

Savannah Simpson
Ola High School
Review Writing Competition

Heavy doors protect the artistic stories within the Columbia Museum of Art, located in the business district of Columbia, S.C.. The essence of the museum placed me at peace, captivating my eye, taking me on a historic journey of worldly masterpieces.

The sleek, modern design of the museum causes the viewer to be absorbed further into the museum, providing the opportunity to wander into the intricate detail and inspirational story each art piece entails.

For the family friendly price, an adult can experience the meticulous pieces for a minimal cost of \$12; however, if you are of military personnel, your entrance fee is \$10. Students of all kinds are welcomed into the astonishing building at a price of \$5; minors six and under are exempt of an entry fee.

Once receiving a white entrance sticker, the viewer begins the aweing experience the museum offers.

If little ones are not as fond of art as others in the group, children are welcomed into the Interactive Education Gallery, located on the primary floor to the right, to read books, color a masterpiece of their own, and observe different pieces of art from kids similar to their age.

Upstairs lies the permanent art gallery which is exemplary for a history guru or Bible expert, a person who has a high appreciation for the arts, or a an individual who has visited many museums of classical or modern art. A solid two to three hours would be an ideal time in order for one to walk into each of the fourteen galleries in its entirety.

The museum expresses different tones and emotions in each gallery room which is observed in the changing of wall color; darker colors present more of a darker tone, lighter color choices make the viewer feel peace and joy.

Red walls symbolize the royalty and power the art may inhabit. Color choices help the viewer predict the type of artwork to be displayed.

The Columbia Museum of Art utilizes a numbered system in order to help the viewer understand the story behind the piece and why it is found in a certain gallery. Inside the glass display box, each piece is numbered, matching an excerpt on the wall entailing the pieces history.

An exuberating asset the muesum encompasses would include an impressingly high level of artistic diversity, highlighting various culture groups from international and local artists, and their way of implementing a family fun environment for all ages.

The permanent gallery upstairs sets on a more mature level than other exhibits, the Interactive Education Gallery for example, and would receive a personal rating of "PG-13" due to some graphic nudity which may not be appropriate for all ages.

People of all descriptions squint their eyes and place their hands on their hips to witness the microscopic detail the highlighted artists have created, providing an immaculate collection of world masterpieces. The collection the museum obtains includes different artists from different parts of the world, ranging from Sandro Botticelli and Matteo di Giovanni of Italy to Attus Wolffort of Belgium.

The assemblage of art is compiled in effortless awe as each golden frame grows in size, new textures of velvet are introduced, and as a simple stroke of the paintbrush grows in age.

The air in the building is filled to the brink with peaceful energy and the will of art to tell silent stories, stories such as the birth of Jesus Christ which is seen in Sandro Botticelli's "*The Nativity*", which is the only one of his art pieces displayed outside of Italian borders. The additive of furniture art also changes the tone in each room as you begin to witness the level of development from one period to the next.

The museum also offers free public tours every Saturday and Sunday with an option to schedule a cheaper tour during the week day, including a free tour guide. The friendly staff is welcomed to answering any questions one may have and will greet you with warm smiles.

One can witness the breathtaking journey Tuesday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday from noon till 5 p.m.. The museum acquires special hours for the first Friday of every month, opening at 11 a.m. and closing at 8 p.m.; the first Friday of December, the museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m..

The Columbia Museum of Art is a must see. People of all ages, cultures, and backgrounds can absorb the positive energy circulating within the grey and cream walls in order to turn their visit into the ideal learning experience.

From experience, the educated staff is eager to share their knowledge with the viewer and share the wonders that art can encompass. One paintbrush stroke has the ability to change a person's life; this is an attribute the museum has the capability to do.

As you exit through the same five glass doors, you are left yearning for the still, beautiful silence each gallery contains. My experience at the museum is one of complete awe which I suggest every person should experience.