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***Waterfront* Opens at Brooklyn Historical Society DUMBO**

New York's First, Major Exhibition on Brooklyn's Coastline Explores its Eclectic History and Global Impact

January 18, 2018 (Brooklyn, NY) - On January 20, 2018, Brooklyn Historical Society (BHS) will open *Waterfront*, an immersive, multimedia exhibition that brings to life the vibrant history of Brooklyn's coastline through interwoven stories of workers, industries, activists, innovators, families, neighborhoods, and ecosystems.

Waterfront is the first major exhibition on the history of Brooklyn's coastline. The culmination of four years of development and research, *Waterfront* blends BHS's acclaimed approach to historical interpretation with forward-thinking design to feature 12 concept areas that will engage visitors of a variety of ages and interests.

Upon arrival, visitors encounter a floor-to-ceiling sculptural installation of more than 80 archaeological artifacts and fragments excavated from the landfill beneath Empire Stores in the 1970s.

A centerpiece of the exhibition is a 14-foot reproduction of an 1879 lithograph of Brooklyn's waterfront. Nearby, visitors can explore the sights, sounds, and smells of Brooklyn's 19th-century warehousing district and learn about hidden stories of Brooklyn's coastline – from Walt Whitman's waterfront trysts to hidden graves near the present-day Brooklyn Navy Yard.

Two multimedia installations allow visitors to travel back into the coastline's history. *At Water's Edge*, an eight-minute film, introduces visitors to the waterfront's dynamic history through ten epic historical moments stretching over 20,000 years. Nearby, *History in Motion* drops visitors into historic paintings and photographs and weaves their actions into a 60-second movie starring themselves.

Workers and families are a central theme in the exhibition. *An Unfree Waterfront* highlights the moving and untold stories of three enslaved Brooklynites and their struggle for freedom along the shoreline. *Brooklyn Bivalves* tells the unlikely story of oystermen and sewage. In *A Laboring Family*, visitors become historians themselves and trace the story of one 19th-century Empire Stores dockworker, Michael Harkins, and his family. *Factory Women* lets visitors explore artifacts and listen to oral histories of female Navy Yard workers during World War II; a dress-up experience lets kids don work clothing and try their hand at ship fitting.

The exhibition also looks at the present and future of the borough's shoreline. Visitors explore salvaged materials and graffiti from the late 20th-century, when abandoned warehouses dotted the shoreline. Oral history and video installations tell of the waterfront's mid-century economic decline and its 21st-century rebirth. *Rising Waters*, a touchscreen video installation, features historians, business owners, politicians, scientists, and activists who explore key questions about climate change and sea level rise. Nearby, children and adults can design their own waterfront neighborhood using whimsical magnets of buildings, bridges, animals, landmarks, and more on a ten-foot illustrated landscape.

BHS DUMBO is the only history museum in the DUMBO neighborhood and the Brooklyn Historical Society's second location. Opened in 2017, the 3,200 SF satellite space is housed inside Empire Stores, a renovated 19th-century warehouse in Brooklyn Bridge Park. The warehouse, constructed in the late 1860s, once housed coffee, sugar, animal hides, and other commodities when Brooklyn was one of the largest commercial waterfronts in the world. Empire Stores stood shuttered for decades and reopened in 2017 as a revitalized public space featuring restaurants, retail stores, and offices.

Waterfront at BHS DUMBO (55 Water Street, Brooklyn) will be open to the public Tuesday to Thursday from 11 am to 6 pm, Friday and Saturday from 11 am to 8 pm, and Sunday from 11 am to 6 pm. Suggested admission is \$10 for adults, \$6 for seniors and teachers, and free for members and students of all ages.

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About Brooklyn Historical Society: Founded in 1863, Brooklyn Historical Society is a nationally recognized urban history center dedicated to preserving and encouraging the study of Brooklyn's extraordinary 400-year history. The main site is in Brooklyn Heights, housed in a magnificent landmark building designed by George Post and opened in 1881. In 2017 a second site, Brooklyn Historical Society DUMBO, opened in Brooklyn Bridge Park. Today's BHS is a cultural hub for civic dialogue, thoughtful engagement, and community outreach.