



DESIGNING · TOMORROW

AMERICA'S WORLD'S FAIRS OF THE 1930s

EDUCATOR RESOURCE GUIDE

INTRODUCTION: DESIGNING TOMORROW

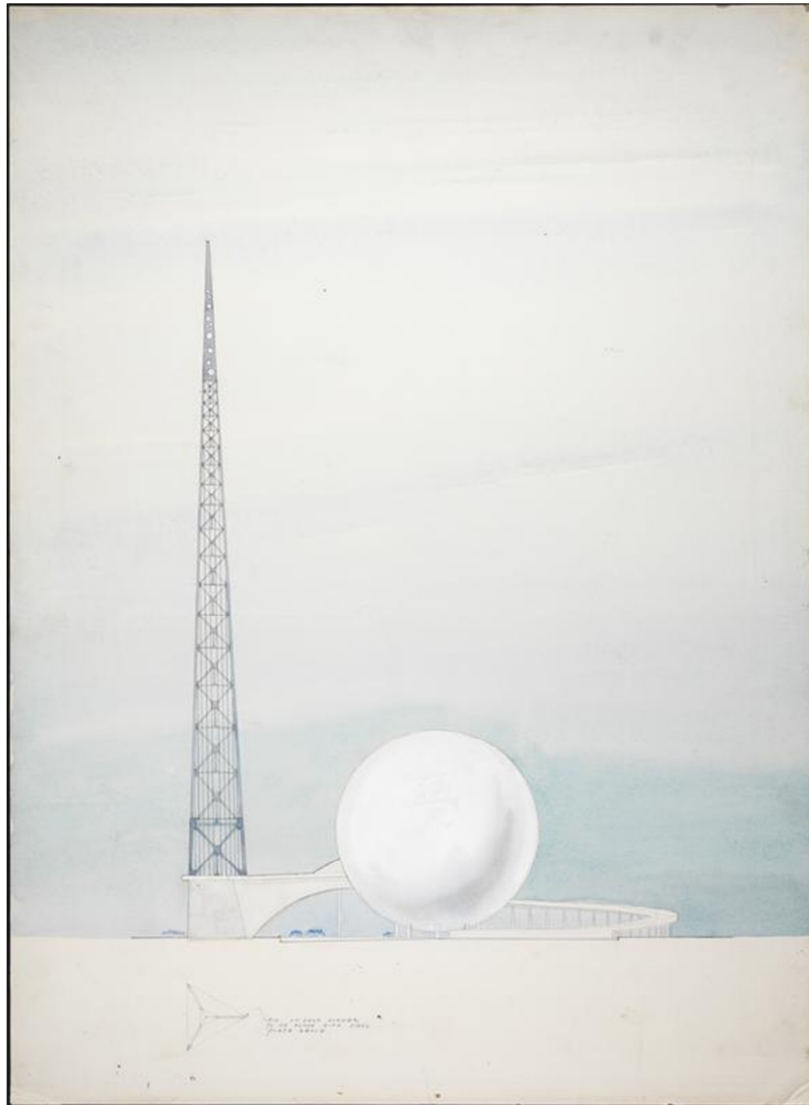
New York's celebrated World's Fair of 1939-40, held in the newly built Flushing Meadows Park in Queens, drew millions of visitors with its promise to reveal "The World of Tomorrow." As one of the last – and the largest – of six world's fairs that were held in the United States in the 1930s, the New York fair was the culmination of years of planning that looked to design, science, and technology to alleviate the bleak conditions of the Depression and create a brighter future. While earlier world's fairs had also showcased industrial growth and technological innovations, the modern world displayed in Chicago (1933-34), San Diego (1935-36), Dallas (1936), Cleveland (1936-37), San Francisco (1939-40), and New York was one where industry merged with artistry to envision post-Depression life.

Though local politicians and national corporations had major stakes in the fairs—hoping to boost tourism, consumerism, and civic morale—it was the architects, engineers, and designers who enabled fairgoers to imagine what a brighter future would look like and how it would operate. These "poets of the twentieth century"—as one fair guidebook called them—used scientific and technological advances to design buildings, modes of transportation, furniture and appliances that not only functioned more effectively, but also had a new modern aesthetic: houses made of glass, streamlined trains and toasters, and modular plastic furniture. More broadly, these innovators anticipated a nation of suburbs linked by superhighways. In their hands, the world's fairs of the 1930s predicted tomorrows that look remarkably like contemporary America.

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THEME CENTER, 1937-1939

COLORED ARCHITECTURAL ELEVATION DRAWING OF THEME CENTER, INCLUDING SKELETAL TRYLON BEFORE SHEATHING WITH GYPSUM, PERISPHERE, AND HELICLINE. 2011.15.64

The New York World's Fair Theme Center, a complex of two buildings named the Tylon and the Perisphere, encapsulated the essence of a modern world's fair. The globe-like Perisphere and the Tylon (an invented name for a triangular pylon) were studies in pure form—steel-framed structures clad with gypsum board and painted white. Elevated on mirrored, steel pillars, the Perisphere appeared to hover above a reflecting pool below.

To enter the Perisphere, visitors rode the world's largest escalator partway up the Tylon and then walked along a ramp. Once inside, they found Henry Dreyfuss' Democracity, a mammoth diorama of a futuristic city that separated business, government, shopping, and housing into separate districts linked by highways. Complete with projections, and a musical score, the exhibit dramatically predicted the shape of the future American metropolis.

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**I HAVE SEEN THE FUTURE PIN, 1939, IN THE 1939-1940 NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR COLLECTION.
MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.**

