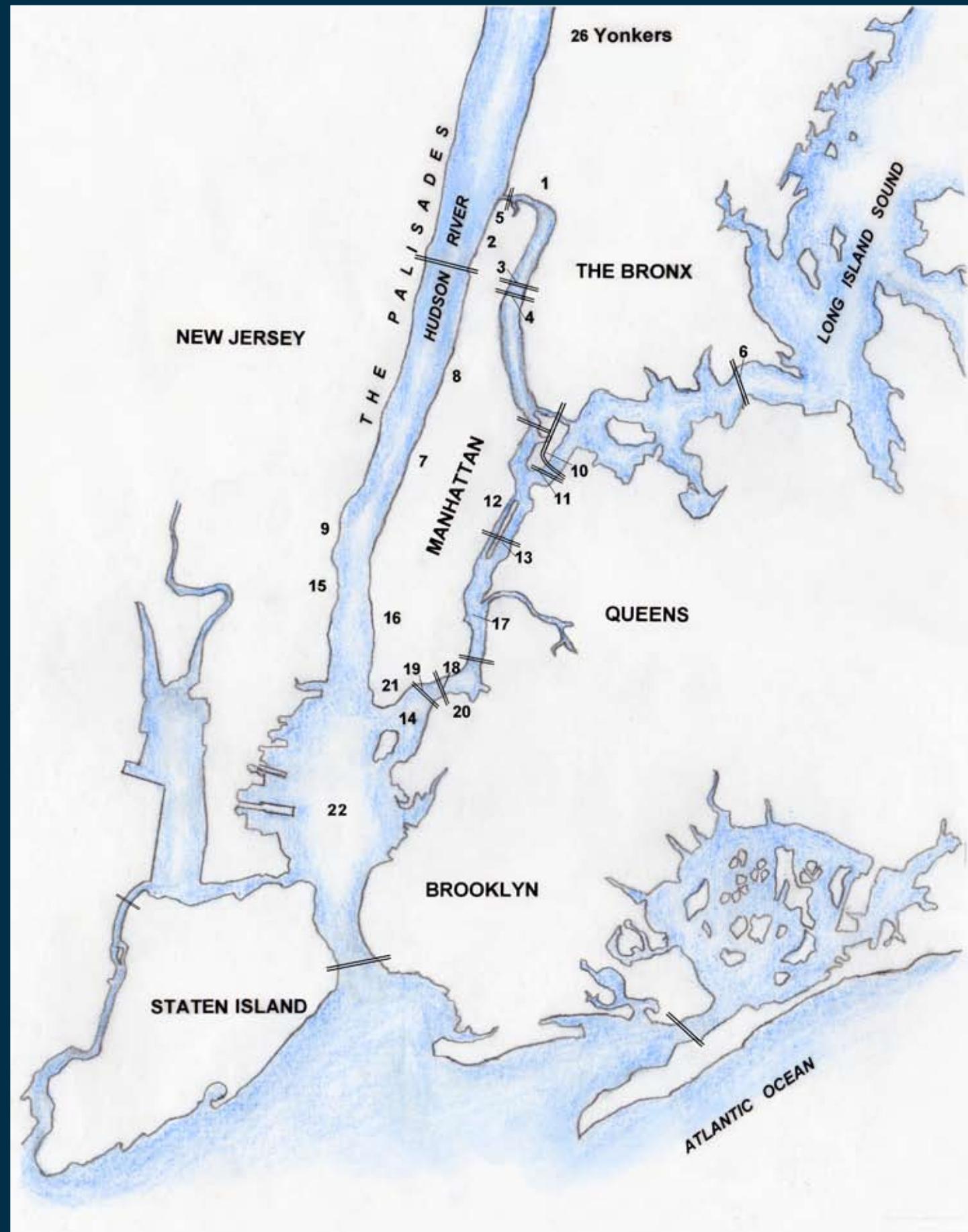
The Civil War tore America apart. Walt Whitman, the country's poet and seer, looked beyond the conflagration and saw a new country birthed and crying out its wants, too great and too many for cottage industry.

