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Introduction

Arnold Lehman: Welcome. I'm Arnold Lehman, director of the Brooklyn Museum. You've just entered our exhibition *American Identities: A New Look*. Through this wonderfully diverse range of paintings and objects from our permanent collection, we are exploring three centuries of American art from new perspectives. This exciting project is supported in part by a generous grant from the Independence Community Foundation.

I can't think of a better place to start than with the image of the twin arches of the Brooklyn Bridge. It's in the corner to the right of the galleries' entrance. This powerful and lofty painting by Georgia O'Keeffe represents the gateway to Brooklyn, and now to this exhibition. Many of the works in this room and in the other galleries are also related to Brooklyn—they're about Brooklyn, or they were made here, or once owned by people who lived here.

These galleries are organized around eight themes. Some are based on time periods and others on more general subjects. Each section is indicated by its own bright wall color. And we've designed this audio tour to enhance your visit with stories about the works of art and the people associated with them.

You'll hear directly from our curators and also from visitors much like yourself—members of the diverse community of which the Brooklyn Museum is proud to be a part.

Your guide on this tour will be the talented New York journalist Dominic Carter, Senior Political Reporter for New York 1. I'm sure you'll find him an informative and engaging narrator.

Thanks so much for coming to the Brooklyn Museum. We hope you will find your visit enjoyable and thought provoking and come back often!