

Museum Observation #1

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While most know of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, the main museum is not the only collection the MET has to offer. The Cloisters, located in Fort Tryon Park, NYC, is an offshoot of the MET that focuses solely on medieval European architecture and art. This museum is housed in a medieval-style building at the top of a large, rocky hill, with a winding road that brings you to the entrance – or, if you fancy some exercise, a long, rather steep staircase cut into the side of the hill. The museum's collection includes medieval art, tapestries, sculptures, even a few tombs and a garden at the center. The building itself could be said to be an exhibit, with its stone walls and winding staircases. The Cloisters is smaller than the MET itself, yet still holds an incredible amount of history and art within its walls.

As part of the MET, the Cloisters is afforded quite a large social media presence, as well as interactive elements that may not be as easily found in smaller museums. The Cloisters has its own page on the main MET website, which not only provides hours and an address for the museum, but also lists upcoming events, a map and history of the museum, links to accessibility options, and more. At the bottom of the page are links to the MET's various social media platforms, including Twitter, Instagram, and Youtube.

On this website, you are also able to search for individual exhibits, which come with photographs, the same description as what is located on the wall plaque, a description of the exhibit or artifact itself, and the specific audio file used in the museum's audio tour for that particular object. In this way, a patron can experience an exhibit from home, complete with the audio file used in audio tours on the actual premises.

Visit / Plan Your Visit / The Met Cloisters

The Met Cloisters

Hours
Open Seven Days a Week
 March – October: 10:00 am – 5:15 pm*
 November – February: 10:00 am – 4:45 pm*

Address
 99 Margaret Corbin Drive
 Fort Tryon Park
 New York, NY 10040

[Buy Tickets](#)

Closed Thanksgiving Day, December 25, and January 1.

Screenshot of MET Cloisters homepage

Tomb of Ermengol VII, Count of Urgell, ca. 1300–1350

Catalan

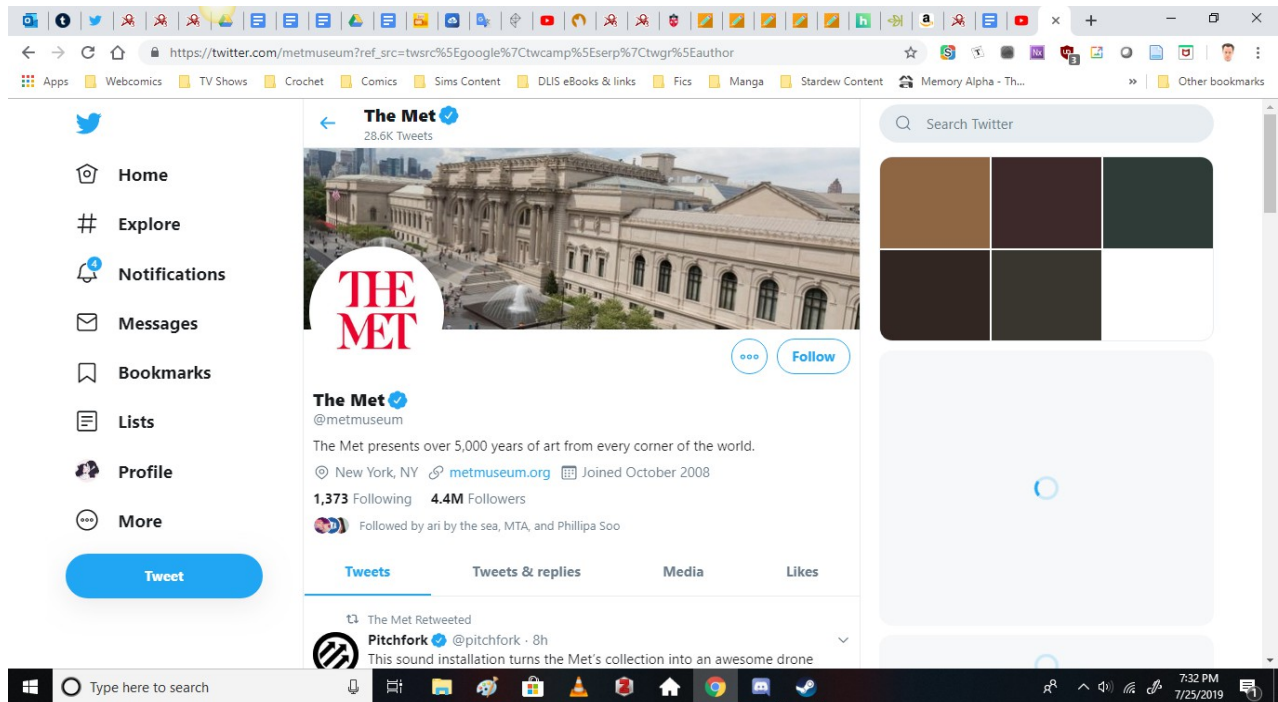
The rebuilding of the monastic church at Les Avellanes in the Gothic style was undertaken by Ermengol X, count of Urgell, who died in 1314. It was his intention to establish a family burial chapel in the church, and the three large tombs now assembled around the three walls of this room may all date from that time. This tomb ensemble is said to have been made to house the remains of Ermengol VII, who died in 1184 and who was erroneously thought to have founded the present monastery at Bellpuig de les Avellanes. The ensemble was constructed of disparate but contemporary elements and was probably put together in its present form in the eighteenth century when the monastery was revitalized and the abbot was attempting to reestablish land and water claims through historical right. The severe style of the effigy