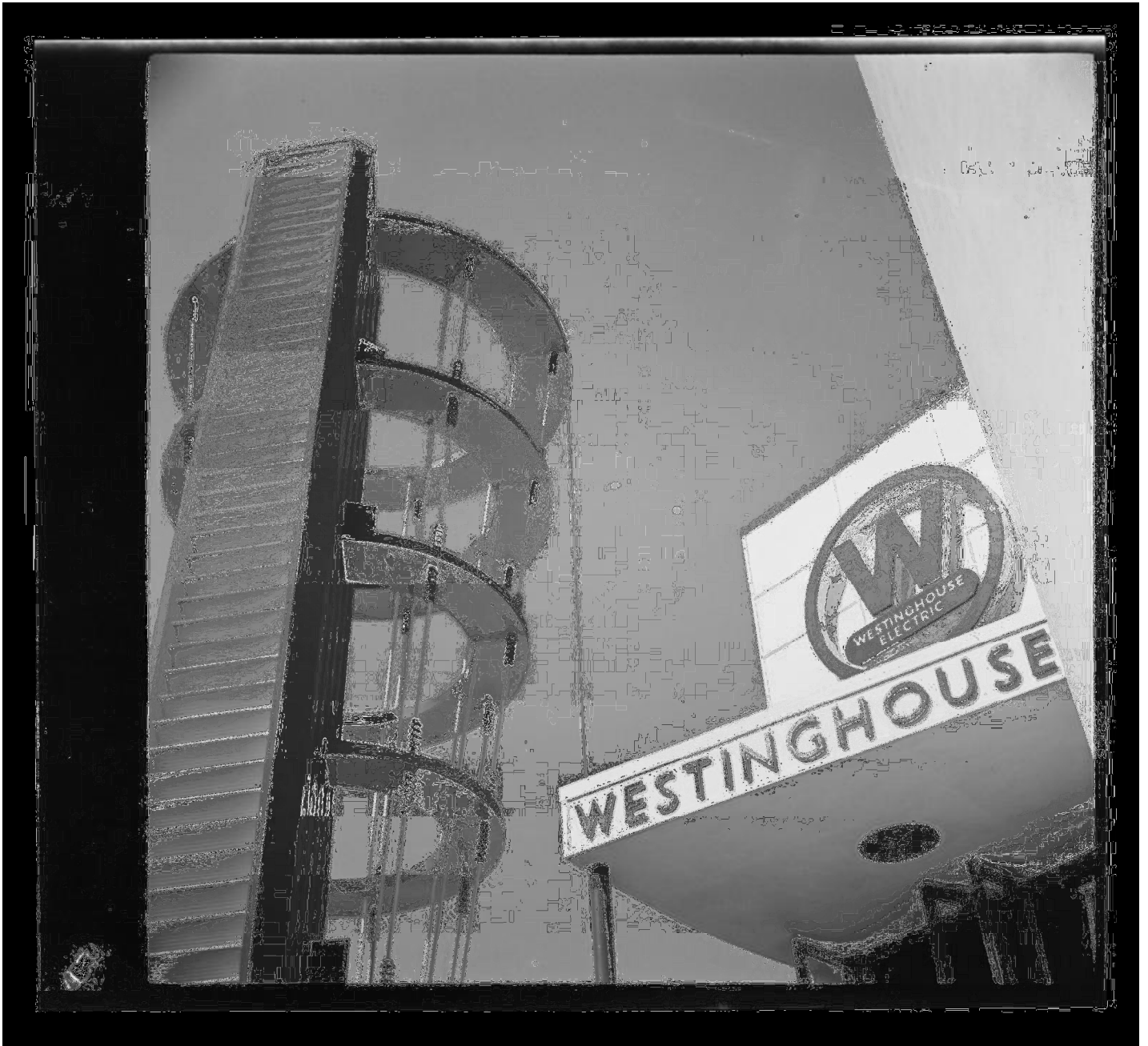
Though most visitors could not buy the products on display at the fairs' pavilions until after World War II, there were ample opportunities to own a piece of the "world of tomorrow" by purchasing innumerable souvenirs. Long after the fairs of the 1930s closed their gates, visitors held fast to mementos—brochures, home movies, and decorative objects—that brought modern design and materials back home to cities and towns across the United States.

By 1938, there were 400 manufacturers who had been given permission to use the New York fair's designs, hoping to draw people to the city as well as give them something to take away. Though the *New York World's Fair Bulletin* avowed that "purchasers of Fair-inspired products will be getting the very best and latest in modern design," these souvenirs were often inexpensive products advertising the host city or region as the embodiment of the modern world. In 1939, and for years afterwards, New York World's Fair visitors of all ages could use and wear souvenirs sporting the Tylon and Perisphere—presented as the ultimate symbols of the future.

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WURTS BROS. (NEW YORK, N.Y.)
NEW YORK WORLDS FAIR, WESTINGHOUSE BUILDING, NEW VIEW FINISHED.
4/25/1939
X2010.7.1.7620

At Westinghouse's Hall of Electrical Power in New York, a diorama of power lines and factories helped make the connection between electric appliances in the home, the mainstay of Westinghouse's business, and the concept of electricity symbolized by the spinning molecules at the top of the company's new "electric stairway."

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WURTS BROS. (NEW YORK, N.Y.) NEW YORK WORLDS FAIR, RAILROAD EXHIBIT, NO. 6100, WORLDS LARGEST STEAM LOCOMOTIVE. 5/18/1939 X2010.7.1.7661

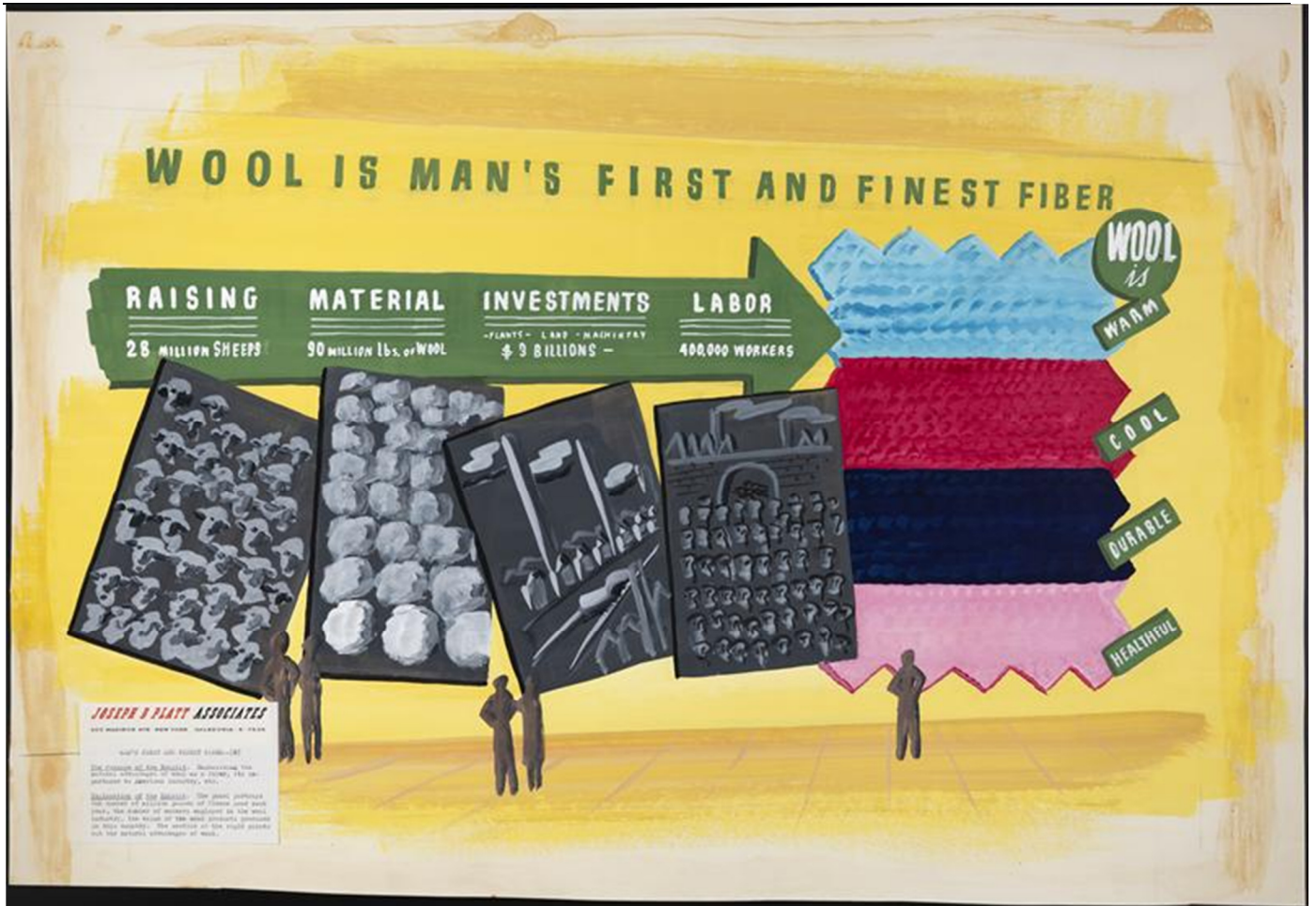


**SAMUEL H. (SAMUEL HERMAN) GOTTSCHO (1875- 1971)
RAILROADS ON PARADE AT THE 1939 NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR, 1939
VIEW SHOWING A GROUP OF ACTORS IN VARIOUS COSTUMES POSED ON THE FRONT OF A STEAM ENGINE. 50.137.38**