*The shapes arise!  
Shapes of factories, arsenals, foundries, markets,  
Shapes of the two-threaded tracks of railroads,  
Shapes of the sleepers of bridges, vast  
frameworks, girders, arches,  
Shapes of the fleets of barges, tows, lake and canal  
craft, river craft,  
Ship-yards and dry-docks....*

# A R T I S T S

Kurt Albrecht	Martin Lewis	Jan and Warren Adelson	Martin J. Maloy
Junius Allen	Richard Hayley Lever	Amistad Research Center	Memorial Art Gallery, University of Rochester
George Ault	Jonas Lie	The Art Institute of Chicago	The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Reynolds Beal	Louis Lozowick	The Baker Museum	Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute
Cecil Crosley Bell	George Luks	Boca Raton Museum of Art	Museum of Art, Ft Lauderdale/ Nova Southeastern University
George Bellows	George Macrum	Gregory and Maureen Church	The National Arts Club
Oscar Bluemner	John Marin	Joanne and Jim Cohen	New Jersey State Museum
Daniel Putnam Brinley	Reginald Marsh	Nina and Stephen Cook	New-York Historical Society
Edward Bruce	Alfred Mira	Erik Davies	Newark Museum
Theodore Earl Butler	John Noble	Kristian Davies	The Noble Maritime Collection
Carlton Theodore Chapman	George Oberteuffer	The Flint Institute of Arts	Norton Museum of Art
Clarence Kerr Chatterton	Georgia O'Keeffe	The Fralin Museum of Art at the University of Virginia	The Old Print Shop, Inc.
James Rene Clarke	Marguerite Ohman	John and Sally Freeman	Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
Glenn Coleman	George Parker	Georgia Museum of Art, University of Georgia	The Phillips Collection
Colin Campbell Cooper	Van Dearing Perrine	Kristine and Marc Granez	Private Collections
Ralston Crawford	Robert K. Ryland	Hampton University Museum	Remak Ramsay
Francis Criss	Charles Rosen	High Museum of Art	Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art, University of Florida
Aaron Douglas	Everett Shinn	Elie and Sarah Hirschfield	Smithsonian American Art Museum
John Folinsbee	John Sloan	Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution	Staten Island Museum
Ina Garsoian	Robert Spencer	Hudson River Museum	Terra Foundation for American Art
William Glackens	Charles Vezin	James A. Michener Art Museum	Wichita Art Museum
Robert Henri	Everett Longley Warner	Susan Perrine King and Shawn King, Van Dearing Perrine Estate	
Arnold Hoffman	Julian Alden Weir	Thelma and Melvin Lenkin	
Max Kuehne	Sidney M. Wiggins		
Leon Kroll			
Ernest Lawson			

# NEW YORK'S WATERWAYS



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1. **Harlem River**  
Oscar Bleumner, *Harlem River*
2. **Washington Heights**  
Ernest Lawson, *Railroad Track*  

3. **Washington Bridge**  
James René Clarke, *Washington Bridge*
4. **High Bridge**  
Richard Hayley Lever, *High Bridge over Harlem River*
5. **Inwood**  
Aaron Douglas, *Power Plant in Harlem*  

6. **Whitestone Bridge**  
Ralston Crawford, *Whitestone Bridge*  

7. **Riverside Park**  
George Bellows, *Winter Afternoon, Riverside Park*  

8. **Riverside Drive**  
Richard Hayley Lever, *Riverside Drive and Seventy Second Street*
9. **Weehawken**  
Leon Kroll, *Terminal Yards*  

10. **Triborough Bridge**  
Aaron Douglas, *Triborough Bridge*
11. **Hells Gate Bridge**  
George Oberteuffer, *View at Hells Gate Bridge*
12. **Eastside Drive**  
Inna Garsoian, *Eastside Drive*  

