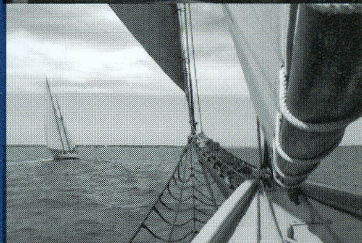
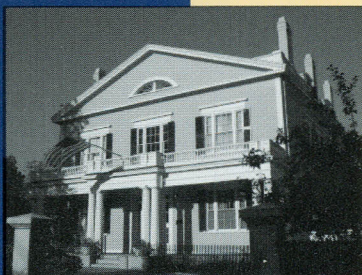




THROUGH THE **DIGITAL LENS**

Photographs by
John K. Robson

An Exhibit
Documenting the
making of
*The City That Lit
The World*



Introduction

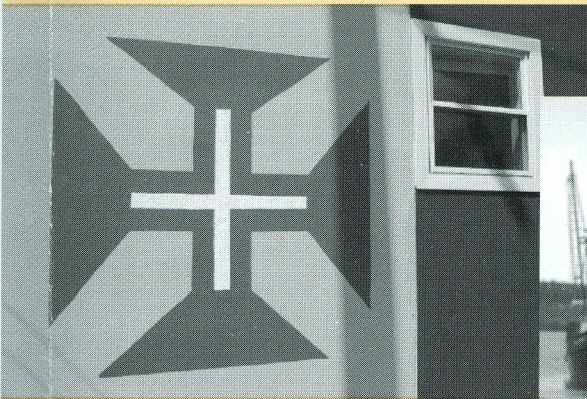
This exhibition chronicles the making of *The City That Lit the World*, the official orientation movie for New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park. Throughout the filming of the movie, roughly a one-year period spanning 2001, New Bedford photographer, John K. Robson, traveled with Northern Light Productions of Boston to capture still images of location filming with his digital camera. Through his lens, the process of making the movie, and the historical and contemporary themes of the park emerged.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

John K. Robson is a traditionally trained photographer, graduating with a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Swain School of Design in New Bedford, Massachusetts. He has been photographing historical and contemporary themes in the South Coast region of Massachusetts for more than seventeen years. His ability to capture the color, light, and casual essence of his subjects have earned him a national reputation of photographic excellence. Robson's work has been published in numerous books by Spinner Publications and he has exhibited his work in fine art venues including the New Bedford Art Museum, Gallery X, and ArtWorks! at Dover Street in New Bedford, MA.

ABOUT DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY

John Robson's classical training as a photographer is evident through the exceptional compositions and formal qualities he achieves in his prints. Yet, Robson's work is all produced using digital equipment and processes. What is a digital camera and how does it differ from a traditional one? A digital camera is designed so that as the photographer presses the shutter release, the image captured goes directly onto a disk that is inserted into the camera. This disk is then downloaded onto a desktop computer where the artist has the ability to process his pictures. He can boost the color, contrast, or composition as he sees fit. Robson very rarely edits his pictures though. The color and composition of his images are almost always what he is actually seeing and recording in the camera itself. The digital images are then printed on special paper using a high-quality inkjet printer.



DOMESTIC NEW BEDFORD

New Bedford is a city of grand architecture and glorious gardens. The Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum, the County Street historic district, and the streets and buildings in the historical park were used to illustrate domestic life in whaling era New Bedford, where ship owners once reigned over global empires and women helped to stabilize a transient sailing community.

MYSTIC SEAPORT AND ERNESTINA

Two locations were used to illustrate life at sea. A July film shoot aboard the whaleship *Charles Morgan* at Mystic Seaport in Connecticut and an August shoot aboard the schooner *Ernestina* in New Bedford brought together men from different backgrounds—not unlike the whaling era. Like a whaling voyage, there were periods of endless watching and waiting. These images depict periods of repose, relaxation, camaraderie and exhaustion in between shoots.

BARROW, ALASKA

In July 2001 a crew of three from Northern Light and John Robson journeyed to the northernmost community in the United States—Barrow, Alaska—to illustrate the connection between New Bedford's commercial whaling industry and the subsistence whaling culture of the Inupiat people of Alaska's North Slope. Here, the crew partnered with locals to set-up and film scenes. Long Arctic summer days and John's spirit of exploration brought us compelling images of contemporary culture and youth.

NEW BEDFORD WATERFRONT AND NEIGHBORHOODS

The commercial waterfront, and the North and South End neighborhoods of the city show the continuity of enterprise, culture and tradition in a city that still makes a living from the sea. Restaurants, bakeries, butcher shops and fish landing facilities willingly opened their doors to a delighted film crew. Not all of the scenes filmed would ultimately end up in the movie, but the local hospitality will be long remembered by the production company. Here are images of John Robson's hometown—New Bedford.

"We all come for a reason.

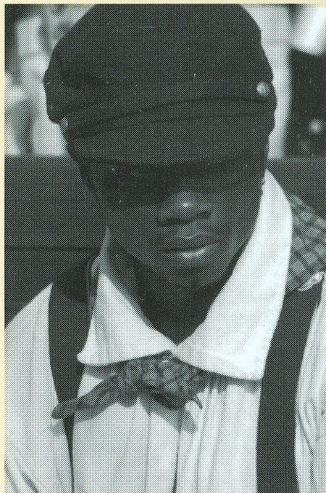
Some crave danger.

Others adventure.

Many boys come to escape.

Some come seeking

their destiny."



To SEE *THE CITY THAT LIT THE WORLD*:

Location	New Bedford Whaling Museum Theater
Hours of Play	Daily, every hour, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Admission	Admission to the movie is free; there is a charge for admission to the museum exhibition areas
Information	New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park 33 William Street New Bedford, MA 02740 (508) 996-4095 www.nps.gov/nebe

Experience Your America

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This publication accompanies the exhibition "Through the Digital Lens: Photographs by John K. Robson".

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