



WHITNEY
KIDS

**DAVID
HAMMONS
DAY'S END
ACTIVITY
GUIDE**

WELCOME!

Day's End is a permanent public art project by David Hammons (b. 1943), located in Hudson River Park along the southern edge of Gansevoort Peninsula, directly across from the Whitney Museum. It was fabricated out of stainless steel and installed in 2021.

This Whitney Kids activity guide is designed to introduce you to David Hammons, his artwork *Day's End*, the ecology of the Hudson River, the history of the waterfront, and the Meatpacking District. We hope it will inspire the artist in you, too!

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Image credits

Dawoud Bey (b. 1953), *David Hammons, Bliz-aard Ball Sale I*, 1983, printed 2019. Inkjet print, 33 x 44 in. (83.8 x 111.8 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Jack E. Chachkes Endowed Purchase Fund 2020.31. © Dawoud Bey

courtesy Rena Bransten Gallery, San Francisco, and Stephen Daiter Gallery, Chicago

Gordon Matta-Clark (1943–1978), *Day's End (Pier 52) (Exterior with Ice)*, 1975. © 2021 The Estate of Gordon Matta-Clark / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Courtesy The Estate of Gordon Matta-Clark and David Zwirner

Gordon Matta-Clark (1943–1978), *Days End Pier 52.3 (Documentation of the action "Day's End" made in 1975 in New York, United States)*, 1975, printed 1977. Gelatin silver print: sheet, 8 x 10 in. (20.3 x 25.4 cm); image, 7 x 9 3/4 in. (17.8 x 24.8 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of Harold Berg 2017.134. © 2021 Estate of Gordon Matta-Clark / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Schematic for *Day's End, Pier 52*, by Gordon Matta-Clark, 1975. Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal / Gift of Estate of Gordon Matta-Clark © The Estate of Gordon Matta-Clark; CourCanadian Centre for Architecture, Montréal

David Hammons (b. 1943), sketch for *Day's End*, 2014. Graphite on paper, 8 1/2 x 11 in. (21.6 x 27.9 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; gift of the artist. 2021.11. © David Hammons

Renderings of the proposed project *Day's End* by David Hammons. Courtesy Guy Nordenson and Associates

Gansevoort Street looking east, 2020. Photograph by Filip Wolak

SS *Kronprinz Wilhelm* at Pier 52 (detail), c. 1901. Museum of the City of New York, 93.1.1.13637

Ruth Orkin (1921–1985), *Boy Diving into Hudson River, Gansevoort Pier, New York City*, 1947. Gelatin silver print, 9 1/2 x 6 13/16 in. (24.1 x 17.3 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase with funds from the Photography Committee 2019.21. © Ruth Orkin

Marine Company One on Pier 53, 2020. Photograph by Laura Protzel

A boat on the Hudson River, 2015. Photograph © MyMicrostock/Stocksy / Adobe Stock

Belgian granite blocks in the Meatpacking District, 2021. Photograph by Jonathan Gorman

Check out whitney.org/Families for a full list of our Family Programs.

DAVID HAMMONS

Hammons helps us question what art can be. Choose an ordinary object and transform it into a work of art. What choices are you making? Draw it here.

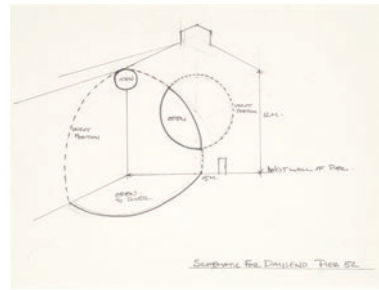


Dawoud Bey, David Hammons, Bliz-aard Ball Sale I, 1983

David Hammons's art includes prints, installations, paintings, and performance. As one of the most influential artists working today, Hammons has reimagined what art can be. He often transforms discarded objects such as bottle caps, paper bags, and hair collected from the floors of Black barbershops so as to address issues of race and class. He's made impossibly high basketball hoops from telephone poles covered in a mosaic of bottle caps, and even sold snowballs on a Manhattan sidewalk as works of art!

DAY'S END

Fun Facts



(left) Gordon Matta-Clark, *Day's End (Pier 52) (Exterior with Ice)*, 1975. (top right) Gordon Matta-Clark, *Days End Pier 52.3 (Documentation of the action "Day's End" made in 1975 in New York, United States)*, 1975. (bottom right) Schematic for *Day's End, Pier 52*, by Gordon Matta-Clark, 1975

David Hammons's *Day's End* was inspired by Gordon Matta-Clark's 1975 work of the same name. Both artists began their artworks with a sketch. Matta-Clark and his assistants cut five openings into the floor and walls of the empty, run-down Pier 52 shed that occupied the site in the 1970s. One observer even called it a "sun and water temple" because of the ever-changing play of sunlight and water in the space. Hammons imagined an open structure that follows the exact outlines, shape, scale, and location of the Pier 52 shed that Matta-Clark used to make his *Day's End*.

