

FAVORITE  
PLACES OF  
CITY TECH  
TYPE II  
STUDENTS

MY  
TYPE  
PLACE  
OF

TYPOGRAPHIC DESIGN BY DAVID FLORES

## BLACK STAR CAFE

One of my many favorite places in NYC has to be a cafe named Black Star. Something about this cafe always makes me feel very excited even till this day.

The first time I ever encountered this cafe was on my first day of high school. I remember walking past it and at the very first glance, I knew this cafe was going to be where I would spend the majority of my time. What really caught my eye was the interior of the cafe and the environment inside. It's very clean and minimalistic with a modern feeling. People were either drinking their coffee or just doing their work. And it did turn out that way. When I first walked in, the smell was lovely, like fresh bread and coffee, it just felt right. Eventually after school, it became a habit for me and friends to walk in and order some lattes and croissants and do our homework. I have to say not only is the cafe so amazing but the pastries and drinks are just as good. My go to always is a chai latte with a plain croissant.

So if you ever pass through a Black Star, just know that if you step in you are not going to want to leave. It's truly one of those places where you can just relax, talk with friends or even just do your work. It has a special place in my heart, because although it is just a beautiful cafe, it will always remind me of the days when me and my friends would go after class and just talk and bond and help each other out with advice. Black Star was a place, and still is a place, where I would always feel happy.

## THE PIERS AT LIC

The beaming rays of the sun shine down, illuminating the tiled concrete patterns that follow the fencing along the piers. Waves crashing, seagulls cawing in the distance, and the calming sigh of the luscious trees make the Long Island City piers a place to go if you just want to forget all your stresses. Take a walk along the water, and you'll be captured by the beauty of Manhattan from a safe distance. Stumble upon the sand pit that is spacious enough for a fun game of volleyball or play with the pups at the dog park.

If you find yourself too overwhelmed, feel free to sunbathe under the infamous Pepsi-Cola sign that has been an icon since the 1940s. The Long Island City piers are home to an environment that embraces the beauty between city and nature, combining the two to create a gorgeous and relaxing experience for all its visitors. Day or night, winter, or summer, and whether it's by yourself or with friends and family, everyone can find something to enjoy here.

Every time I find myself at the Piers, whether it's to take the ferry from Queens to Manhattan, or just to spend time alone, I play a list of songs that I love, and I embrace the beauty and happiness that the area radiates.

## MY DUMBO

DUMBO has to be my favorite neighborhood in New York. As odd as that name is, it always makes me happy to tell someone new about it. What is DUMBO? Like the Disney movie? Then, I have to explain DUMBO stands for Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass; and that they have probably seen it a million times in photos, a person standing on a cobblestone street, with a great view of the Manhattan Bridge in the background. I was once someone who had never heard of this neighborhood, but that changed when my high school photography class took a trip there. I love walking the bumpy cobblestone streets while looking up at the tall reddish brick buildings surrounding every corner. The view from the water has to be my favorite part, after a day of classes I love to walk all the way near to the water. I like to sit on one of the wooden benches, listening to Sedona and hearing the waves crashing against the rocks in the background.

After sunset is the perfect time to do this, you can see all of the buildings lit up from across the water. Especially in the summer, the breeze feels crisp but not cold. I could just sit there for hours and never get bored. The area is familiar yet fresh, I feel at home there but there is always something new to do or check out. I feel most at home when I'm there, even though I grew up in Manhattan.

I don't really have a favorite spot in NYC, but there are several places I like to go to enjoy my tranquility, life, friends, and family. My room is a location with a lot of importance. Why is that? My room is very valuable to me since it is a location where I can sit and discuss a variety of topics. I concentrate more on completing the tasks at hand. There are no distractions and no one disturbing me in my room, it's just me, myself, and I. When I need it, I enjoy having my own space. Staying in my room makes me feel like I have my own mini-home where I can do whatever I want. In my room, I have my Xbox and TV on my gaming table, and my fitted hat collection is displayed on my walls. I finished my shoe collection. My walls are covered with various wallpapers. It smells quite great. I prefer my room to be tidy, and I like to liven it up with candles. I enjoy playing music, and the genre I choose is hip-hop. When I'm doing work or academics, I listen to music because it helps me focus.

