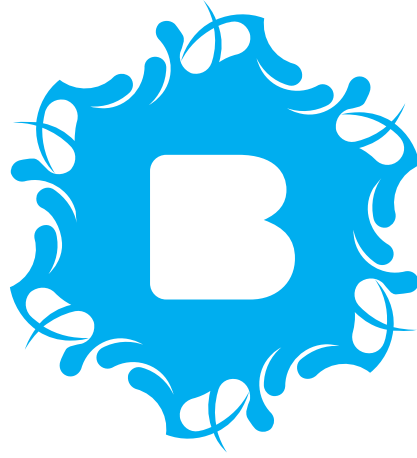


# Press Release



August 2015

***CONEY ISLAND: VISIONS OF AN AMERICAN DREAMLAND, 1861-2008,*  
ON VIEW AT BROOKLYN MUSEUM - NOVEMBER 20, 2015-MARCH 13, 2016**

***New Exhibition Focuses on Area's Indelible Impact on American Culture***

The spirit of Coney Island will come alive in the fall when *Coney Island: Visions of an American Dreamland, 1861-2008* opens at the Brooklyn Museum on November 20, 2015. The exhibition will trace the evolution of the Coney Island phenomenon from tourist destination during the Civil War to the World's Greatest Playground to a site of nostalgia. Covering a period of 150 years, the exhibition features 140 objects, including paintings, drawings, photographs, prints, posters, artifacts, carousel animals, ephemera, and film clips. Also on view will be *Forever Coney*, 42 photographs from the Brooklyn Museum collection.

An extraordinary array of artists have viewed Coney Island as a microcosm of the American experience and used their works to investigate the area as both a place and an idea. *Coney Island: Visions of an American Dreamland* offers up early depictions of "the people's beach" by Impressionists William Merritt Chase and John Henry Twachtman; modernist depictions of the amusement park by Joseph Stella; Depression-era scenes of cheap thrills by Reginald Marsh; photographs by Walker Evans, Diane Arbus, Weegee, and Bruce Davidson; and contemporary works by Daze and Swoon.

"The modern American mass-culture industry was born at Coney Island, and the constant novelty of the resort made it a seductively liberating subject for artists," said Dr. Robin Jaffee Frank, exhibition curator. "What these artists saw from 1861 to 2008 at Coney Island, and the varied ways in which they chose to portray it, mirrored the aspirations and disappointments of the era and the country. Taken together, these tableaux of wonder and menace, hope and despair, dreams and nightmares become metaphors for the collective soul of a nation."

*Coney Island: Visions of an American Dreamland, 1861-2008* is organized by the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut. The Brooklyn presentation is organized by Connie H. Choi, Assistant Curator, Arts of the Americas and Europe, Brooklyn Museum.

## **Brooklyn Museum**

200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn, NY 11238-6052  
T (718) 638-5000 F (718) 501-6134  
[www.brooklynmuseum.org](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org)

A fully illustrated 304-page catalogue, co-published by Yale University Press and the Wadsworth Athenaeum, incorporates the first continuous visual analysis of great works of art about Coney Island by Dr. Frank as well as essays by distinguished cultural historians.

For more information about the exhibition or to visit the Museum, please visit [www.brooklynmuseum.org](http://www.brooklynmuseum.org).

Generous support for *Coney Island: Visions of an American Dreamland* is provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities: Celebrating 50 Years of Excellence, the Henry Luce Foundation, and The Mr. and Mrs. Raymond J. Horowitz Foundation for the Arts, Inc.

Additional support for the Brooklyn Museum presentation is provided by Ron and Barbara Cordover, Lizanne Fontaine and Bob Buckholz, the Norman and Arline Feinberg Exhibition Fund, and the Martha A. and Robert S. Rubin Exhibition Fund.

*Forever Coney* is made possible by the Eugénie Prendergast Fund for American Art, given by Jan and Warren Adelson.

**Press inquiries:**

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**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Admission:**

Contribution \$16; students with valid I.D. and seniors \$10. Ages 19 and under FREE. Group tours or visits must be arranged in advance by calling extension 234.

**Directions:**

Subway: Seventh Avenue express (2 or 3) to Eastern Parkway/Brooklyn Museum stop; Lexington Avenue express (4 or 5) to Nevins Street, cross platform and transfer to the 2 or 3. Bus: B41, B69, B48. On-site parking available.

**Museum Hours:**

Wednesday and Friday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Thursday 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.; first Saturday of each month (except September), 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Closed Monday, Tuesday, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day.