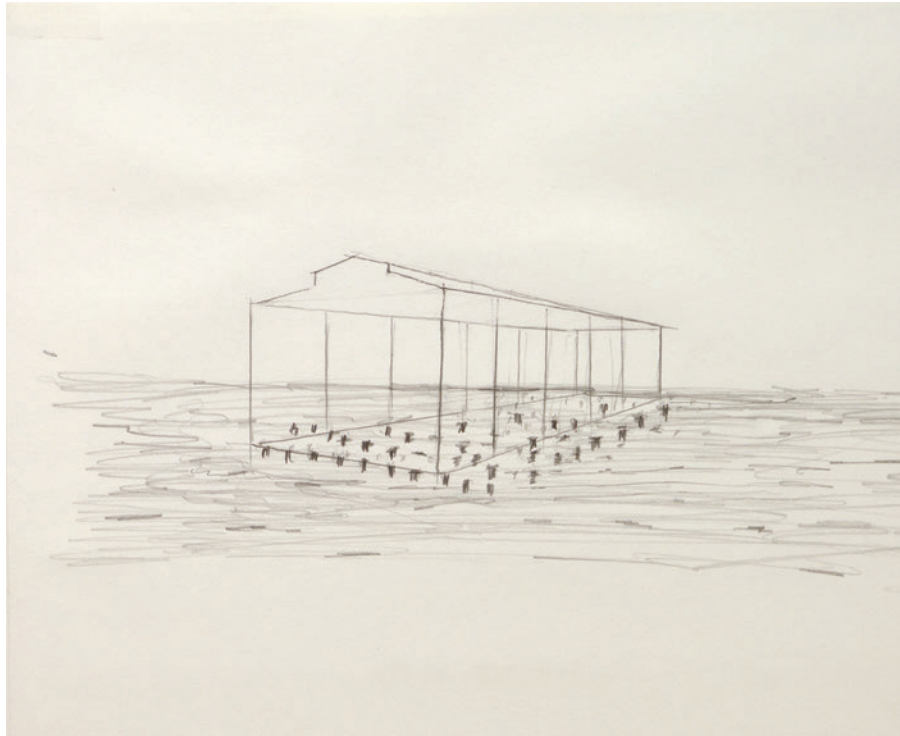
Hammons's *Day's End* is made from an extra-strong kind of steel called Super-Duplex. It won't rust or corrode even while standing in the water.

The sculpture is 52 feet tall and 325 feet long—longer than a football field, or the Whitney Museum!

The artist wanted the steel pieces to be as thin as possible, so the sculpture would seem to disappear when the light was right. It's not lit at night, either.

SKETCH

Find a place to sit and gaze at Hammons's *Day's End*. Look upward to the sky or across the river. Can you see a boat, a building, a bird, a cloud? Something else? Sketch what you see.



(top) David Hammons, sketch for *Day's End*, 2014. (bottom) Renderings of the proposed project *Day's End* by David Hammons

