



Oceanic New York

By Steve Mentz

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Oceanic New York By Steve Mentz

This volume comprises a three-fold object, Book and Ocean and New York City. If this Book were Ocean, how would it feel between your fingers? Wet and slippery, just a bit warmer or colder than the air around it, since the Ocean is our planet's greatest reservoir of heat, a sloshing insulator and incubator girdling our globe. If its pages were New York City, how would they abrade your imagination? Human and teeming, endlessly humming along with that same old tune. Imagine that these three things were one thing. All together: Book and Ocean and New York City. During the long historical pause between the day the last sailing ship docked at South Street and that day in October 2012 when Hurricane Sandy brought the waves back in fury, New York turned its back on the sea. This Book remembers that the City was founded on Ocean, peopled by its currents, grew rich on its traffic. The storm taught what we should never have forgotten: under New York's asphalt lies not beach but Ocean. Oceanic New York salvages the City's salt-water past and present. It takes inspiration from Elizabeth Albert's gorgeous exhibition of historical artifacts and contemporary art, "Silent Beaches, Untold Stories: New York City's Forgotten Waterfront," which was on display at St. John's University in Queens in Autumn 2013. Buoyed up by art, the Book plunges into the urban and oceanic. "Circumambulate the city of a dreamy Sabbath afternoon," entices our friend Ishmael. "Nothing will content [us] but the extremest limit of the land." CONTRIBUTORS include: Elizabeth Albert, Jamie "Skye" Bianco, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, Vanessa Daws, Lowell Duckert, Granville Ganter, Anne Harris, Jonathan Hsy, Alison Kinney, Dean Kritikos, J. Allan Mitchell, Steve Mentz, Nancy Nowacek, Julie Orlemanski, Bailey Robertson, Karl Steel, Matt Zazzarino, and Marina Zurkow.

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