



PAUL STRAND **MANHATTA** CHARLES SHEELER
SILENT ART FILM 1921

Created by photographer Paul Strand and photographer-painter Charles Sheeler and considered the first American art film, *Manhatta* is a modernist's exaltation of the urban and industrial landscape (its title when first shown was *New York the Magnificent*). Structured loosely as "a day in the life of the city," the nine-minute film opens with the morning arrival of a commuter-filled ferry and closes with sundown over the Hudson River. Rooftop shots of the city, dramatic pans of skyscrapers, and scenes of industrial might are interwoven with lines from Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (including "Mannahatta").

| * 5 | WHITMAN, LEAVES OF GRASS as written in <i>Manhatta</i> titles (without line breaks) | MANHATTA SCENES |
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| 5 | "City of the world (for all races are here) City of tall facades of marble and iron, Proud and passionate city." | Opening title; New York harbor, Manhattan skyline, Brooklyn Bridge |
| 4 | "When million-footed Manhattan unpent, descends to its pavements." | Morning: arrival of commuters on Staten Island ferry; street scenes, pedestrians |
| 7 | "High growths of iron, slender, strong, splendidly uprising toward clear skies." | Skyscraper views; pan down to city roofs |
| 8 | "The building of cities – the shovel, the great derrick, the wall scaffold, the work of walls and ceilings." | Skyscraper construction: laborers, cranes, heavy machinery |
| 4 | "Where our tall topt marble and iron beauties range on opposite sides." | Pan up of the Park Row building; aerial shots of city roofs releasing white steam trails |
| 7 | "City of hurried and sparkling waters, City nested in bays." | Aerial views of the harbor, river, boats, dockside crane |
| 3 | "This world all spanned with iron rails." | Railroad yard; train engines exhaling smoke |
| 3 | "With lines of steamships threading every sea." | Ocean liner and tugboats, billowing smoke |
| 2 | "Shapes of the bridges, vast frameworks, girders, arches." | Brooklyn Bridge with pedestrians |
| 1 | "On the river the shadowy group, the big steam tug closely flank'd on each side by barges." | Approaching sundown: aerial views of boats in the river |
| 6 | "Where the city's ceaseless crowd moves on, the live long day." | End of workday: aerial views of city streets with pedestrians and vehicles; elevated railway |
| 1 | "Gorgeous clouds of sunset! drench with your splendor me or the men and women generations after me." | Sunset over the Hudson River |

*Sections, *Leaves of Grass*, 1891-92 ed.: 1. "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" 2. "Song of the Broad-Axe" 3. "Song of the Exposition" 4. "A Broadway Pageant" 5. "City of Ships" 6. "Sparkles from the Wheel" 7. "Mannahatta" 1860 ed.: 8. "Chants Democratic" [later "A Song for Occupations"]