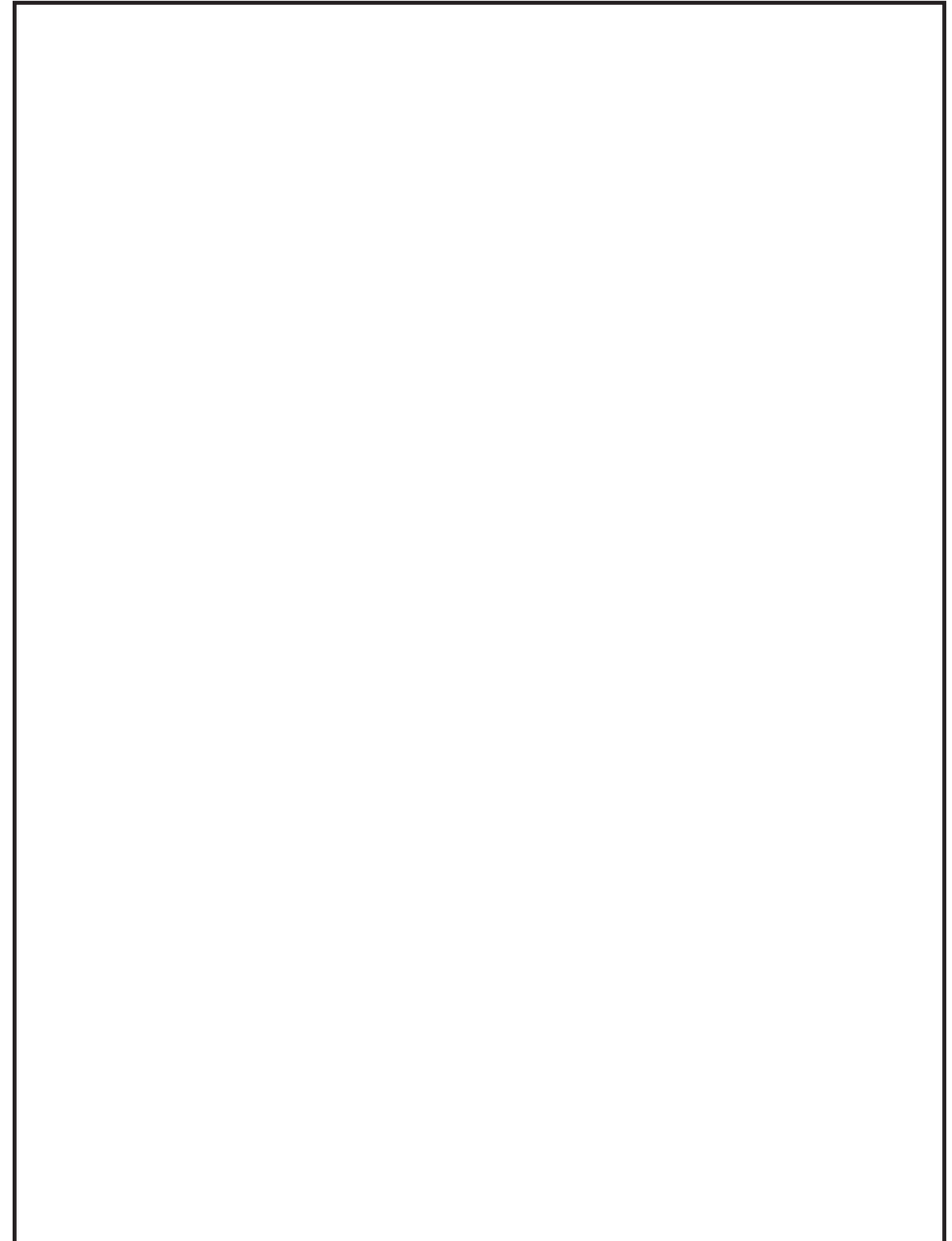
GHOST MONUMENT

If you designed a monument to honor the memory of someone or something, what would it look like?
Draw it here.



Rendering of the proposed project *Day's End* by David Hammons

Hammons's *Day's End* is like a big line drawing in space. It shimmers and changes with the light and the weather. The artwork is not illuminated at night, so it disappears into the darkness at the end of the day. Its ghostly shape suggests a monument, too. A monument is a structure or a sculpture that honors the memory of a person or an event. This monument hints at the history of Pier 52, from its beginnings to today.



LENAPE LAND



Gansevoort Street looking east, 2020

The Lenape are the original inhabitants of the area now known as the Meatpacking District. The name Manhattan comes from the Lenape word Manahatta, which means “the land of many hills.” The Whitney Museum is located near the Lenape fishing and planting site called Sapponckanikan, which translates as “the land of tobacco growth.” The Dutch sailed into Manahatta in 1609 and established a settlement on the island. The Lenape soon faced violence and disease brought by the Europeans. Today, Lenape communities continue their cultural and language practices across North America.

Take some time to look at the land around you. What do you notice? Look toward the river. Write a list of descriptive words. Next, create a concrete poem by arranging the words in a specific shape or pattern.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

