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*Each time I approach, I feel a volatile mix of wonder and dejection roil in my chest. New York can absorb even this, I tell myself.*

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Justin Davidson

Stairs can be social spaces. The architects of the Metropolitan Museum and the New York Public Library lifted those institutions above Fifth Avenue by means of imposing, processional staircases, but the city's democratic culture eventually appropriated them as hangouts. Visitors use them to roost and recover. Even in winter there's always a scattering of hardy types flaunting their endurance by seeing how long they can relax.

In the past couple of decades, New York has become a city of sittable stairs: the scarlet staircase at Times Square, which functions as both stage and parquet, the lounging bleachers in front of Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, atop Pier 17, or at the water's edge in Brooklyn Bridge Park.



<https://www.artnews.com/art-news/news/thomas-heatherwick-vessel-hudson-yards-review-12163/>

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*It most resembles one of those sets in sci-fi films where members of an alien tribunal gaze down on humans...*

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Andrew Russeth

Mar 18, 2019