

Learning Places Fall 2016

# EXPANDED SITE REPORT #1

## Grand Central Terminal



**Jesus Mendoza**

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### INTRODUCTION

Grand Central Terminal, a beautiful terminal that sits right in the heart of Manhattan. Home to many trains and railroads as well as a wonderful sight for sore eyes. This gorgeous station has been seen on many movies and has been the home for a vast amount of wedding photos as well. Although I have

always heard of this grand terminal I honestly never stepped foot inside until this past week. It really was such a grand and magnificent place to visit.

## SITE DOCUMENTATION (photos\*)



In this photo we can see the front view of the marvelous Grand Central Terminal na all its glory. This is quite an important picture because it captures the building from two angles. You can actually see the symmetry in the the building and how well one half mirrors the other. We also get to see the beautiful clock at the top of the terminal surround by the wonderfully hand carved statues. It is really quite the sight.



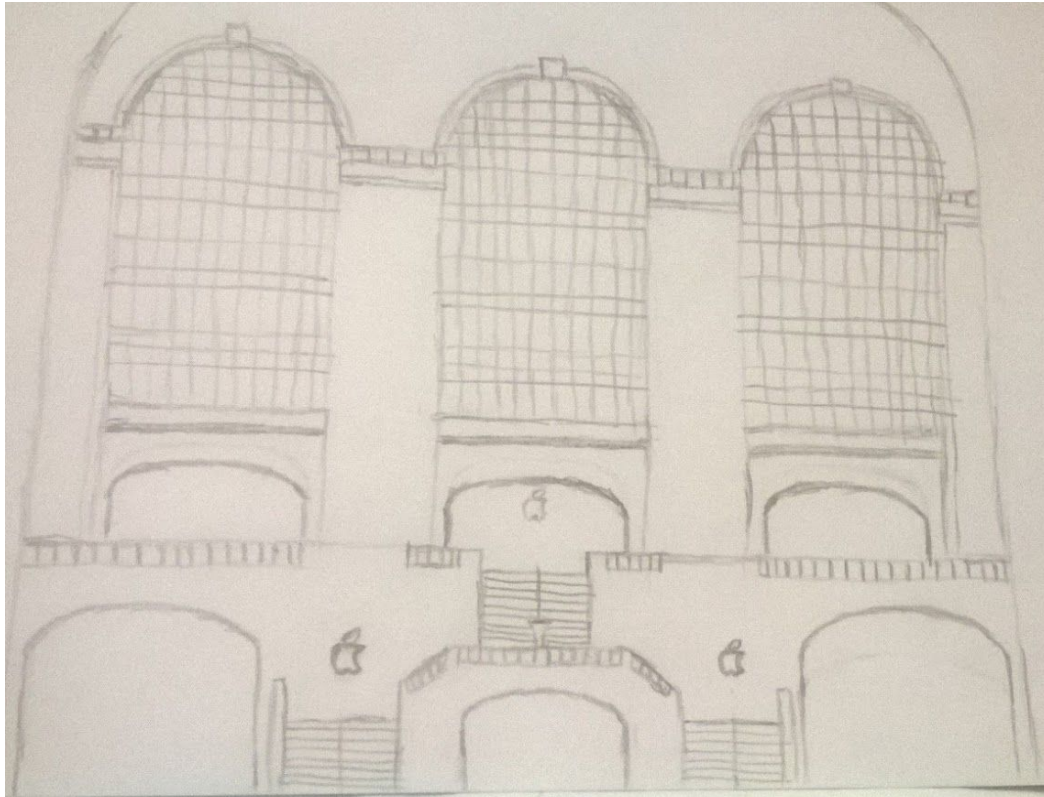
In this photo we are able to see the terminal from within. This area is known as the grand concourse and it is enormous. Note how there is a clock hanging down from the far left side. This shows how important it was to know the time back then in order to be able to catch your train on time. We can also see how much lights are within the building. Not only do they use old style dim lighting but they also made sure a lot of natural lighting could get in as well. What makes this picture so important was that I was able to get a glimpse of even the most minor details.



In this photo we got glimpse of two trains parked in track 28. As you can see the trains look very different from the ones we may take during our regular commutes. They look much more box like and also seem to be much larger in size. This photo is

important because we get to how different these tracks look compared to the old station where the trains were once parked. We are also able to how different these trains look compared steam powered train.

## SITE DOCUMENTATION (sketches\*)



\*2 sketches minimum required per site visit

This is my small sketch of the grand concourse at Grand Central Terminal. It is important because it depicts how much attention I was actually paying during my visit. I did my best to catch every detail but in the end I am not an artist.



This is my sketch of the outside of Grand Central Terminal. Although it does not capture the true essence of what the terminal actually is, I still did my best to draw the important finite details. For example the enormous clock is there and so are the outlines of the statues holding it. All in all at least I tried.

## GENERAL NOTES:

- Cornelius Vanderbilt was famous for building his wealth using railroads.
- The terminal has a 98% on time record.
- The basement lies 13 stories below street level, the deepest basement ever created.
- FDR has a secret station hidden within Grand Central Terminal.
- Known as the “Gateway to the Nation”.

## INSIGHTS/DISCOVERIES

This being my second time visiting the marvelous Grand Central Station I was able to learn so much more. This time around we were able to take a tour that mostly consisted of standing in the middle of the grand concourse. The experience allowed both me and my fellow classmates to learn so many new facts about the place. One astonishing fact I learned was that the basement is actually 13 stories below street level while the glass cat walk we walked on is 110 feet above. Hearing about FDR’s secret station was fascinating and the fact about the clocks being exactly one minute wrong even though the clock in the center of the grand concourse gets its time from the atomic clock was very ironic in my opinion. The overall experience was very insightful and I would gladly take another tour.

## KEYWORDS/VOCABULARY & DEFINITIONS

**\*5 keywords minimum required per site visit**

Electrification: process of powering by electricity rather than another power source

Neoclassicism: the revival of a classical style or treatment in art, literature, architecture, or music

City Beautiful: a reform philosophy of North American architecture and urban planning that flourished during the 1890s and 1900s with the intent of introducing beautification and monumental grandeur in cities

Baths of Caracalla: second largest Roman public baths built in Rome between AD 212 and 217, during the reigns of Septimius Severus and Caracalla.

Train Shed: a building adjacent to a station building where the tracks and platforms of a railway station are covered by a roof

## **QUESTIONS for Further RESEARCH**

1. Was the lack of profit a major contribution to the destruction of Penn Station?
2. How is the golden ratio used at Grand Central Terminal?
3. How exactly will architects be able to tell about the stairs one inch difference in the future?