PIER 52 HISTORY

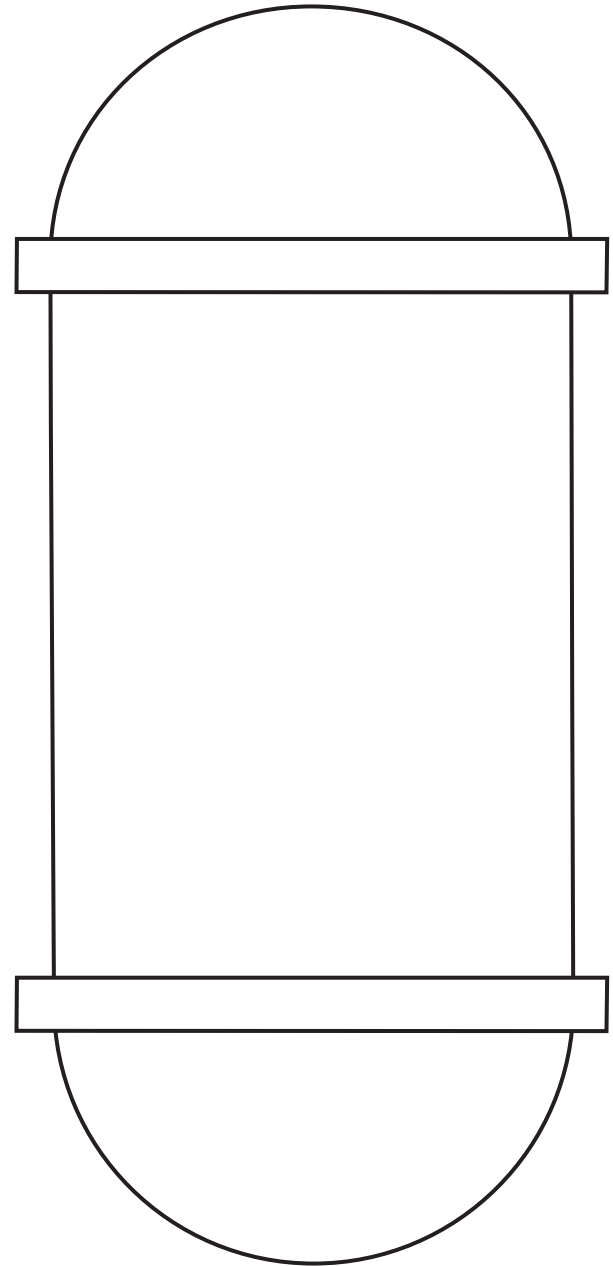


(left) SS Kronprinz Wilhelm at Pier 52 (detail), c. 1901. (right) Ruth Orkin, *Boy Diving into Hudson River, Gansevoort Pier*, New York City, 1947



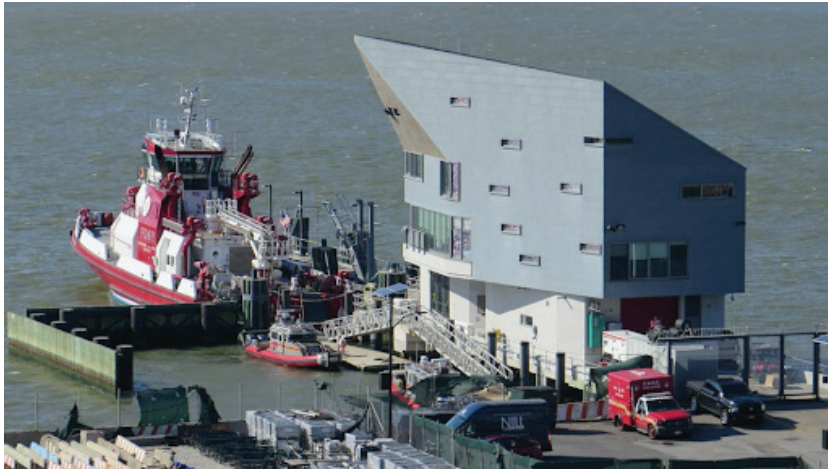
Pier 52 was created in the 1840s as a place to dump trash. At the end of Gansevoort Street, garbage was put into boats docked at the pier, or thrown directly into the Hudson River. Gansevoort Peninsula—the outcropping of land adjacent to the pier—was built a few years later. The sites were used in a lot of different ways over the years. The peninsula once housed a market for meat and dairy products, and later an incinerator known as the “Gansevoort Destructor” burned trash there. At times, Pier 52 was also a recreation and swimming spot.

If you discovered a time capsule of the Gansevoort Peninsula buried one hundred years ago, what might it contain? Food? Trash? Toys? Swimming gear? Draw what you might find inside the capsule.



