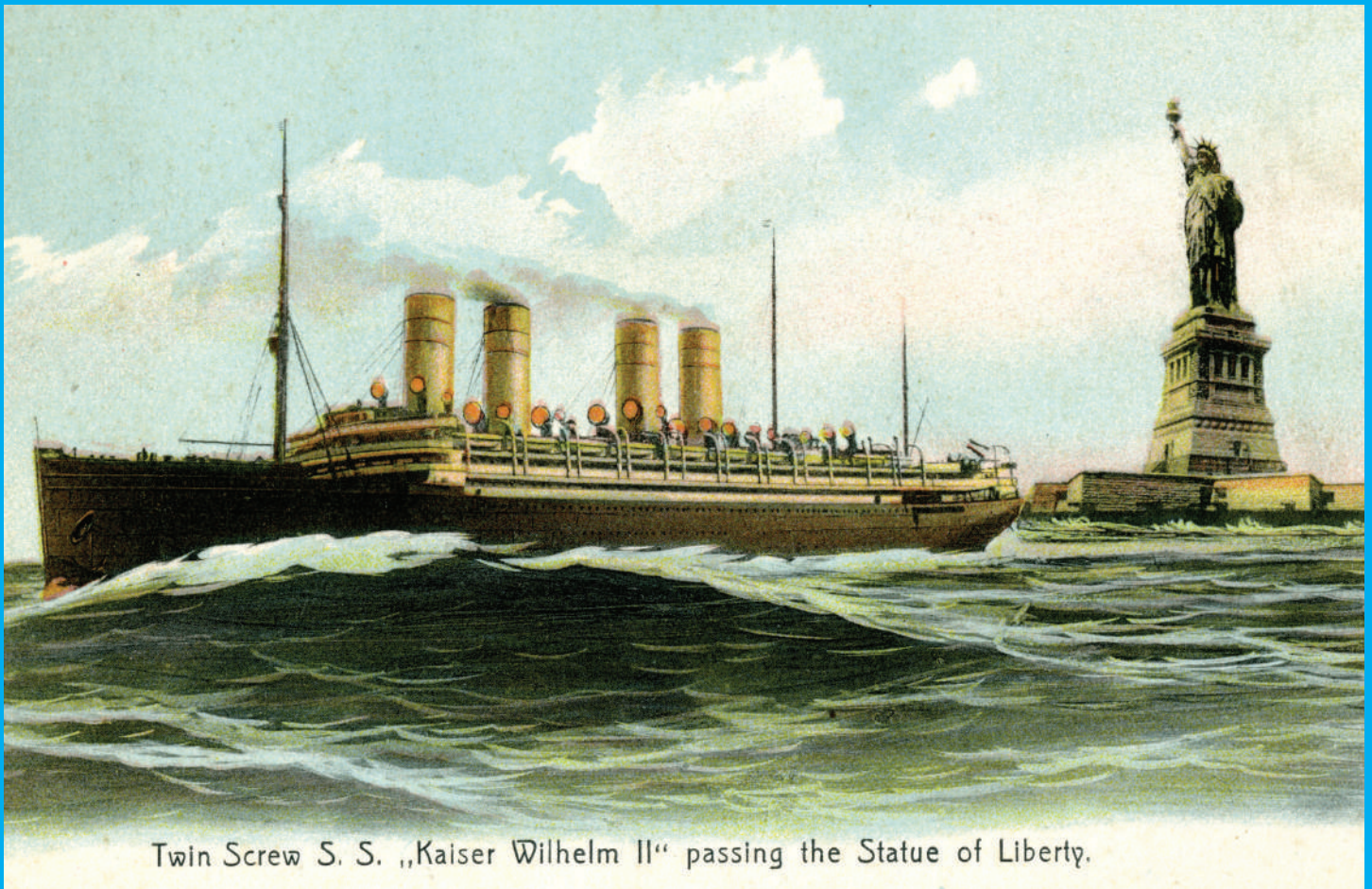


Masterpieces and Curiosities: Alfred Stieglitz's *The Steerage*



Family Guide



Alfred Stieglitz took the photograph entitled *The Steerage* on board a large ship bound for Europe in 1907. This ocean liner called the *Kaiser Wilhelm II* was one of the fastest ships of its time and could carry almost two thousand passengers at once. Most of the room on board was devoted to first-class passengers who enjoyed many comforts on the journey. However, the smaller front section of the ship held the steerage class. Stieglitz, who was traveling in first class, took his photograph while observing the steerage passengers.

Begin by looking at Alfred Stieglitz's photograph *The Steerage* in the glass case in the middle of the gallery.

What do you notice about this scene?

Can you imagine being in this place? What might you hear, smell, and see?

Find one person in this photograph and describe him or her to your grown-up.

As a photographer, Stieglitz was captivated by the forms of the people as well as by other interesting shapes and lines that he noticed in the scene. When taking the photograph, he thought about the arrangement, or composition, of these elements.

What shapes do you notice in *The Steerage*? Do you see them repeated? Where?

Can you find a straight line, a curvy line, a bumpy line, a thin line, and a thick line?

Use your finger in the air to draw some of these lines.



Find the artwork in the back right corner of the gallery entitled *The Steerage* (after Alfred Stieglitz) from *Pictures of Chocolate*.

This artist, Vik Muniz, recreates existing works of art with unusual materials. As the title of this artwork suggests, Muniz made this picture to look like Stieglitz's photograph.

The artist used chocolate syrup to recreate *The Steerage* and then photographed his composition to make the final piece you see here.

How is Muniz's photograph similar to or different from *The Steerage*?

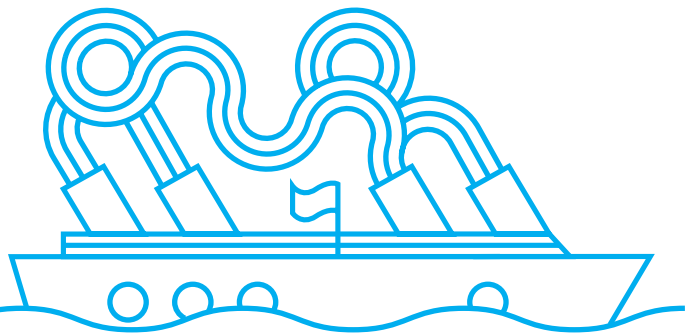
Turn around and find the model of the ship. On your way, look at the various postcards of the *Kaiser Wilhelm II* on the wall to your left.

Walk around the ship. What do you notice?

Look at the front part, or bow, of the ship. This is where the steerage class passengers would have stayed.

Can you imagine where Stieglitz might have been standing when he took the photograph? What makes you think that?

After seeing the model of the full ship, does the scene in the photograph seem different to you? Why?



We hope you enjoyed the exhibition! Visit TheJewishMuseum.org/Families for more information on programs.

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Cover: Postcard of the *Kaiser Wilhelm II* passing the Statue of Liberty. **Above:** Alfred Stieglitz, *The Steerage*, 1907, photogravure. The Jewish Museum, New York. Purchase: Mr. and Mrs. George Jaffin Fund, 2000-6.



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