

Jason Kang
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Artist Date

Like almost any other Saturday, the hustle and bustle of the crowd at Times Square was able to be seen and felt from literally blocks away. With a heavily mixed crowd of passionate tourists, street performers, ticket sellers, and your native New Yorkers all jamming New York's own version of the Ginza district, the place was a spectacle with its bright lights and carnival-like atmosphere that could be seen as visually striking by first time visitors.

The smell of roasted nuts and pretzels was quite an addictive one. With food vendors, peddling hot dogs, and other dishes on the street corners, I realized that nothing compares to the fantastic smell of these goodies, as I bought a pretzel for myself without any hesitation. A flock of foreign tourists caused an annoyance as they started to block my way and kind of had to fight my way through to pass by.

Every time I come to Times Square, the huge LED billboards instantly catch my eye. The first billboard that caught my eye this time was the M&M's billboard placed outside the M&M's World store on Broadway. With tons of people walking out of the store with their M&M's bags, which is probably filled with delicious chocolate, I suddenly felt a craving for M&M's. To avoid the crowd that I cannot bear with, I entered a Duane Reade nearby and bought myself a pack of M&M's that I haven't eaten in years. It felt good to say the least.

Three hours suddenly passed by, and the sun was about to set. As I was walking, I saw the famous red stairs that I've never walked up to in my life. I was gazing at all these flashing lights and that is when I started to get inspired. Many different things started to cross my mind. I had all these random flashbacks of the previous times I've been to Times Square, especially when I was little. It felt really great and I was able to find 30 minutes of peace, just sitting down and thinking while being surrounded by all these energetic tourists flashing their cameras. It was filled with people sitting down and taking in the lights on one side and couples with their H&M and Forever 21 shopping bags just sitting down and relaxing on the other.

As someone who is usually uncomfortable traveling to places alone due to the feeling of solitude especially in the summer, I was hesitant to take the trip at first. However, being at Times Square did not feel like I was part of the crowd at all. I just felt like a number like how I sometimes feel here at Rutgers with everyone minding their own business. It was an interesting experience moving by myself in Times Square, which is often regarded as the "Crossroads of the World", without having someone to constantly chat with or take "tourist-like" memorable pictures that could possibly last a lifetime. Maybe coming again alone in the near future won't seem like a bad idea.