In the 1930s railroads needed to attract customers. Business had been lost to automobiles and bus lines, and income from transporting freight had decreased due to the Great Depression. Industrial designers envisioned a solution: futuristic vehicles that would excite customers with their sleek appearance and promise of speed. Their designs included tapered cars and smooth exteriors with flush windows. Diesel-powered engines, more efficient than steam, pulled cars made of new, lighter materials. These streamlined trains were some of the fairs' most popular attractions. Fairgoers were awed by the chance to see impressive locomotives close up and to tour sleekly designed interiors. Symbols of speed and a future fueled by technological innovation, the streamliners were often the final act in elaborate pageants dramatizing the evolution of American transportation.

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WOOL EXHIBIT CA. 1938

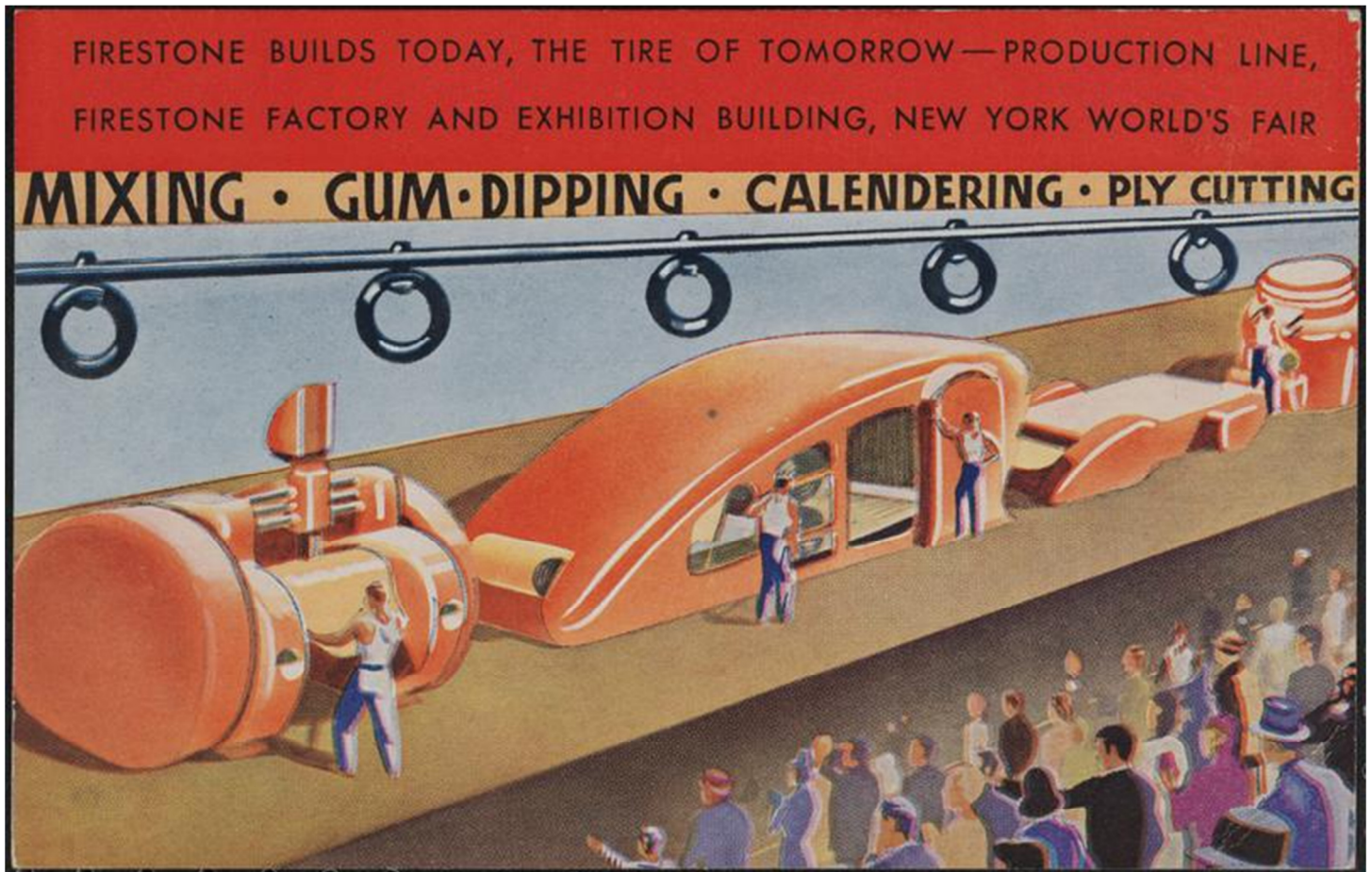
COLORED DRAWING OF WOOL EXHIBIT, "WOOL IS MAN'S FIRST AND FINEST FIBER" SHOWING VISITORS LOOKING AT EXHIBIT PANELS ON WALL. 41.44.190

Wool, cotton, linen, metal, stone, clay, and wood: these materials had been available to engineers and designers for centuries. At the 1930s world's fairs, visitors learned of an unprecedented revolution in materials science, one that they may have only been starting to see in the world around them but that would burst out of laboratories and into department stores and ordinary households in the years to come.

Consumer products such as furniture, cars, and coffee pots looked different, felt different, and worked differently when new materials became available after the 1930s. Chemists worked particularly on plastics, creating in the laboratory superpolymer fibers that could stand up to stretching and bouncing, and that could be manufactured cheaply in large quantities. What they come up with was nothing short of a complete transformation in the design and accessibility of consumer goods.

