Summer's hottest exhibits, from Jim Henson puppets to JFK photos

BY ALAN S. MEHL
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Take it easy. Lazy, hazy days of summer are made for that — and a kaleidoscope of art exhibitions and events at city museums are a great way to do just that. Shows feature a beloved American president, the Old West, Kermit the Frog’s creator, flower power — and more.

**MANHATTAN**

"**American Visionary: John F. Kennedy's Life and Times**" *(June 23 - Jan. 07, 2018; $20 for adults, others discounted; New York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West, at 77th St. nyhistory.org)*

In honor of what would have been JFK’s 100th birthday — he was born on May 29, 1917 — nearly 80 images of iconic public moments and seldom-seen private ones reveal the hope, challenges and drama of our 35th president’s life.

"**Frederic Remington at The Met**"
Go West! Upstate New York-born artist Frederic Remington did in the 1880s — and captured the American frontier at its most majestic. Twenty of his paintings, sculptures, works on paper and illustrated books bring the rowdy tumbleweed world and dusty trails back to life.

Also at the Met, **Talking Pictures: Camera-Phone Conversations Between Artists** spotlights “visual dialogues” using something everyone has — a cell phone. (June 27 - Dec. 17).

The Historical Society’s John F. Kennedy exhibit includes this photo from Nov. 8, 1960, depicting the morning after the presidential election. From left, surrounding JFK, artist Bill Walton; Pierre Salinger; Ethel and Bobby Kennedy; Bobby’s secretary, Angie Novello; and campaign aide Bill Haddad. (JACQUES LOWE)
Frederic Remington's "On the Southern Plains" at the Met brings to life a tumbleweed world. (COURTESY OF THE MUSEUM)

"Magnum Manifesto"
(Through Sept. 3; adults, $14; International Center of Photography, 250 Bowery. icp.org)
Pictures capture history in a snap. That point is made vividly in this ambitious exhibition featuring 70 years of Magnum Photo Collective, a legendary photojournalism agency.
BROOKLYN

"New York Harbor Scenes"
(July 6 - Oct. 28; free; Waterfront Museum, 290 Conover St., at Pier 44, Brooklyn; waterfrontmuseum.org)
Artist and landscape painter Bill Mensching finds inspiration in New York City’s coastlines, bridges and quiet idylls. His recent works have a summer home aboard this floating historic- barge- turned gallery.

Bill Mensching's barge painting is on view this summer at the Waterfront Museum.

(COURTESY OF THE ARTIST)

"Grand Ole Opera"
(Through July 50; free; Pioneer Works, 159 Pioneer St., Brooklyn. pioneerworks.org)
A scorched truck, a revival tent and a biker bar set the scenes in this immersive multimedia installation by Willie Stewart and Brent Stewart — each from Tennessee but unrelated — that pays tribute to the American South and its complicated characters.

THE BRONX

"Flora Fantastica!"

(July 16 - Aug 27; $8 for adults; Wave Hill, West 249th St. and Independence Ave., Riverdale, the Bronx. wavehill.org)

Botanical art with Middle Eastern, 18th century, Byzantine and Chinese influences complement lush outdoor gardens at this public garden and cultural center.
QUEENS

“*The Jim Henson Exhibition*”
(Opens July 22; $15 adults, $7 kids; Museum of the Moving Image, 36-01 35th Ave., Astoria, Queens. movingimage.us)

Original puppets of Kermit the Frog, Miss Piggy and Elmo, along with costumes and character sketches, are among 300 objects on view in this permanent exhibit celebrating the mind and the magic of “The Muppet Show” creator Jim Henson.
STATEN ISLAND

"Lumen 8"
(Through Sept. 10; free; ArtSpace @ Staten Island Arts, 23 Navy Pier Court, Staten Island. Statenislandarts.org)
The annual Lumen Festival is the place for cutting-edge visual, performance and multimedia installation art. Previously a tightly jammed one-night event, this year's fest gives you a more leisurely pace to see for the first time or revisit hits from the last seven years. That includes including a giant light pendulum made by Staten Island sculptor Scott Van Campen.

"67th Annual Fence Show"
(Sept. 16; free; Staten Island Museum at Snug Harbor, 1000 Richmond Terrace. statenislandmuseum.org)
This summertime pop-up gallery is still going strong at age 67. It includes hundreds of artworks of all genres and types by established and emerging artists. A fee is required for exhibitors, but looking is no-charge.

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