13. **Queensboro Bridge**  
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Jonas Lie, *Path of Gold*
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Cecil Crosley Bell, *Welcoming the Queen Mary*

Katherine E. Manthorne

## A WOMAN'S PERSPECTIVE ON THE INDUSTRIAL SUBLIME

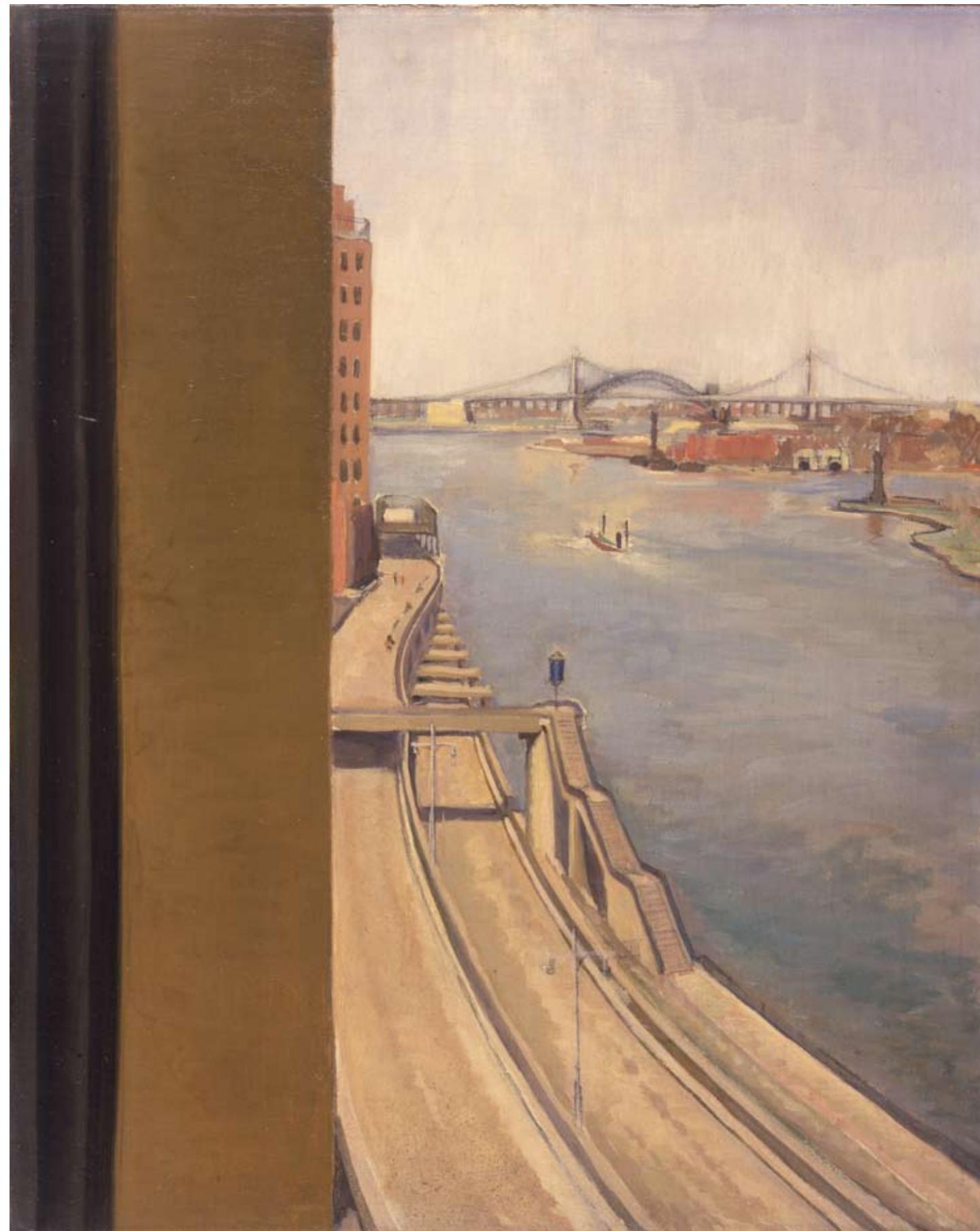
Americans began to embrace the industrial sublime with as much enthusiasm as they had previously nature.