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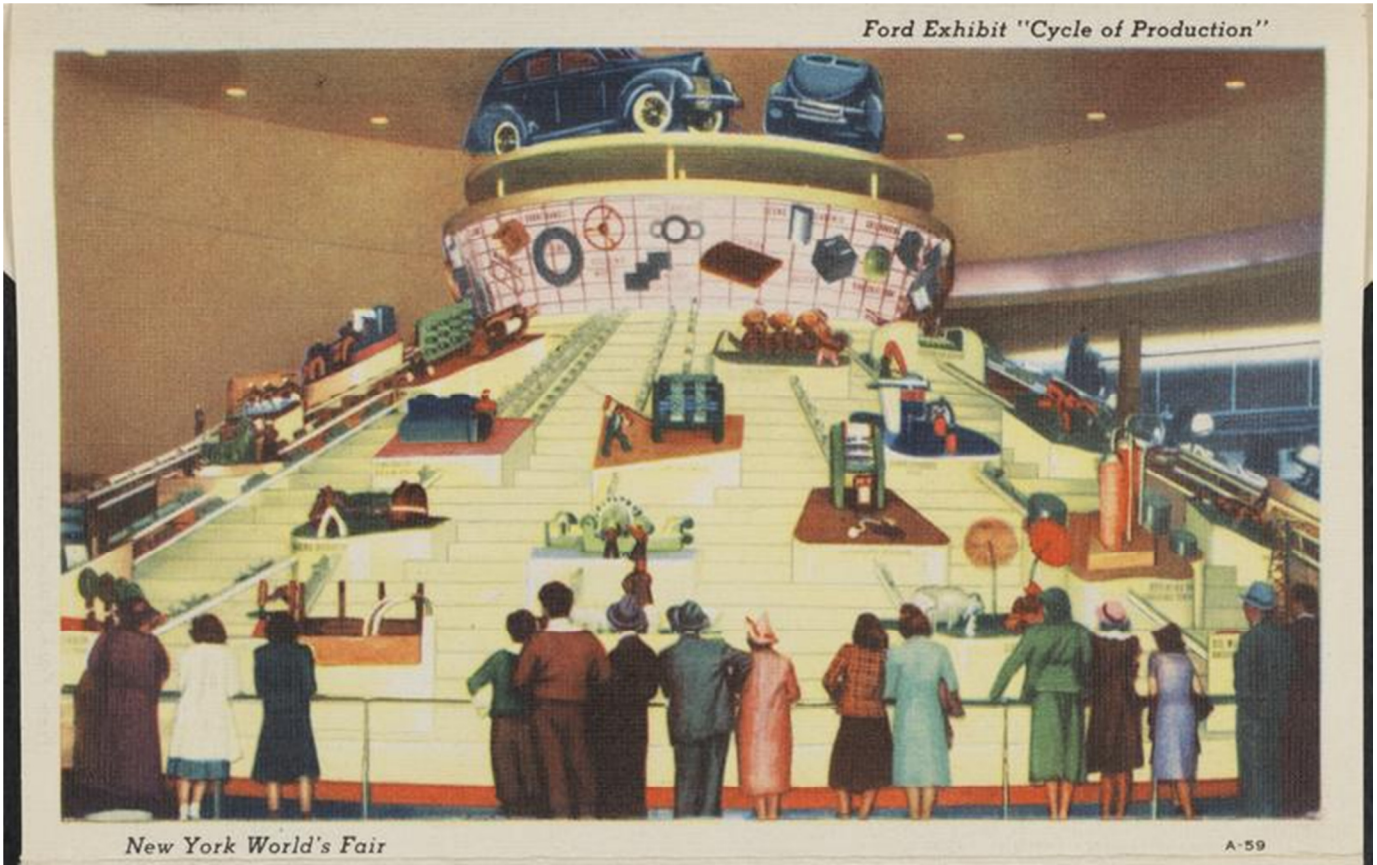


FIRESTONE BUILDS TODAY, THE TIRE OF TOMORROW - PRODUCTION LINE, FIRESTONE FACTORY AND EXHIBITION BUILDING, NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR, 1939
X2011.34.4339

Auto-related industries were equally eager to promote the use of cars. At the Firestone exhibit in New York, fairgoers were invited to watch the assembly of the “world’s most modern tire”—from the mixing of the raw rubber to the wrapping of the finished tire—with the “world’s most modern and most efficient tire machinery.”

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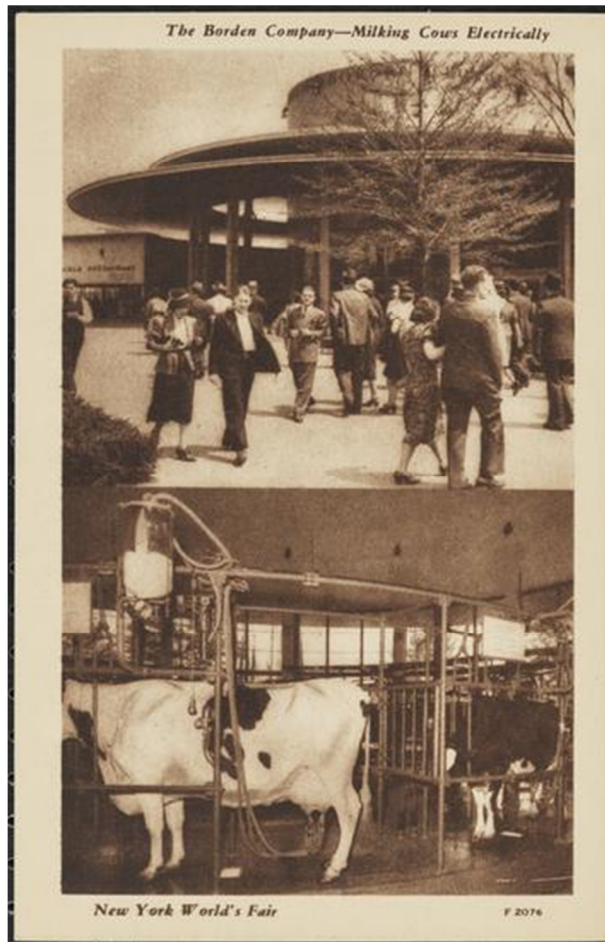


GRINNELL LITHOGRAPHIC COMPANY FORD EXHIBIT "CYCLE OF PRODUCTION" CA. 1939

Ford, Chrysler, and General Motors established a consistent presence at all six American world's fairs, hiring the biggest names in architecture and design to help them dramatize their message. The car companies and related automotive industries hosted exhibitions and demonstrations where visitors test-rode in new models, observed factory line production, watched films and other entertainments, and even arranged trade-ins of older cars for new models.

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THE BORDEN COMPANY - MILKING COWS ELECTRICALLY CA. 1939

OFFICIALLY LICENSED BY NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR. "N.Y.W.F. LIC. N 1020". MADE EXCLUSIVELY FOR THE EXPOSITION SOUVENIR CORP., CORONA, L.I. PUBLISHED BY QUALITY ART NOVELTY CO., INC., LONG ISLAND CITY, N.Y. GREETING CARD MANUFACTURERS. 88.63.103

Dioramas of cities with functioning electricity, working models of industrial plants, cows milked by machine, live science demonstrations—all these greeted visitors to the world's fairs. Fairgoers were meant to be wowed as much as educated. Designers worked under the assumption that the elimination of "technical details not familiar to the public," in the words of designer Walter Dorwin Teague, would lead to accessible—and effective—exhibits. Lenox Lohr, general manager of the Chicago fair, wanted exhibits "with the accent on showmanship."

Innovative exhibits went hand-in-hand with willingness by corporations to invest in public relations on a grand scale. In the face of a broad distrust of mass production and the Depression's challenge to capitalism, industry stakeholders hoped to convince the public of the benevolent future made possible by industrial capitalism. At the world's fairs, designers experimented with visually and viscerally dramatizing that message. Selling the big idea was more valuable than selling goods.

