

State of the City: Parnassus, U.S.A.

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*New York is the concentrate of art and commerce
and sport and religion and entertainment, bringing
to a single compact arena the gladiator, the evangelist,
the promoter, the actor, the trader and the
merchant.*

—E. B. White

From Coney Island to Staten Island, from Queens to the Bronx, the City of New York possesses the greatest concentration of cultural resources in the country. Nowhere else do mammon and the muse coexist with such creative tension. Nowhere else are all the arts and humanities seen and studied, sought and sold, performed and sometimes ennobled. It's an unfinished cavalcade, with a healthy tendency to deprecate its yesterdays and achievements and with a short memory for its current splendors. But for participants and audiences alike, it's still Parnassus-on-the-subway.

New York's visual and linear arts—its museums, galleries, publications, libraries and universities—bring the world's artistic and intellectual treasures within busing and sometimes walking range. In scores of independent schools and centers, dreamers can strive to dance, to sculpt, to paint, to act, to play music. In private and public educational institutions, students can learn to write, perform and direct, search the past or invent the future.

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