Gifford Beal. *On the Hudson at Newburgh*, 1918



VOLCANIC ERUPTIONS, earthquakes, and thunderstorms have terrified mankind since Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden. Impressed by such displays of power beyond themselves, human beings sought the language to express their emotions. One of the oldest essays on the subject appeared in a Greek manuscript from the 1st century A.D. titled "On the Sublime," traditionally attributed to Longinus (although probably erroneously), which declared that Nature "has implanted in our souls an unconquerable passion for all that is great and for all that more divine than ourselves." For centuries the essay languished until it was printed in 1554 in Basel. By the 17th century — with translations into French and English — the concept of a search for the grand began to take hold. In *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1756), Edmund Burke established the sublime and the beautiful as the central — and mutually exclusive — aesthetic categories intimately associated with nature. Both concepts proved especially useful to gentlemen on the Grand Tour, attempting to describe their experiences. It acquired further meaning in the hands of 19th-century American artists, who took up the subject of the grand and untamable, including Niagara Falls and the Grand Canyon to inspire awe in their viewers. By the early 20th century these feelings were transferred to machines, war, and factories as the "natural sublime" gave way to the "industrial sublime," which was both a representational strategy and a philosophical orientation that accounted for fearsome, uninhabitable regions that simultaneously repulsed and excited the beholder.

# SIGHTING THE RIVER



*Eastside Drive, c.1940*

Inna Garsoian.

Collection of The New-York Historical Society



*East River from the Shelton (East River No. 1), c. 1927-28*  
Georgia O'Keeffe.

Collection of the New Jersey State Museum, Trenton, New Jersey  
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# INDUSTRIAL SUBLIME

## *Modernism and the Transformation of New York's Rivers, 1900-1940*

**B**ILLOWING SMOKE, booming industry, noble bridges, and an epic waterfront are the landscape of New York changing and growing in the first 40 years of the 20th century. *Industrial Sublime: Modernism and the Transformation of New York's Rivers, 1900-1940* shows the convulsive changes in the New York metropolis and its rivers in modern paintings from Robert Henri to Georgia O'Keeffe.

**I**NDUSTRIAL SUBLIME looks at American Modernism, embraced by artists who greeted The Machine Age, the birth of the country's industrial hegemony, with a fresh vocabulary of color, shape, and their visions, some joyful, others reflecting the darker side of a world newly fashioned by man, no longer bowing to the creative forces of nature or an all-knowing deity. Just as the artists show us arching bridges, swinging cranes, and waters churned by boats transporting goods and travelers to ever new ports of call, five essayists tell the story of the brightest and busiest center of industry — New York. American perceptions of beauty and the sublime awe they experienced as their country built glamorous icons of success from skyscrapers to bridges, and how artists interpreted these icons are examined by Wendy Greenhouse, co-author of *Chicago Modern 1893-1945: Pursuit of the New*; Katherine E. Manthorne, Professor of Modern Art of the Americas, Graduate Center, City University of New York; Ellen E. Roberts, Harold and Anne Berkley Smith Curator of American Art, Norton Museum of Art; and, Hudson River Museum Curator Kirsten M. Jensen and Director of Curatorial Affairs, Bartholomew F. Bland, editors of *Industrial Sublime* and co-curators of the exhibition of the same name.

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Leon Kroll. *Queensborough Bridge, 1912*.

Courtesy of the Fralin Museum of Art at the University of Virginia

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