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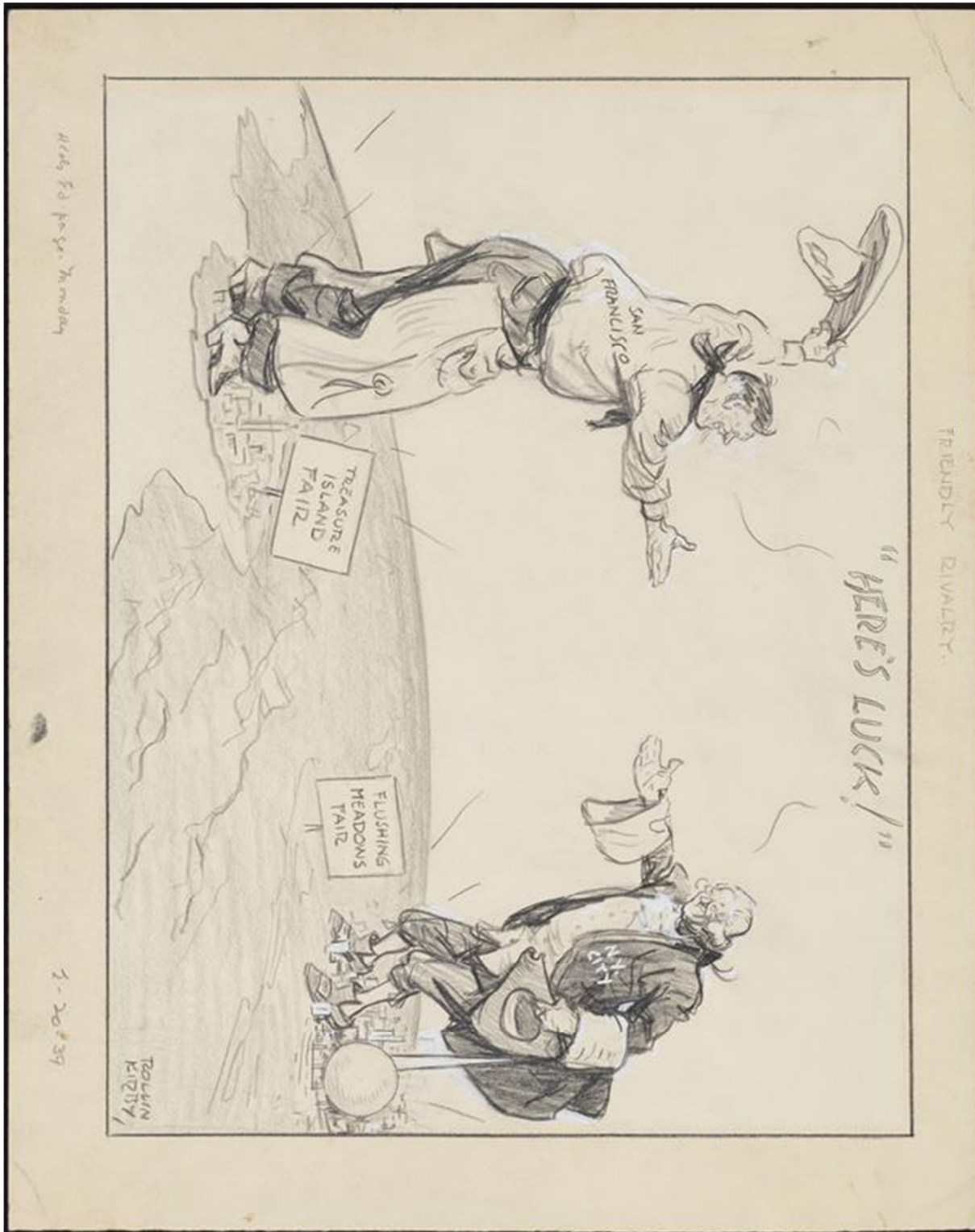
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**NEW YORK TRIBUNE, THE LADY WHO CAME TO THE WORLD'S FAIR IN A TRAILER
1939 45.65.23**

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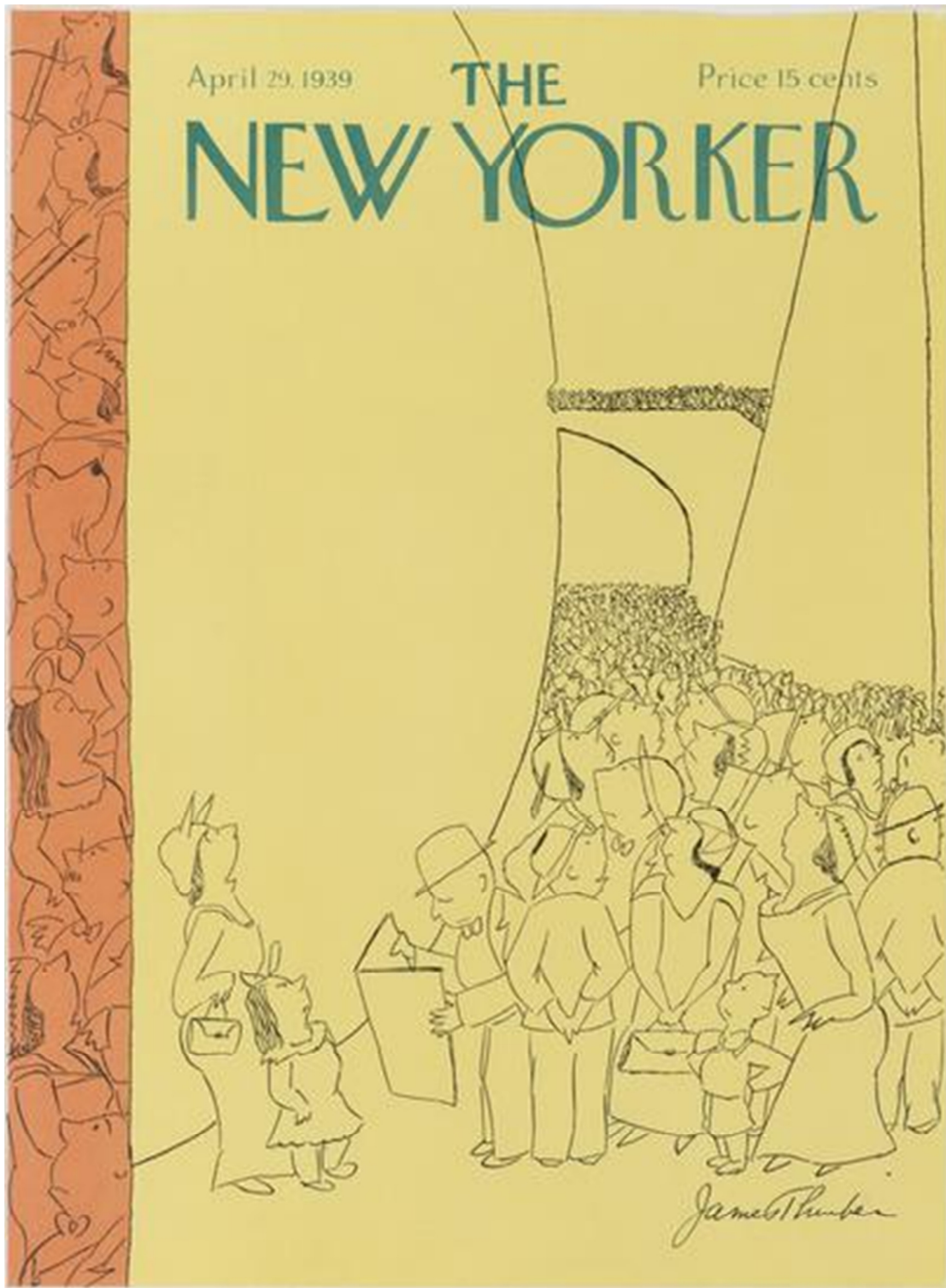
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ROLLIN KIRBY (1875-1952) FRIENDLY RIVALRY. 1939 43.366.642

