

Learning Places Fall 2016

SITE REPORT #1

Grand Central Terminal



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INTRODUCTION

One of the world's great railway terminals, often referred to as the gateway to the nation and a marvel of civil engineering, Grand Central Station is a remarkable Beaux-Arts design. The engineer William Wilgus and the architects Reed and Stern were responsible for the terminal's innovative plan, with its extensive tunnels, ramp system, and upper and lower concourses. The class took a trip to see and

sketch the wonderful building and this is my site report on that expedition.

SITE DOCUMENTATION (photos*)



The light structures in this building all stand out, with a lot of the bulbs that we saw being on the outside of the structure that were on. This shot also captures on of the many ramps that allow you to move around freely without the use of stairs to access the various levels.

The shot below is of the corner of 42nd street and Vanderbilt Avenue. You can see more of the bulbs that was mentioned in the photo above as well as see the raised street of Park Avenue that curves around the building. Also in this shot, we can notice that there are two distinct sections to the building



The main concourse inside of Grand Central Station allows for lots of natural light to filter in during all times of the day. We can see the glass walkways in the window as well as clocks. There is an abundance of clocks at Grand Central.



These shots show the Constellations on the ceiling in the main concourse and the glass walkways.

SITE DOCUMENTATION (sketches*)

This is a cutaway of the top half of Grand Central, with the focus on one of the Big Bay windows that faces Park Avenue South.



Grand Central Station as viewed from 42nd Street and Vanderbilt Avenue.

GENERAL NOTES:

- Marvel of Civil Engineering
- Whispering Gallery is located between Vanderbilt hall and the main concourse
- There is a bar upstairs in the Campbell Apartments that's accessible via elevator
- The main concourse has constellations on it, but not ALL of them

INSIGHTS/DISCOVERIES

During this site visit, I discovered that Grand Central Station has a whole upper level called the Campbell Apartment as well as finding out about the "whispering tiles" located between the main concourse and Vanderbilt Hall. There is still a lot more that I want to see there and I'm hoping that the class gets to go on the hidden tour of GCS.

KEYWORDS/VOCABULARY & DEFINITIONS

Neo Classical: Relating to neoclassicism

Tripartite: consisting of three parts.

Beaux-Arts architecture: A very rich, lavish and heavily ornamented classical style

QUESTIONS for Further RESEARCH

1. How much do the light fixtures cost?
2. How many people come through GCS each year?
3. What was the whispering gallery built for?