

# Metropolitan museam of art

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Rob Murphy Art and Culture Extra Credit My Second Visit to the Met 12/10/11

My second visit to the Metropolitan Museum of Art was equally enjoyable as the first. On my first visit, I hovered around the American wing and Egyptian wing mainly. On the contrary, my second visit consisted of a trip to enjoy the Greek and Roman wing. Wings such as the Egyptian, are big enough to re-visit, as I was able to. The works I was able to enjoy on my second trip were the "Cleopatra" sculpture, and the world renowned "Perseus with a Head of Medusa". The "Cleopatra" sculpture was quite a sensational one.

It was carved by William Wetmore Story out of marble; taking eleven years, it was completed in 1869. The Boston bred sculptor's masterpiece is in Gallery of American painting and sculpture of the Met. This beautiful sculpture is of the Egyptian queen, born in 69 BC. Alike many of William Wetmore Story's sculptures, Cleopatra is sitting down in a chair. The Queen is wearing a long dress with her left breast exposed. She is accessorized with jewelry and an Egyptian head piece. Her facial expressions and body positioning suggests she is in a deep state of thought. Whether reflecting on past behavior or contemplating future actions, the figure is thinking about deeds of cataclysmic significance" (Metropolitan Museum of Art). This suggests Cleopatra is said to be thinking of something of great significance. The reason I chose the sculpture of Cleopatra as one of the works from my second visit is because it was understandable, and expresses a clear thought. She is a famous figure, and once I witnessed it, it was enjoyable to see something familiar. His sculpture made of marble is beyond my imagination of how someone could complete this.

The neoclassical sculptors, "Cleopatra", were one of William Wetmore Story's most applauded works of art. The second work of art I appreciated on my trip to the Met was "Perseus with the Head of Medusa". "Perseus with the Head of Medusa" is located in the European Sculpture and Decorative Arts hall. Italy native Antonio Canova carved this sculpture pning from 1804 to 1806. In addition to the past sculpture, this was also carved out of marble. It displays Perseus, who is a mythical hero who was said to have defeated various archaic monsters; Most notably known for the Greek hero who killed Gordon Medusa , as displayed in the sculpture.

Medusa was a monster who, when someone would lay eyes upon her would be transform into stone. After being killed by Perseus, Medusa's head was used as a weapon by this hero , and later given as a gift to his goddess, Athena, as a shield ornament. This greatly detailed sculpture shows Perseus nude , wielding a shield in one hand and medusas decapitated head in the other. He is shown staring at the severed head of Medusa. Perseus takes pride in slaying this monster , and holds her head high and might with pride.

The face of Medusa looks unpleasant, and has a defeated expression. The mythical hero has her by the hair, except , her would be hair is represented by snakes. The reason I chose to write about this sculpture is because along with Cleopatra, Medusa was a familiar figure to me . In addition , I am also intrigued by Greek mythology such as Medusa and Perseus. The extreme detail of this exquisite sculpture also caught my attention. Canova's detail is remarkable. The fact that he can capture facial expressions, thoughts, and predictable actions in this sculpture is phenomenal.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art is an extraordinary experience. Being lucky enough to enjoy it twice is rare. While gawking at everything you lay eyes upon, you have a sense of disbelief. To think these unparalleled sculptures were hand carved, in days of minutetechnologyis beyond understanding. These two works of art are truly amazing and the fact that they were kept in such immaculate condition is marvelous. The reasons I chose these two was because, I was familiar with both characters and I was interested to do research on them, and learn more.

In conclusion I would recommend to anyone planning on taking a trip to this museum to visit these two miraculous works of art. Bibliography: [http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/search-the-collections?gallerynos=548&ft=\\*](http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/search-the-collections?gallerynos=548&ft=*)  
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