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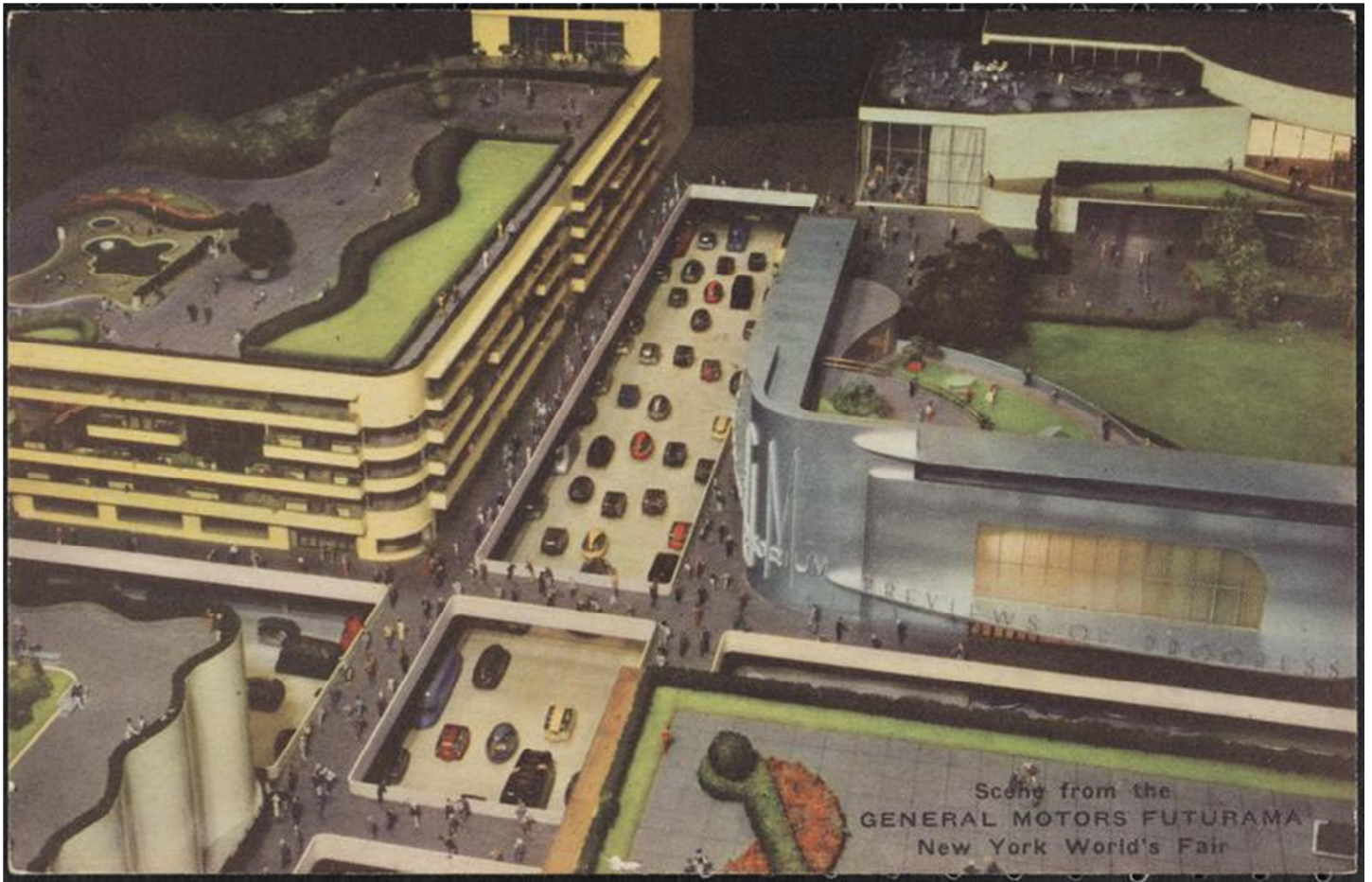
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**JAMES THURBER (1894-1961) NEW YORKER (NEW YORK, N.Y. : 1925)
[PROOF OF THE COVER OF THE APRIL 29, 1939 ISSUE OF THE NEW YORKER, SHOWING NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR CROWD
LOOKING AT TRYLON AND PERISPHERE.] 1939, 46.243.3**

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SCENE FROM THE GENERAL MOTORS FUTURAMA. NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR

CA. 1939

F2011.33.2054

Every hour, more than 2,000 fairgoers waited in winding lines to enter the General Motors building in New York. Behind the gigantic, curved walls lay “Highways and Horizons,” a complex of exhibits designed by Norman Bel Geddes about the cars of the moment and the American landscape of the future, all in support of plans for a national highway system.

The climax of the exhibits was Futurama. Sitting in 552 “sound-chairs” on a moving conveyor, visitors peered down on a 35,000-square-foot model depicting a system of super highways and suburban development of 1960. A recorded narration timed to correspond with the visitor’s location on the track explained that well-designed highways and new road construction would “diminish congestion until traffic, both vehicular and pedestrian, moves about with safety, convenience, and comfort....”

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WORLD'S FAIR OF 1940, NEW YORK. CA. 1940 X2012.5.25

Theme: The World of Tomorrow (1939), Peace and Freedom (1940)

Dates: April 30 - October 31, 1939; May 25 - September 29, 1940

Size: 1216-½ acres in Flushing Meadow, Queens

Attendance: 45 million

Admission fee: adults 75 cents, children 25 cents

From the opening of Chicago's Century of Progress Exposition in May 1933 to the close of the New York World's Fair in October 1940, American expositions across the country beckoned visitors with awe-inspiring displays promising a better tomorrow. Although each fair had a style of its own, the expositions' planners and designers widely agreed that a great fair required "a new type of architecture, a style that will herald building design of the future."

The last of the decade and one of the largest fairs of all time, the New York World's Fair was the beneficiary of the previous ten years' experiments in exposition architecture and design. The architecture was modern in form and function—"a thing of modern lines, studied optical illusions, breath-taking vistas and downright madness, all contributing to the mood of fiesta, and functional without apology."

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WORLD'S FAIR AND CITY

For many visitors the size of the World's Fair will be a little frightening. What can we see? How much must we miss? Why aren't we as rich in legs as the centipede and gifted with the hundred eyes of that old watchman of Argos? Among all these riches we must

find an elective system. The Fair is ready, but we are not. This morning the section of THE TIMES called The Fair and The City tutors and guides. In clear language and with the aid of excellent maps it takes us over the whole region. You can find your way much better than you could in some parts of the old Ninth Ward, for instance.

In terse little chunks full of facts and figures, curiosities, wonders and humors are pointed out. Then you are taken to see the long procession of exhibits that tell the history and processes of Production and Distribution, Transportation, Communication, Community Interests, Medicine and Health, Science and Education, the Federal Government, the several States and Foreign Nations. In each, something of special interest is named. In this fairyland of science one would like to wander long.

You can travel cheaply and profitably in sixty foreign countries, see their people at home, their products and arts, taste their food and drink. One of the most useful parts of our guide book is an alphabetical directory of exhibits from which you can pick those you are "interested in." This is a convenience, as is the list of amusements. To this City of New York, a perpetual World's Fair of all nations, our topographers and historians have given needed attention.