MY BATCAVE

I visited one of Sol Lewitt's wall murals installed in some areas in the city as part of the Art in the Park Exhibits. There is one at Columbus Circle train station on 59th St. I took a look at one of his murals using an app that allows you to scan any painted area of the art work and shows the whole information of the installation. I experienced how interesting this type of tile effect could be as a design, just by scanning a spot of the painted area. I scanned two areas of the mural with my phone and the first one showed me a picture of the artist's exhibition which is the collection that this mural belongs to. Then the second time I did, it showed me the actual picture and description, including the exact location where the artwork is at. It showed me the same picture on my phone as the actual mural I was looking at the station. I have some photos of the mural I took at the station in case someone is interested. I think it's worth the subway trip to see this mural even if it's not immediately, due to the COVID-19 precautions, or if some travel out of our way is needed to see it; but I encourage everyone to notice the interesting digital generated painting design, or any Art in the Park exhibit, even on regular travels in our neighborhood, and take photos of those to share with everyone.

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## SOL LEWITT'S WALL MURALS VISIT

MY FAVORITE PLACE IN NYC

Times Square is my favorite place in NYC because of the lights, the smells and the many stores. I usually smell roasted food when I visit Times Square that has a familiar aroma that I always remember. The lights are everywhere as well as huge screens with advertisements and usually different information for each. This place serves as a center for the shopping district, as I say, in which there are a lot of reknowned stores located around the area. My favorite of these is Red Lobster and AMC since it can be very easy to get lost with all the people walking around admiring the technology on display at the Square. I keep things simple since it is also very loud because of the many people that travel there.

The stores there are busy due to people coming in to admire some of the best that NYC has to offer.



I am one of those people that travel to stores there just to see the difference and where I would like to do my business. Visiting Times Square is time-consuming due to it being a tourist attraction, but it always seems worthwhile. The advertising there is amazing since it lets us see things in a way that makes us feel enthusiastic about something that we want or want to do. The lighting at Times Square makes one feel confident since not much is overshadowed, allowing things like the roasted peanut cart and the Mascots that walk around to catch our attention, which I find good for nostalgic reasons. There are also a good number of police that roam the area to make people feel safe, which is great since it is certainly an area that I would travel too again when I could.

## CENTRAL PARK

My favorite place in NYC to visit is Central Park. Central Park is 2 blocks away from where I grew up and across the street from my old elementary school. Not only do I have early memories of walking by or through parts of it almost everyday from as far back as I can remember I also have fond memories of feeding the ducks as a kid.

Every year in elementary school we had a family picnic day in one of central park's many fields. We would go in the

morning and stay until school got out. Other schools would be there and we would play games or just sit on a blanket and take it all in.

Other memories I have in Central Park are Saturdays with my dad and my little brother when we had nothing to do. We would walk around the entire Central Park and discover different playgrounds, pathways and admire the river. Besides all the great memories I have, Central Park

is my favorite place just because of the scenery. There's multiple beautiful gardens and fountains.





## FULTON ST. TREE IN FRONT OF MY PARENTS' STORE



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I remember always going to my parents' store as they worked long hours. At the time, it was a fried chicken and pizza shop on Fulton St. We would go at 8am and be there till 10pm. We always tried to make the most of our time. My sister and I would eat a bunch of snacks and make random dance routines. When it was fall, we would bundle up and make our way downstairs to the break room to be by this extremely little rotating heater fan. We would watch movies downstairs that we brought from the library and put them into this portable DVD player, which was our savior when we were bored. We were toasty, but we would also fight for hogging the fan too long. But the best thing would be seeing this huge tree that would overlook the corner of the street. Whenever it was sunset, we would see the leaves of the tree change color, as if it were matching the sun. I would see people enjoying our food and sitting under the tree. In the winter, we would see all the leaves fall, as the snow was all over the branches. Our customers would buy our hot chocolate and sit under the tree, again, hearing their laughter as their kids would throw snowballs at each other and run around. People running for their bus, being late for school and work, sliding on ice would be fun. As spring came, flowers would bloom and kids would pick the flowers to show their mom. They would jump and their little backpacks would shake with each jump, with a bright smile on their faces. On the other hand, I would be sneezing as my allergies were the worst in the springtime. Summer rolled around and we would be there full time. There would be no AC and we would go into the extra walk-in freezer downstairs and do random choreography to songs we downloaded on our parents' phone. We would get yelled at to get out since the freezer would break if we kept it open for too long. My sister and I still laugh at the fact that we would still go there from time to time.

