

Much More than Fine Arts

-Caroline Hooper

On Monday morning, the first of October, three blocks of Art Studio I students spent their time admiring some of the finest artwork in the world. I was one of the sixty art students who were fortunate enough to attend this field trip. The bus ride there set the tone for the astounding art we would see that day. The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston was our destination that morning. We could not have asked for a better day. It was a crisp autumn morning decorated with colorful New England foliage. Fierce oranges, bright yellows and bold reds whirled around the streets and clung to the trees despite the wind. The light blue sky gradually blurred into deeper shades of blue as it stretched higher and contrasted dramatically against the leaves. I sat wide-eyed on the bus trying to take in the beauty of the city.

We arrived in the parking lot, unloaded from the bus, and broke up into smaller groups of five or six. A few steps into the museum and I could feel a whole new atmosphere. Quiet. Respectful. Wonderstruck. At least it felt that way for me. I had never before been to this museum. Every inch of wall space, floor space and even the ceiling was strategically arranged with artwork.

All of the art students knew the schedule: Ancient Greek then Native American ceramics. Our goal was to get ideas for our own ceramic unit that was coming up in Studio I. We sketched pieces of pottery we were inspired by in our sketchbooks. We made note of who created it, when it was made and what the symbols on the artwork meant. I contemplated just how old were the pieces. I thought about the history and how all this artwork had been delicately preserved. It felt, in a way, wrong to quickly snap digital pictures of ancient masterpieces with my iPhone.

As the ceramic viewing part of the day wrapped up, we mingled our way up to the Contemporary Art wing. Breathtaking. Neon signs hung from the ceiling and were mounted on the wall high above us. Strings of glittery gold beads hung down from a tall wide doorframe. A yellowy armchair with thousands of black squares on it. A life size painting of shelves filled with miscellaneous objects. A framed piece made of of produce stickers. All these caught my eye. I could spend weeks in that museum and never run out of things to admire and ponder.

Some of the artwork really confused me. I read the short explanations on the wall and thought I'd find my answers. I didn't. It dawned on me that I liked being confused about the art. I love how it's all up to interpretation. When so many things in life are concrete, art doesn't need to follow any cookie cutter rules. Sure, there are techniques that will improve a painting or sculpture but I think it's up to the imagination. As a first year art student, I am thankful for the field trip and plan on visiting the Museum of Fine Arts again soon.