Our visitors are supplied with information which a large number of the permanent residents require fully as much. One can't help envying these strangers in our gates. The ordinary New Yorker is essentially parochial; not urban but a villager. Let us hope that he will stir his stumps when he finds how many varieties of New York have escaped him. In March THE NEW YORK TIMES published a World's Fair Section in which many experts gave their opinions of the world of tomorrow. Today's special section is a practical guide to the World of Tomorrow built on the site of a great Fair.

The New York Times

Published: April 30, 1939

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World's Fair Gives Aunt Jennie Plenty to Tell Folks Back Home

She and All Her Counterparts, Out-of-Town Visitors From Nation's 'Suburbanvilles,' Call It 'the Best Thing I've Seen'

What is this World's Fair that you've read so much about since it made its debut three months ago on the site of the former Flushing refuse heap? Who are its visitors, and what do they think of the brave new World of Tomorrow—neither quite so brave nor so new as it was on that portentous last day in April when Mr. Grover A. Whalen fired the starting gun? And has it been worth all the effort?

Well, the Fair itself, despite all the pre-exposition cynicism, was managed to emerge as a great show. And the visitors, though they have not been the legion that the administration is pining for, are coming from Maine to California. Most of them are finding both the Fair and supposedly hard-boiled New York City satisfactory ports.

Whether it will be worth the effort remains to be seen, depending largely on the number of persons who decide to make the effort to see whether it is worth while. But at least the vanguard of the once hoped-for but elusive 60,000,000 are making few complaints.

Strip the Fair of all the ballyhoo and hokum that necessarily attend the operation of such a gargantuan enterprise and you have a genuinely interesting, even fascinating, show.

Perhaps it would be best, however, to view it through the eyes of Aunt Jennie of Suburbanville, or Uncle Calvin from some down-South hamlet, for to them the Fair is a wonderful spectacular fairyland, and they have no inhibitions against describing it in glowing adjectives.

They will come down the ramp of the train or subway. There will be music—mighty fine music—blaring from the sky to greet them, so spirited that it will make them feel like rushing out and doing all the Fair's 1,216 acres in an afternoon.

Looming straight ahead of them will be the gigantic Trylon and Perisphere, an awesome sight when viewed from close up for the first time (the Perisphere, by the way, is looking better these days with its new coat of paint, though it's still a little whiter on bottom than on top).

Stabbing the sky in other directions will be television towers, an oil-less oil well derrick and weird architectural concoctions of various sorts; at every turn there will be statues—big ones, little ones, patriotic and crazy ones—statues made from colored plaster and statues carved from whole tree trunks. And buildings, the like of which man never saw before the World's Fair, which at night are painted with glowing, radiant colors. And everywhere strange flags, emblazoned with symbols of Mr. Whalen's empire.

There also will be odd things that the Fair calls pylons. These may bewilder the visitors because of their apparent uselessness. Perhaps Aunt Jennie may be lucky enough to find one of the few remaining information cadets, or "Grover boys," who survived the recent economy purge.

"What's that thing there with the cocklebur on top of it?" she may ask him.

"That, madam," he will reply with dignity, "is the star pylon."

"Well, what's it for?"

And she'll have him there, for it's not for anything; it's just there.

Or, if the visitors happen to take the subway that lets them off in the amusement area, they will find themselves in a miniature Coney Island, where the sky is mad with zig-zagging contraptions and the stages are tables amply set with a menu of freakish things and feminine pulchritude.

It's needless to tell you, of course, that the visitors are going to find

themselves doing the traditional things, such as standing an hour or so in the General Motors line, sitting among the 10,000 at the Aquacade amphitheatre, riding the giant escalator around Democracy in the Perisphere and so forth. But there are other things they will learn and do at the Fair, too.

They may find themselves in the Hall of Industrial Science, where they'll enjoy themselves hugely by punching buttons and twiddling levers that illustrate simple little principles of research. They may pause a moment in the golden light inside the pavilion of the Czech people and gaze in silence at a citizen of a country once called Czecho-Slovakia, standing in silence before a flower-decked bust of a man named Masaryk.

Then, inevitably, they'll find themselves wandering through the stately marble halls of the home of the glittering subway station—the Soviet Building. Aunt Jennie may admire it—but, depending upon her political complexion, perhaps she'll write some cutting little remark in the Soviet register book, such as: "Interesting—if true!"

And then they'll enjoy their own patriotism in Uncle Sam's Federal Building; in Pennsylvania's Independence Hall, where they can see a letter signed by General George Washington; or even in so indirect a manner as at the Eastman exhibit, where they find themselves applauding a noble picture of Abe Lincoln, enlarged 50,000 times.

By nightfall, afflicted with that occupational malady of Flushing Meadows known as "Fair feet," and without having made even a sizable dent in the 1,216 acres, the visitors will be content to sit down, perhaps on a bench at Florida's peaceful and remote "beach," to watch the fireworks over Fountain Lake. They will be glad to tell you how much they have enjoyed it—but let's allow a few of them to talk for themselves.

The New York Times

Published: July 30, 1939

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WORLD'S FAIR GOES ON

President Roosevelt's invitation to the nations of the world to continue next year their participation in the World's Fair despite the European conflict will be heartily echoed here, and is not likely to go unheard abroad. Some adjustment must certainly be made, but few of the great nations already represented at the Fair will wish, even if they are at war, to dismantle their exhibits of the peaceful arts of civilization or to discontinue their appeal for the good-will of the American people.

Fifty-eight foreign nations are now taking part in the Fair. Nazi Germany never has been represented. England and France, both of which have majestic pavilions on the meadows, may hesitate to withdraw except under extreme necessity, for their displays form focal points for appeal to public opinion here. The costs of maintaining these outposts of cordial relations with this country should not prove overwhelming to the larger nations. The ominous bulletins from Europe may make more difference to some of the smaller foreign exhibitors; indeed, they have already done so. Nevertheless, it might be possible for their activities at the Fair to be taken over by groups of American citizens of their own racial strains.

The decision to continue the Fair another year is now definite. That fact alone encourages the hope that it can

be carried on with the same scope and at the same tempo which have made it a great symbol of international endeavor toward a civilized future.

The New York Times

Published: September 4, 1939
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World's Fair of 1939-40 Improved the City's Menus

Published: November 05, 2000

To the Editor:

The "World of Tomorrow" did not die with the closing of the New York World's Fair in 1940 ("The Day Tomorrow Died," Oct. 22). Quite the contrary, we are living in it: television, fax, plastics, fluorescent lighting, acrylic fabric, rubber-based paint -- all part of everyday life now -- were introduced at the fair, as was the incubator, that marvelous device for saving the lives of premature babies.

And it's a fact today that all of us who go to a restaurant for a foreign meal anywhere in the United States are enjoying the results of gastronomic impact of the New York exhibition. There were more than 100 foreign pavilions at the fair. When it closed, the chefs of the European pavilions were stranded, unable to go home because of the war. Many decided to open their own restaurants here -- notably among them, Henri Soule, the legendary chef of the French pavilion. Thus was America's romance with haute cuisine born, and the rest is history.

FRANK ZACHARY

Upper East Side

LEGACIES

Although many of the innovations exhibited at the world's fairs of the 1930s—from new appliances to new cars—became part of America's post-WWII everyday world, none was more prescient than the visions the fairs proposed for the city itself. Indeed, in New York there was remarkable similarity between Norman Bel Geddes' Futurama and the city that master planner Robert Moses had already begun to build. Futurama presaged both the national highway system and Moses's vision of New York connected into a regional system, which would be largely realized by the mid-1960s.

