

## Artist Statement

The 1820s was the birth of the urban art and cultural Brooklyn we know today, as this was a time when development was at its threshold. Growth spread kindly like a welcomed disease starting in the northern areas of the then called Village of Brooklyn. At the heart of this booming development was Gabriel Furman, who made it a priority to take on the topic of Brooklyn's growth as part of his diverse journals. Yet, what was his opinion of this epic growth that took place, especially in his native neighborhood of Brooklyn Heights? Was he fond of hills being removed, the paved new streets, empty lots ready to be erected on? Or did he dislike these very aggressive urban developments and the future that was to come to not only the *Heights* area, but to the rest of King's County too.

In my abstract version of the Village of Brooklyn in which I used Hooker's 1827 Village of Brooklyn map as a template, I explored streets of the mentioned area of 1827 in conjunction with major infrastructure which was developed within the next ten decades after Furman's death. Of such this includes most essentially the Brooklyn Bridge, Manhattan Bridge, and Brooklyn-Queens Expressway. While other developments are illustrated on my map these three elements significantly helped defined the rich and vibrant culture present in the atmosphere of the area. The establishment of each "element" demanded dramatic change to the body of this part of King's county therefore asked of its citizens to introduce newer and creative ways to showcase the areas infrastructural qualities. There is no better example than the Promenade which was a result of the areas demand to reestablish a strong connection to the Manhattan skyline.

Upon further reading of Furman's journals it is clear-although not directly stated-that he had high aspirations for the then town of Brooklyn, in fact, hoped the area would be distinctively unique from Manhattan. These major infrastructures not only serve their respective tasks of transportation and/or as internationally beloved tourist attractions, but most importantly offered opportunities for the area to flourish and expand in other portions such as the noted Promenade and most recently Brooklyn Bridge Park. It has allowed for communities to establish strong relationships and leadership amongst each other, for instance, D.U.M.B.O. as an ideal example of how the Manhattan Bridge's presence helped shape the manner in which people socialize and congregate there. Finally, perhaps what Furman would appreciate most about these three elements is their ability to divide- as seen in my map-particular parts of the old village of Brooklyn, in return, allowing particular sections to establish characteristics much different from one another. Ultimately, these elements unbalance newcomer's sense of place-with unpredictable layouts- and promote them to have to explore Furman's beloved neighborhood's richness.