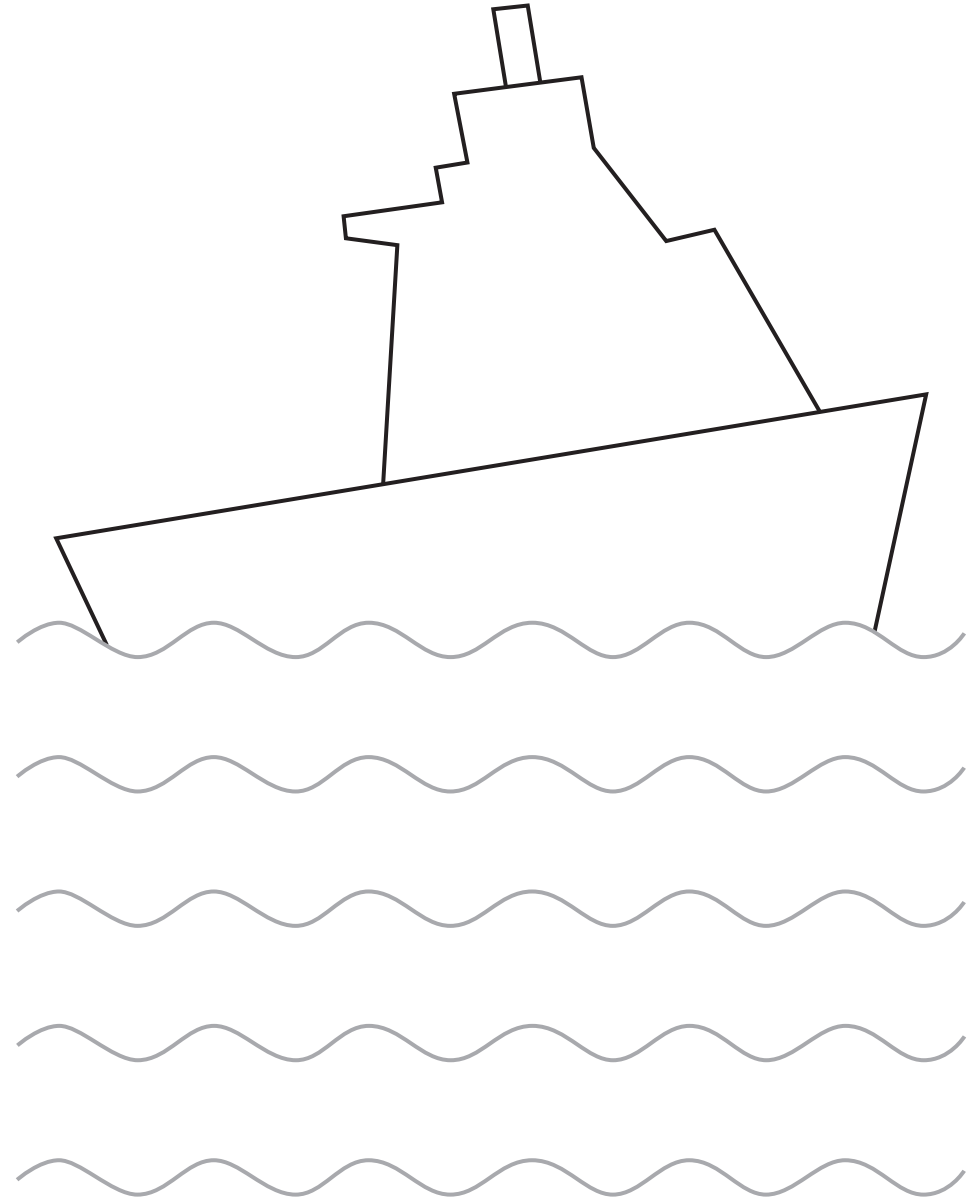
MARINE COMPANY ONE

Sketch something you might see on the fireboat.

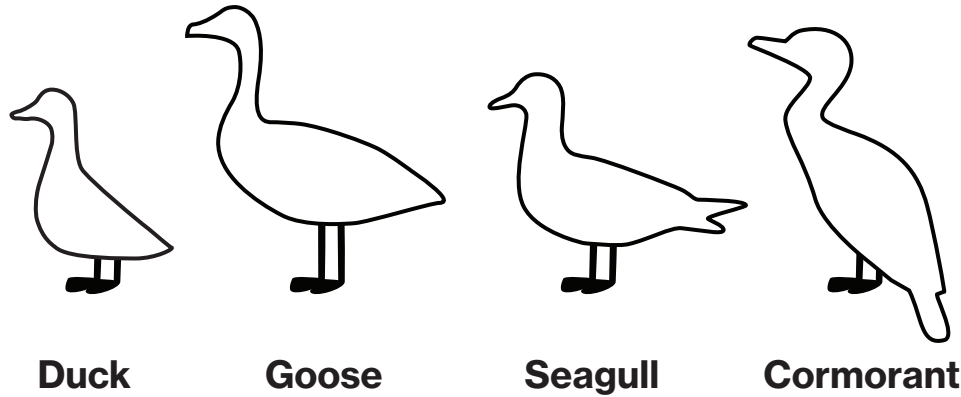


Marine Company One on Pier 53, 2020

Today, *Day's End* shares the Gansevoort Peninsula with the New York City Fire Department's Marine Company One, a fire station and dock on Pier 53. It is one of only three New York City fire stations on the water. The building opened in 2011. It has sleeping quarters, a kitchen, a workout room, storage space, and anchorage for several fireboats. The 343 is Marine One's 140-foot fireboat. To put out fires, it sprays gallons of river water through its water-firing nozzles. Can you spot the fireboat at the dock today?