The transformation of Flushing Meadow was a key part of Moses's plans. In an article for the January 15, 1938 issue of the *Saturday Evening Post* titled "From Dump to Glory," he asserted that the park would be "more romantic and interesting than anything of a temporary nature . . . For like the mirage in the desert, the Fair will be gone in 1940, and at that time Flushing Meadow park will come into its own."

Where fairgrounds were built up from almost nothing – in Chicago, Cleveland, New York, and San Francisco—little remains to suggest the spectacular environments that, for a season or two nearly 75 years ago, delighted and amazed. The pavilions were demolished, industrial displays and equipment returned to sponsors. These fantastic complexes, built over the course of a few years and enjoyed for eight or nine months, were demolished nearly overnight to make room for airports or parks.

In San Diego and Dallas, however, where world's fairs were constructed on sites with histories, many of the pavilions and plazas still stand. Repurposed as museums and other cultural institutions, they are accessible to the public and carry on traditions of education and entertainment. For those who know where to look, the remaining structures are shadowy reminders of the spectacular world's fairs of the 1930s.

The second largest public park in New York City, Flushing Meadows today draws its neighboring populations and international visitors to recreational facilities, the Panorama of the City of New York at the Queens Museum of Art, Arthur Ashe Stadium, and Citi Field. The only remaining building from the 1939 fair is the New York City Building, which became the Queens Museum of Art in 1972. Current—and hotly contested—proposals for the park include a new tennis

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SUGGESTIONS FOR CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES:

INNOVATE OR INVENT? The World's Fair Pavilions demonstrated innovations that would impact visitor's daily lives – from how they could clean dishes (dishwashers!) to the forms of transportation they can take (airplanes!). Note with students that while many of the featured products may seem mundane to us today, they were greeted with wonder and excitement at the time. Students can brainstorm what needs we have today and what innovations would enhance our daily lives. Students can choose existing objects that can be changed for more contemporary needs (innovate) or come up with new creations that would ease daily life (invent). On large sheets of paper students can draw out and write about their suggestions and present it to the class.

ON THE SCENE: Research with students what the site of the World's Fair was before it was transformed into the fairground and what it is today. While little remains of the buildings created expressly for the fairs, visitors do have the opportunity to visit the Queens Museum, housed in The New York City Building, the only remaining building from the World's Fair.

CREATE A DIORAMA: After looking through the *Designing Tomorrow* exhibition, students can create a pavilion of their own showing what a World's Fair of today would present. To create the pavilion gather a square piece of paper, a glue-stick or tape, and a pair of scissors. Have students fold the paper in half from one corner to the opposite corner, leaving a diagonal fold across the paper then repeat this step with the opposite corners. This will leave the square paper with an "x" in the middle. Have students cut along one of the folded lines only as far as the center of the paper. Overlap and tape or glue the two cut sides so that an upright triangle shaped pavilion is left. Next give students Model Magic (or other forms of clay) and colored markers so that they can create what they would want to display in their pavilion.

ADVERTISE IT: Imagine New York City was hosting a World's Fair today (this can be done in tandem with the diorama project or on its own). Encourage students to think about a theme and the products the fair would showcase. In groups, students can come up with forms of advertising to encourage New Yorkers to attend the fair.

OTHER SIDE OF THE STORY: A fictional family, the Middleton's, created to represent an average middle class family, were featured in various promotional videos enjoying the fair. Throughout the fair, a celebration of capitalism as a way to re-energize the country post-depression, was dominant. Attractions such as Futurama celebrated a future of cars and roadways. In each of these instances, a specific view point was dominant in the fair's focus. Discuss with students who was not represented, alternative political agendas to capitalism gaining traction at the time, and the eventual turning away from the car focused urban planning espoused by the likes of Robert Moses.

TIME CAPSULE: One major attraction at the 1939 World's Fair was the Westinghouse Time Capsule – an assortment of objects and ephemera to be opened in five thousand years (do the math!). Among the items buried below ground were pens, cloth and hats, a watch and a Mickey Mouse cup as well as articles news reels on contemporary issues. Invite the class to imagine they are charged with creating a time capsule to be opened in five thousand years – what would they choose to represent this time period to a future far removed from our present day? Depending on what they choose and location feasibility, students can create and bury the capsule.

Designing Tomorrow: America's World's Fairs of the 1930s Educator Resource Guide.
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Images, captions, and text from the *Capital of Capital* exhibition.

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USING MUSEUM RESOURCES:

Visit <http://collections.mcnyc.org> and type terms, phrases, or place names related to New York's world's fairs into the search box. Next to each image from the Museum's collection included in this guide is an accession number (for example: **X2011.34.4339**). Type the accession number into the search box on the Collections Portal to learn more information, to download a high resolution image, or click the magnifying glass to zoom in.

SUGGESTED VOCABULARY WORDS:

DESIGN

GREAT DEPRESSION

INDUSTRY

INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

INNOVATION

EXHIBITION

MODERN

PAVILION

PRODUCTION LINE

STREAMLINE

EXPOSITION

TECHNOLOGY

WORLD'S FAIR

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Audio and Visual:

National Building Museum audio program on modern design:

<http://www.nbm.org/media/audio/modernism-for-the-masses.html>

National Building Museum audio program on the history of world's fairs:

<http://www.nbm.org/media/audio/21st-century-worlds-fairs-2.html>

"The City" (1939) – documentary shown at the world's fair

From the New York Public Library website: <http://exhibitions.nypl.org/bibliion/worldsfair/>

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BRING YOUR STUDENTS TO VISIT THE MUSEUM

Before your visit to the Museum, we recommend the following discussions in the classroom. Each discussion is specific for gallery or history lab programs. Gallery programs take place entirely in the Museum's exhibition spaces while history lab programs take place entirely in the Museum's newly renovated classrooms.

Introducing the Gallery Programs

We suggest familiarizing your class with the Museum of the City of New York exhibitions and information located on the Museum website. Use the following guiding questions to explore the Museum online at www.mcny.org

1. Explore the location, mission, and history of the Museum. Go to the "visit" tab located on the top of the screen and focus on the following quote, "the Museum connects the past, present, and future of New York City." Engage your students in a discussion on how museums in particular and this Museum in specific focuses on these aspects. Encourage your students to look up the definitions for words such as "artifact", "display", "exhibition" and of course "museum"!
2. Explore current and upcoming exhibitions at the Museum. Go to the "exhibitions" tab located on the top of the screen and explore the exhibition descriptions. Have an inquiry-based discussion with your class on what they can expect to see in the gallery program you are attending using the information provided online.

Introducing the History Lab Programs

We suggest familiarizing your class with the Museum of the City of New York Collections Portal (collections.mcny.org) an online resource that offers nearly 95,000 images of New York City to explore a range of history topics. Use the Online Collections Portal Guide for Educators located on the Museum's website (<http://www.mcny.org/education/Collections-Portal-Guide-For-Educators.html>) to begin your investigation in the classroom.

1. [Analyzing the Sources: Collections Portal Lesson One](#)
 - a. Use the Collections Portal to distinguish between primary and secondary sources
2. [Analyzing the Sources: Collections Portal Lesson Two](#)
 - a. Use the Collections Portal to research a specific collection.
 - b.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CITY MUSEUM'S EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT: <http://www.mcny.org/education/>

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