



# World of Fairs: The Century-of-Progress Expositions

*Robert W. Rydell*

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In the depths of the Great Depression, when America's future seemed bleak, nearly one hundred million people visited expositions celebrating the "century of progress." These fairs fired the national imagination and served as cultural icons on which Americans fixed their hopes for prosperity and power.

World of Fairs continues Robert W. Rydell's unique cultural history—begun in his acclaimed *All the World's a Fair*—this time focusing on the interwar exhibitions. He shows how the ideas of a few—particularly artists, architects, and scientists—were broadcast to millions, proclaiming the arrival of modern America—a new empire of abundance build on old foundations of inequality.

Rydell revisits several fairs, highlighting the 1926 Philadelphia Sesquicentennial, the 1931 Paris Colonial Exposition, the 1933-34 Chicago Century of Progress Exposition, the 1935-36 San Diego California Pacific Exposition, the 1936 Dallas Texas Centennial Exposition, the 1937 Cleveland Great Lakes and International Exposition, the 1939-40 San Francisco Golden Gate International Exposition, the 1939-40 New York World's Fair, and the 1958 Brussels Universal Exposition.

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