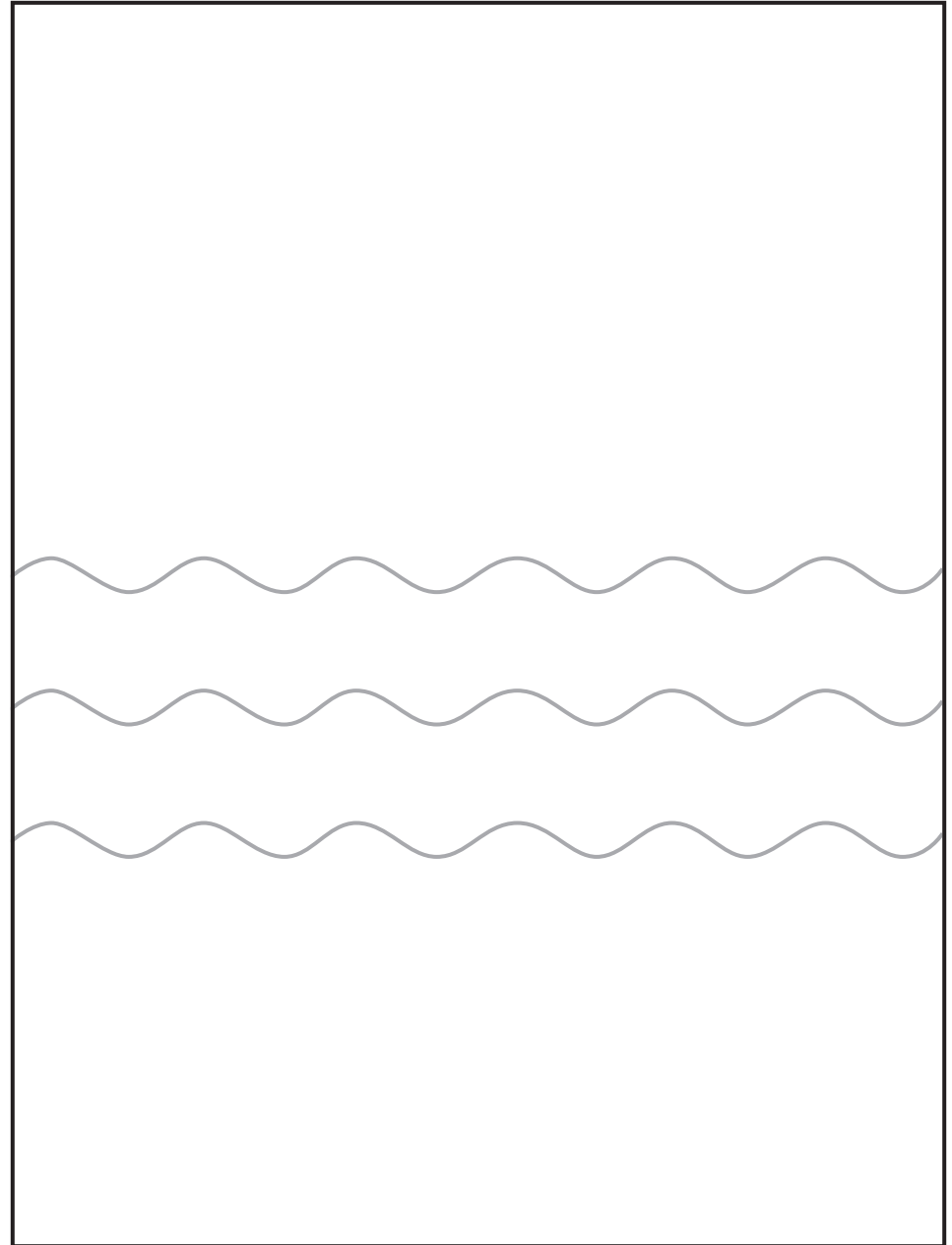


RIVER WILDLIFE



The Lenape, the original inhabitants of Manhattan and the surrounding lands, called the Hudson Shattemuc—the river that flows two ways. The current runs south from an Adirondack mountain lake in upstate New York called Tear of Clouds, 315 miles away. At the same time, the tide often pulls the water north. The section of the Hudson nearest New York Harbor is called an estuary because it is a mixture of saltwater and freshwater—where the river meets the sea. Wildlife teems below the river’s surface, including fish, eels, mollusks, shrimp, crabs, worms, oysters, and plants. Over seventy types of fish live in this part of the river—even seahorses! More than a hundred bird species live close by. Look out for ducks, geese, seagulls, and cormorants.

Use your observation skills and your imagination to draw a few animals and plants that live underwater and aboveground nearby.



RIVER TRAFFIC

Look for boats on the river. Can you see a:

☐

Barge

☐

Cargo ship

☐

Cruise ship

☐

Ferry

☐

Kayak

☐

Tanker

☐

Tugboat

☐

Yacht



A boat on the Hudson River, 2015

The Hudson River is an important transportation route, also known as US Marine (or Blue) Highway M-87. It is traveled by barges, tugs, and the occasional tanker or cargo ship going back and forth to the Port of Albany, 150 miles upriver from the Whitney. The barges and tankers carry products such as oil, gasoline, machinery, and sewage sludge!