## MY HOME

I HAVE LIVED IN NEW YORK FOR THE PAST 18 YEARS OF MY LIFE. MY FAMILY MOVED A lot until finding the house we are living in today. Although I have visited a bunch of places around New York City there is no place that will make me feel safe and comfortable like my home. I have grown up in this house and created friendships with people around the neighborhood. I have also fallen a number of times on the sidewalk outside my house. I created a number of memories in this place that looking back at makes me happy, laugh and sad. My house is also a huge reason why I rather stay home than go out.

My favorite memory in this house is the day I got my dog. I had begged my mother for a puppy every year for my birthday. She finally said, "yes." The first day we got her she was having trouble adjusting, so my mother made the decision to take her back and wait till she was a bit older. As a little kid, I did not understand why she was taking her back and I cried. A few weeks later, I came home from elementary school and asked my mother when we were getting her back. She was very serious and said, "we will no longer be getting her." I was extremely disappointed and made my way towards the kitchen. I found a blanket on the floor and there she was. She was the best surprise I had ever received and she grew up in the same home I grew up in.

## SOHO, MANHATTAN: SHOWFIELDS

**N**ow I'm sure everyone is familiar with lower Manhattan, also known as SOHO Manhattan. My favorite place in Soho is a store called Showfields. It is a multi-level store that highlights a unique sense of style and art. Many people may not know this but I am very fond of art and museums, so whenever I have any free time on my hands I go to Showfields. When I first came across this store I didn't know exactly how to feel, but after going back a second time I instantly grew fond of it. This store brings me peace. Everyone has a comfort zone and when I go out to lower Manhattan to shop, Showfields is mine.

Overall Soho itself is a place I love to go to, especially when shopping or just simply to go eat out on a nice day.

Showfields bring a variety of differentness and the idea of seeing that in a store is very appealing. It is very funky and colorful. Every floor has its own unique sense. It's like a mini museum so you can never get bored. I know I never do. The idea of loving art and being able to see in a store among other brands and designs is truly something amazing. I love it so much that I even brought a family member here. This may not be something very deep but it is a place of joy for me and that's all I could ever need. It may seem like I'm just writing about any other store out in the world but to me, Showfields' entire energy/aura just sits well with me.

*Every summer since I was small my family and I would take a drive to my aunt's house and we would meet up with all of my family. She had this huge staircase on the right side of her house and a big living room area. Her kitchen reminded me of a diner because there were neon lights and fake menus along the walls.*

She had this huge double-sided sink which had one side for dry dishes and one side for dirty ones. The fridge was always so full that we would have to use the snow outside to keep the sodas cold. The couch was grey with these huge pillows and a wool knitted blanket draped along the base. The wall along the television was wooden like a cabin, and a huge balcony behind the couch had the smallest grill I've ever seen. There was this thin hallway which is where the guest room was and the guest bathroom, but upstairs was my cousin's room which reminded me of grapes because there was a calming aura surrounding it. She had these royal purple curtains that the sun would shine right through, but it was just enough light to keep the room dim. Her bed was white and it seemed to have these spiral designs, which reminded me of a fence in a rich neighborhood. I remember this one time we were jumping on her bed and we saw a ladybug on her ceiling and ended up releasing it out her window on a leaf. Across from her room was a very dark bathroom that seemed to have an eerie feel to it. The basement was where my family would hold events like Easter or Thanksgiving, and the adults would play beer pong and sometimes let us throw the ball in the cup. I never noticed anything else down there; all I remember was rubble and a dartboard on the patched cracked wall, and a singular light with a string attached to turn it on.

