

NEW YORK

**Dominique (Lower 6th) shares her memories of this year's art trip to the city so nice, they named it twice**

**T**he sheer diversity of New York City is evident in its cultural diversity, from the food vendors found at every street corner to the multitude of different languages spoken on the street. The writer Tom Wolfe said that "Culture just seems to be in the air, like part of the weather." The city has more than 2,000 arts and cultural organizations and more than 500 art galleries so it is no surprise that 16 students, accompanied by Mr Russell and Miss Duggan, were excited to spend our winter half-term discovering the art world that encapsulates New York.

**"Culture just seems to be in the air, like part of the weather."**

Every morning began with a visit to a diner where we experienced the delicacies of New York cuisine. Our waistlines certainly expanded during our stay as we indulged in pancakes, French toast and lots of cooked breakfast. Armed with our sketchbooks and every imaginable media you can carry, we then explored the countless galleries and museums, capturing our own impressions of New York. From the Guggenheim Museum to the Whitney Museum of American Art to The MoMA (Museum of Modern Art), we explored, learnt and were inspired by some of the most amazing modern art you can imagine. The Whitney Museum of American Art contains one of the most important collections of 20th century

American art, the permanent collection containing more than 12,000 works, displaying paintings, drawings, prints, sculptures, installations, video and photography. At the Whitney we discovered a special exhibition of the work of Edward Hopper, the largest collection of his work anywhere in the world; famous for his insights into New York, his work epitomises the diner culture of New York that we had been familiarising ourselves with so diligently. This was a collection about more than just the finished product; we were given an invaluable insight into the mind and processes of one of the greatest American artists, as well as Miss Duggan's irrational fear of clowns.

For me the highlight of the trip was the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The Met's permanent collection contains more than two million works of art from around the world; the collection is mind-blowing, and one could legitimately spend weeks in there and still find something new to see. Located near Central Park on Museum Mile it is an impressive red-brick Gothic Revival stone 'mausoleum' designed by American architects Calvert Vaux and Jacob Wrey Mould. To give you an idea of its size, the Met measures almost a quarter mile long and occupies more than two



million square feet. It is the type of place that immerses you in culture, history and art. Everywhere you looked there was something fantastic to capture your attention. From classical sculptures to aboriginal masks to halls of medieval armour; balconies overlooking enclosed terraces, kimonos, artwork by the most renowned artists in the world, it was the most amazing place I have ever seen.

Very near to the Met is Manhattan's Central Park, designed by Frederick Law Olmsted and Calvert Vaux; it is the most visited city park in the United States. We learnt on our trip that walking around the park the wrong way is a sure way to get shouted at by angry joggers – the epitome of a certain type of New Yorker attitude. One of the most unforgettable moments of the trip was the Empire State Building, which is one of the seven wonders of the modern world. At an incredible 102 floors, it is the tallest building in New York, a record that it maintained for more than 40 years. On a freezing cold evening we braved the weather conditions and queues and took the amazing journey up to the top. Standing at 1,250 feet tall on the observation deck, we had a view over all of the city; from the Brooklyn Bridge, to Times Square, to ordinary streets, you could see it all and the only word to describe it is spectacular.

A couple of days before we had taken a boat trip to the Statue of Liberty, which also gives amazing views of New York, but from below. The Statue of Liberty was a gift to the Americans from France in 1886, sculpted by Frederic Auguste Bartholdi and engineered by Alexandre Gustave Eiffel (the designer of the Eiffel Tower). It is one of the most recognisable icons in the country and it was strange to see it 'in the flesh'; it seemed smaller than I thought it would be but amazing nonetheless, and most of us braved the face-numbingly freezing temperatures to stay outside on the ferry and get the best view of the ultimate symbol of the American Dream.

**T**he trip was only five days long but in attempting to recount everything that happened I just can't do it justice. I could have gone into extensive detail about every aspect of the trip to give you a sense of just how much I enjoyed it but you would probably not have wanted to read a

ten-page article. I have only touched on a couple of the most memorable aspects of our trip, but I could have told you about Grand Central Station, the Hard Rock Café, Times Square, Fifth Avenue, Broadway, shopping, Starbucks or the models in front of Abercrombie & Fitch but there simply isn't enough time to convey just how amazing a trip this was. All I can say is that we saw so much, learnt so much and shopped so much, and you don't get so much enjoyment in most winter half-terms. So a big thank you from all of us to Mr Russell and Miss Duggan for all their hard work and for making it so *ah*-some.

