

PRESS RELEASE

THEN AND NOW: THE WHITNEY MUSEUM COMPARES NYC ARTWORKS FROM ITS FIRST BIENNIAL TO TODAY

“Putting Artists On The Map” is a project that captures how NYC has changed between the Museum’s inaugural 1932 edition of its landmark exhibition and the current edition, *Whitney Biennial 2024: Even Better Than the Real Thing*, on view until August 11



New York, NY, May 22, 2024 —Much has changed in New York City in the nearly 100 years since the Whitney Museum of American Art launched its landmark exhibition, while some things have remained the same.

The inaugural Whitney Biennial—a survey of contemporary American art—opened on November 22, 1932, and featured several works that highlighted life in New York City, including Edward Hopper’s now iconic painting *Room In New York* and works by artists Joseph Stella, Florine Stettheimer, and George C. Ault, among others.

To mark the latest edition of the Biennial—*Whitney Biennial 2024: Even Better Than The Real Thing*, on view at the Museum (99 Gansevoort Street in Manhattan) until August 11—the Whitney partnered with NYC architectural photography Max Touhey to determine the exact locations of many New York City scenes depicted in 1932 Biennial artworks and recreate them. The results show a changing NYC and showcase the longevity of the Biennial, the longest-running survey of American art that, since its beginning, has spotlighted many of the most relevant ideas and artists of the time.

Each location will be included in a digital map launching today at whitney.org/map and next week via Whitney’s guide on the Bloomberg Connects app. The project—called “Putting Artists On The Map”—showcases the long history of the Whitney Biennial in New York City and invites viewers to discover the locations of NYC spots depicted by Biennial artists, public art by Biennial artists, NY subway stations that include artworks by Biennial artists, as part of the MTA’s Art and Design program, and much more. The map will be updated through the summer.

“The Biennial has been part of the Whitney – and New York City – for nearly a century, and every iteration offers the opportunity to bring new voices to the fore.” said the Museum’s Nancy and Steve Crown Family Chief Curator Kim Conaty. “Just as the 1932 edition gave us contemporary reflections by the likes of Hopper and Stettheimer, today’s Biennial artists are helping to shape the landscape of tomorrow.”

Side-by-side comparisons of NYC locations that the Museum was able to recreate from artworks in the 1932 Biennial include:

- [George C. Ault, “Hudson Street”](#) (northwest view of Hudson and Gansevoort Streets). This work is in the [Whitney’s collection](#) and is currently on view on the seventh floor.
- [Francis Criss, “Astor Place”](#) (south-facing view of E 9th St and Lafayette Street). This work is in the Whitney’s collection.
- [David Morrison, “Union Square”](#) (northeast view of 14th St and Broadway).
- [John Cunning, “Sunset, New York Bay”](#) (southwest view from 110 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn)
- [Kenneth Frazier, “The Leviathan Goes to Sea”](#) (southwest view from Broadway and Exchange Place)
- [Edward Laning, “Fourteenth Street”](#) (east-facing view of 14th St at Sixth Avenue). This work is in the Whitney’s collection.

The Museum also [recreated the view of the original Whitney Museum at 10 West 8th Street](#), which graced the cover of the [1932 Biennial catalog](#).

PRESS CONTACT

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ABOUT THE WHITNEY

The Whitney Museum of American Art, founded in 1930 by the artist and philanthropist Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney (1875–1942), houses the foremost collection of American art from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Mrs. Whitney, an early and ardent supporter of modern American art, nurtured groundbreaking artists when audiences were still largely preoccupied with the Old Masters. From her vision arose the Whitney Museum of American Art, which has been championing the most innovative art of the United States for ninety years. The core of the Whitney’s mission is to collect, preserve, interpret, and exhibit American art of our time and serve a wide variety of audiences in celebration of the complexity and diversity of art and culture in the United States. Through this mission and a steadfast commitment to artists, the Whitney has long been a powerful force in support of modern and contemporary art and continues to help define what is innovative and influential in American art today.

Whitney Museum Land Acknowledgment

The Whitney is located in Lenapehoking, the ancestral homeland of the Lenape. The name Manhattan comes from their word Mannahatta, meaning “island of many hills.” The Museum’s current site is close to land that was a Lenape fishing and planting site called Sapponckanikan (“tobacco field”). The Whitney acknowledges the displacement of this region’s original inhabitants and the Lenape diaspora that exists today.

As a museum of American art in a city with vital and diverse communities of Indigenous people, the Whitney recognizes the historical exclusion of Indigenous artists from its collection and program. The Museum is committed to addressing these erasures and honoring the perspectives of Indigenous artists and communities as we work for a more equitable future. To read more about the Museum’s Land Acknowledgment, [visit the Museum’s website](#).

VISITOR INFORMATION

The Whitney Museum of American Art is located at 99 Gansevoort Street between Washington and West Streets, New York City. Public hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, 10:30 am–6 pm; Friday, 10:30 am–10 pm; and Saturday and Sunday, 10:30 am–6 pm. Closed Tuesday. Visitors eighteen years and under and Whitney members: FREE. The Museum offers FREE admission and special programming for visitors of all ages every Friday evening from 5–10 pm and on the second Sunday of every month.

Image credit:

Left: George C. Ault, *Hudson Street*, 1932. Oil on linen, 24 3/16 × 20in. (61.4 × 50.8 cm). Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase 33.40. © Estate of George C. Ault.

Right: Photo by Max Touhey Photography

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