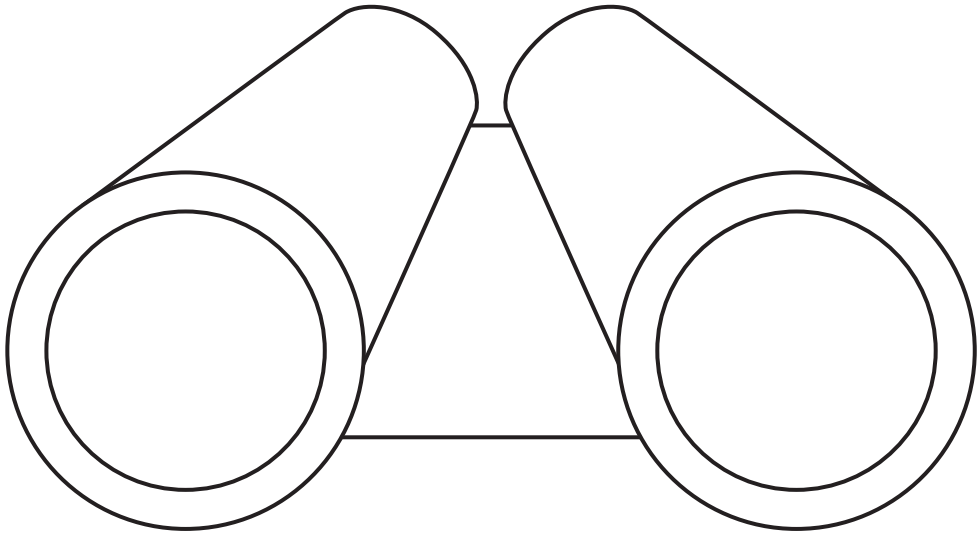
OLD AND NEW



Belgian granite blocks in the Meatpacking District, 2021

The Meatpacking District gets its name from the meatpackers who used to occupy the neighborhood. There are only a few meatpacking companies left here today. The corrugated iron awnings on the brick buildings shaded the meat from the sun. The Belgian granite blocks paving the streets had been used as ballast—heavy material placed in ships to stabilize them as they traveled across the Atlantic Ocean to New York City. The blocks were unloaded and tossed ashore before the return journey because the ships were now filled with cargo. Today, the Belgian granite has been replaced with newer granite stones.

As you walk through the neighborhood, notice what seems new and what seems old. Buildings? Shops? Restaurants? Write down what you see.

