

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Panoramas: The Big Picture
On View August 23 – December 8, 2019

Selected PR Images

Panoramas: The Big Picture explores wide-angle, bird's-eye imagery from the 17th to the 20th century, revealing the influence that panoramas had on everything from mass entertainment to nationalism to imperial expansion. Through more than 20 panoramas, the exhibition presents the history of the all-encompassing medium in New York City, San Francisco, and beyond.



John Trumbull (1756–1843)

Niagara Falls, from Two Miles Below Chippawa, 1808

Oil on canvas

New-York Historical Society, Gift of Alexander Eddy Hosack, 1868.6

John Trumbull was one of the first American artists to paint in a panoramic format. He planned to create a large-scale, 360-degree circular panorama of one of the world's greatest natural spectacles—Niagara Falls—for exhibition in London. In preparation, he produced this pair of panoramic oil studies.



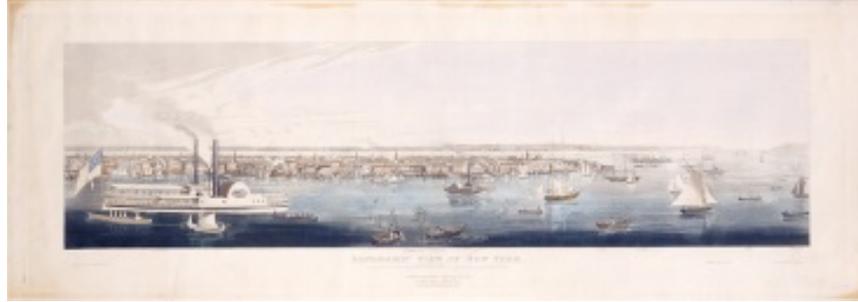
John Trumbull (1756–1843)

Niagara Falls, from under Table Rock, 1808

Oil on canvas

New-York Historical Society, Gift of Alexander Eddy Hosack, 1868.5

The compositions distort perspective to create the impression that the falls are already painted on a curved surface that wraps around the viewer. This early panoramic venture ultimately failed to find financial support, and Trumbull abandoned the project.



Robert Havell, Jr. (1793–1878)

Panoramic View of New York, Taken from the North River, 1844

Hand-colored etching and aquatint

Patricia D. Klingenstein Library, New-York Historical Society, Gift of Daniel Parish, Jr.

British-born Robert Havell, Jr. created this sweeping view of New York after his relocation to the United States. It features the steeple of Trinity Church prior to its 1839 razing to make room for Richard Upjohn's masterpiece of ecclesiastical architecture (1839–46). Also visible is the British Queen—the first transatlantic steamship, which had made its maiden voyage from England to New York in July 1839.



John Frederick Kensett (1816–1872)

View from Cozzens' Hotel, near West Point, N.Y., 1863

Oil on canvas

Robert L. Stuart Collection, the gift of his widow Mrs. Mary Stuart, S-189

This innovative composition foregoes picturesque framing conventions to suspend the viewer above a sweeping and light-filled space. The vantage point looks out from Cozzens' Hotel, a famous summer resort constructed at the edge of a rocky bluff along the Hudson to afford patrons a spectacular panoramic vista and the thrill of the sublime.

Leigh Behnke (b. 1946)

Chrysler Building, 1996

Watercolor on two pieces of heavy watercolor paper with deckled edges

New-York Historical Society, Gift of Lawrence L. Di Carlo, 2006.29

The top image in Leigh Behnke's work renders the Chrysler Building as seen from below, framed by the marquees of Grand Central Station and partially blocked by the glass façade of the Hyatt Hotel. The bottom image zooms out to show a bird's eye view of Manhattan from the Empire State Building looking toward Queens with the Chrysler Building now on the left. The shift in vantage point emphasizes the sense of an embodied perspective—one rooted in the streets of New York City, and the other lifting toward an expansive, elevated panoramic view.