My favorite thing to do was go to this park down the street from my aunt's house. It was like, once we crossed the bridge it was a different place. The park was surrounded by water and there were swans swimming around. The park was on top of sand, and gum was along the back of the rock climbing wall and slide. There was a gazebo that had two overgrown benches and smelled like mold. We would go to this park almost every day as kids and we would run back before sundown. My aunt made us baked ziti and potato salad on special occasions. On Easter one year we had an egg hunt in the park and after my uncle drove us to McDonald's to get milkshakes. This is my favorite place because whenever I think back on these times they make me nostalgic, because now that covid came around we can't do anything like that when we go visit my aunt. The last thing I remember us doing was taking a road trip to a waterpark, and we went so far upstate that we saw deer and farmland and it smelled fresh. I could feel the sun on my face and it was one of the last times my family and I had fun like that.

## MY AUNT VIVIAN'S HOUSE

## PRINCE TEA HOUSE

Not too quiet, nor too noisy—this café is a popular hangout spot for the residents of the Bensonhurst area. Upon entering, the guest has the choice of either dining in one of the comfortable booths at the front, or dining in the greenhouse area in the back of the eatery. With chandeliers hanging over each table and shelves of small potted plants, the decor is reminiscent of the Victorian era

with a splash of modern chic. Foliage and potted plants decorate the walls and shelves of the café, creating a comfortable and beautiful space. Their menu features dishes ranging from snacks like popcorn chicken to sweets like *pâte à choux* with ice-cream. Of course, since the words “tea house” are in the name of the establishment, obviously fragrant

teas are readily served with delicious sweets. The Rose Lover is a pot of sweet rose milk tea that I often share with my friends, and the Prince Passion—an amalgamation of apples, passion fruit, peach, mango, and orange—comes close in second. With so many teas to pair with sweets and a gorgeous setting, it’s hard not to come to love this café.

# CENTRAL PARK

My favorite place in NYC to visit is Central Park. Central Park is 2 blocks away from where I grew up and across the street from my old elementary school. Not only do I have early memories of walking by or through parts of it almost every day from as far back as I can remember, but I also have fond memories of feeding the ducks as a kid.

Every year in elementary school we had a family picnic day in one of Central Park's many fields. We would go in the morning and stay until school got out. Other schools would be there and we would play games or just sit on a blanket and take it all in. Other memories I have of Central Park are Saturdays with my dad and my little brother when we had nothing to do. We would walk around the entire park and discover different playgrounds and pathways, and admire the river. Besides all the great memories I have, Central Park is my favorite place just because of the scenery. There are multiple beautiful gardens and fountains.

# WARM BOWL OF COMFORT

I love many places in New York City but there are some that hold a special place in your heart. For me, that place is tucked into the busy metro streets of Jackson Heights, Queens. There is a Vietnamese restaurant that I adore called Thai Son. I wouldn't describe the restaurant as fancy or commercial, but it has its own character and charm. As soon as you walk inside, the décor screams authentic and the most irresistible smells of pho, lime, crisp onions, cilantro, and grilled pork flood your nostrils, instantly making you salivate. You are always greeted with friendly smiles (now probably under a mask). The service is fast, to the point, and all the staff are just wonderful, but not overly friendly.

*The highlight of this place is the food—and the price! I've tried about everything on the menu and it is delicious, you really cannot go wrong with any dish. But my favorite of all would be the classic pho, a Vietnamese rice noodle soup with beef stock, cilantro, onions, and meat toppings. The ingredients may seem simple, but nothing beats this classic dish for me. The broth warms deep to your soul as it goes down. It's made with 12 hours or more of simmering love, so how could you possibly not taste the love? The noodles are filling but at the same time light, and don't feel overly heavy with beef broth. Perfection in a bowl.*

This local Vietnamese restaurant may seem ordinary, but when I think of this place I think of comfort. Undoubtedly, my memories associated with this place contribute to the pleasant feelings I have towards it. Until I was 18, my grandma and I lived together and we used to go to this restaurant all the time. We lived nearby so it became our “to-go” place. We went so frequently that the servers would recognize us and remember our orders. I have many fond memories eating at this restaurant with her and the staff always being so lovely. My grandma lives in Korea now but even years later, I still love coming here. The food and staff mixed with special memories of this restaurant bring me warmth and comfort. Neither the staff, service, nor the food ever changes, and the décor has remained the same for many years, and probably will for many years to come. I can always count on them to warm me up through rain or shine and in sadness or happiness. All it takes is that warm bowl of comfort to feed your soul sometimes. I hope this place never changes.