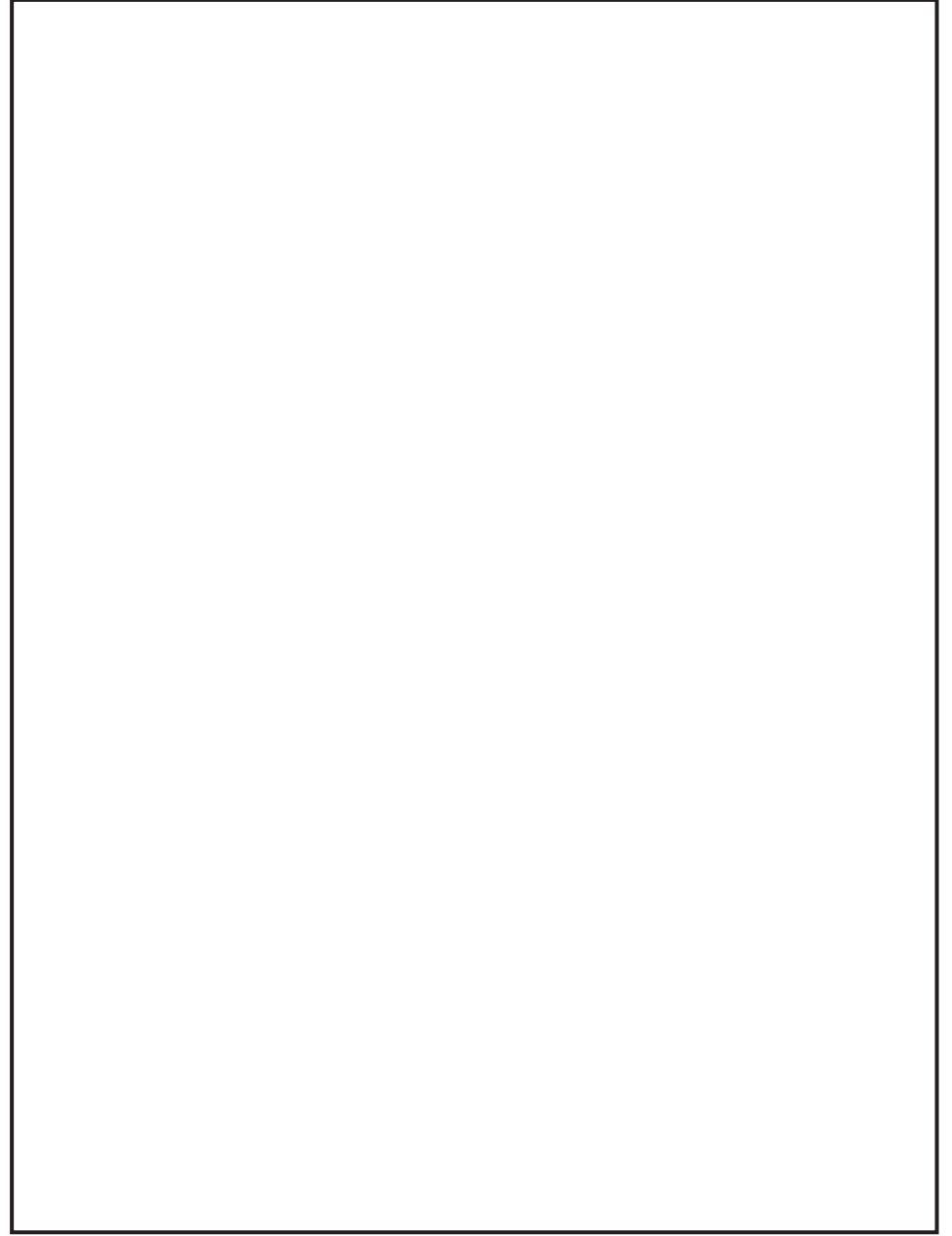
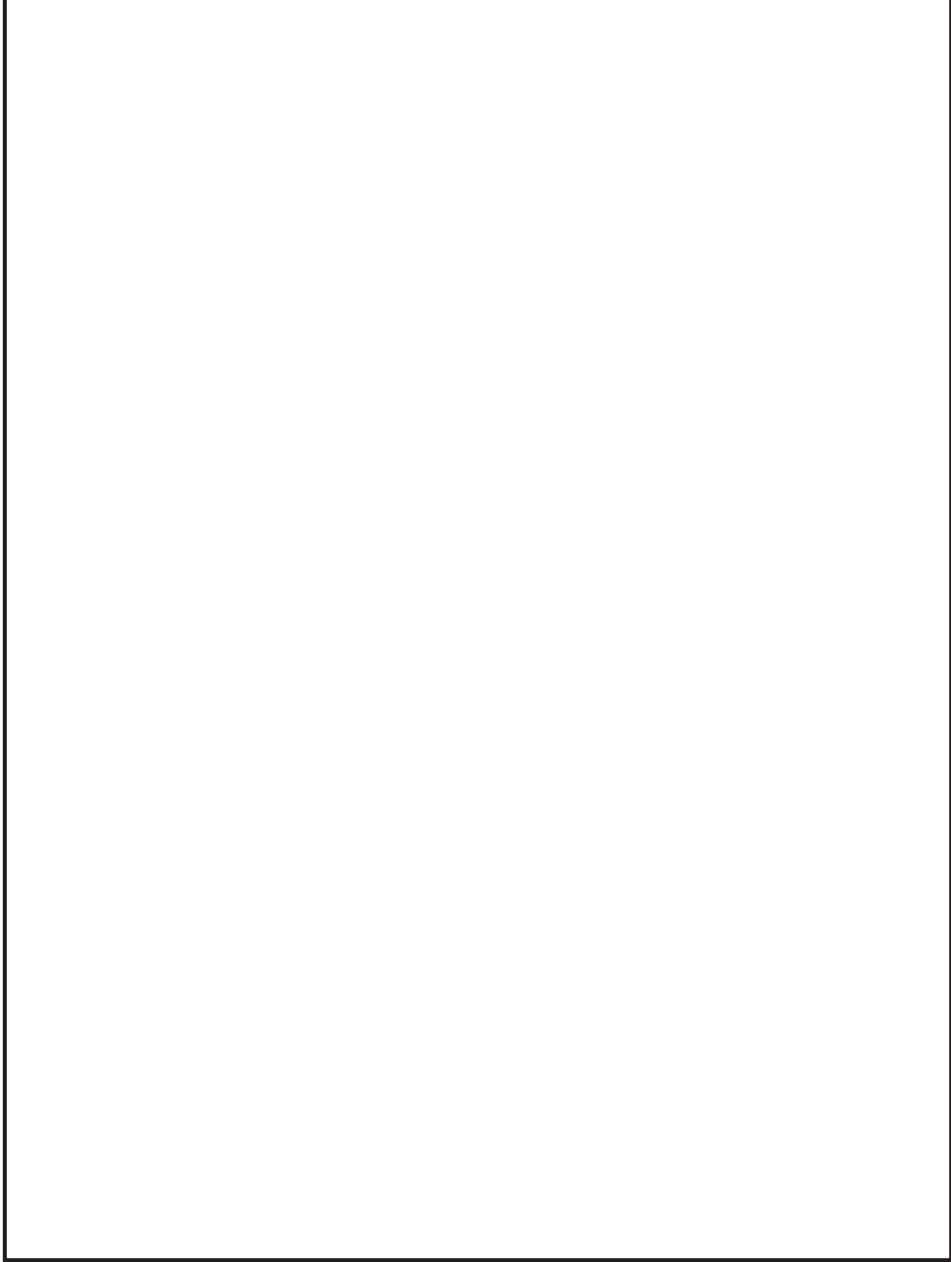


Old

New

KEEP DRAWING

Continue to explore the neighborhood and Museum.
Draw what you see!



SIGUE DIBUJANDO

Continúe explorando el barrio y el Museo.
¡Dibuja lo que ves!