# ROCKAWAY BEACH

Since I was a kid I have always enjoyed the beach; the sun, the water, the sky, everything feels different when you are in the beach. Back in my country we had to take road trips that lasted hours to be able to go to the beach, and I think that was part of the experience and the reason why I would always get so happy when my parents would mention that we will be going to the beach that summer. I already knew in which car I would be going, what cousins would be going with me, and I could even imagine what kind of music we would be listening to. As I mentioned before, everything at the beach would feel different, even if it was just a simple hot dog or a ham a cheese sandwich. It was special.

## **When I moved to New York I was not expecting to have the beach so close to me.**

When I moved to New York I was not expecting to have the beach so close to me. It was amazing, the fact that I could just take the train and then a ferry, and I would be there in just an hour or hour and a half. Even though my family or cousins were not there, I could still feel that sense of joy when I would touch the sand or when ordering chicken fingers with my friends. Rockaway beach has become my favorite space ever since I moved to New York; I will never forget the sunsets you can experience while riding a bike through the beach pier, having the air breaking on your face. I will always be grateful for Rockaway beach, for bringing the joy of my childhood to my adult life.



## ***WHERE THE MAGIC BEGINS***

My favorite place is my room, it's where the magic happens. I don't really like going outside and since I don't have any friends, I just stay at home. I like my room a lot because that's where I play video games with my friends and watch anime. I had depression at the start of high school and the only thing that could cheer me up was being able to play video games with my friends.

We laughed, cried, argued with each other, I felt more comfortable. I also learned a lot while watching

anime, there's lots of good quotes in anime that helped me with moving on and not giving up. "If you're looking back all the time, you'll never get ahead!" -Gray Fullbuster. I know there's a whole world out there for me to see but I will always come back to my room because that's where I feel happy the most. Also my bed is in my room, so whenever I feel sad or want to cry, I can just lay down in bed and cry. I don't know many places since I barely go outside but I know I can truly be myself when I'm in my favorite place.

# THE WHITNEY MUSEUM

My favorite place to be in NYC is the Whitney Museum because it's so calming. I absolutely love going here. I love seeing new artwork. They always switch it up. It's so exciting to go because you never know what art work you will encounter.

I got accepted into their competitive program for youth insights. I was so excited to be in my favorite place with a very cool ID with my picture on it. I was living the dream. Then I got to see exhibits before

they were opened to the public. It was the best. It was called Vida Americana, still one of my favorite exhibits. It's definitely one of my favorite places of all time. I try to go often. The teen events are so amazing they got me through high school meeting new people. I would recommend this place 10000 percent if you want to have a good time seeing art and enjoying the rooftop views of the Empire state and if you are lucky enough to see the sunset.

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Al-Aqsa is a very popular restaurant in my neighborhood located in Parkchester, Bronx. I've never had the urge to eat in a restaurant before. After visiting Al-Aqsa it has become my favorite restaurant. They have the food that I ate when I was a child. Whenever I go to this restaurant I feel like I want to spend more time. This restaurant has my favorite food: chana chaat. Chana chaat is a street food in Sylhet, Bangladesh. It can be served as a snack, a side dish or a light meal. It is made from boiled and fried chickpeas served with chaat masala. It is a versatile dish that has many regional variations. The word chana means chickpeas and the word chaat means it is derived from tasty. Every time I go to Al-Aqsa it reminds me of my childhood when I first ate chana chaat at the vendors outside of school. When I was a child I used to eat food from vendors every day. Outside my school gate, there was a vendor who used to sell puchaka, pakora, samosa, aloo kabli and chana chaat. My favorite food was chana chaat. I used to take money from home to buy food from vendors during lunch breaks or after school. I have always enjoyed eating this vendor food and have so many wonderful memories.

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