Public Domain

Screenshot of page for the Tomb of Ermengol VII, Count of Urgell

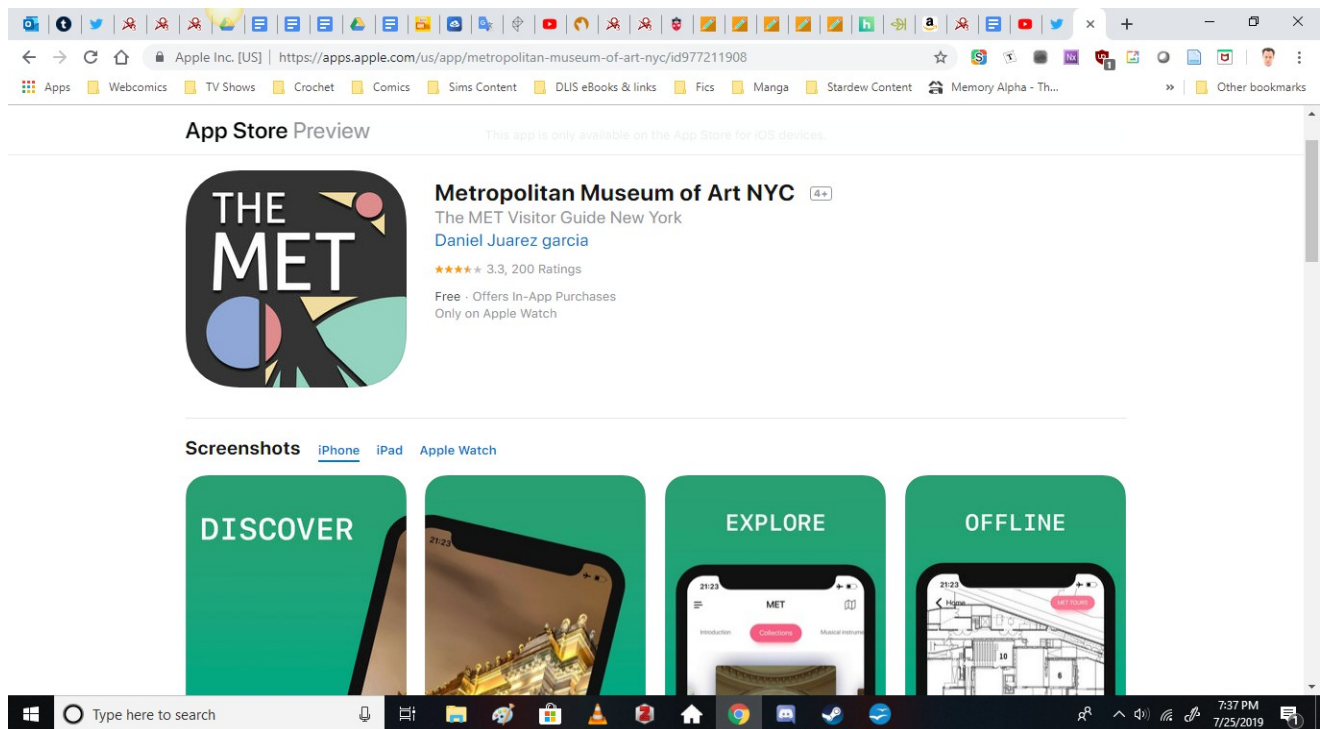
When it comes to social media, the MET has accounts on Twitter, Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, and Pinterest, all of which can be accessed from the museum's website. Unfortunately, as

the Cloisters is a part of the MET rather than a museum on its own, it does not have official individual social media accounts, instead having news and pictures posted through the MET's main accounts. There are some unofficial accounts on Twitter for the Cloisters specifically, but none are officially associated with the Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Screenshot of the MET's official Twitter page

On top of all of these social media accounts, the MET also reaches out to patrons through a phone app, which is available both for iPhones and Androids. This app includes a map for the main MET building on Fifth Avenue and the Cloisters, as well as features that assist patrons in discovering what they are most interested in at these museums. It is a free app, released in 2015, and gives patrons the ability to decide on what they want to see, where they can see it, and how they can get there before they even step foot in a MET museum.



Screenshot of the MET app in the Apple Store

As said in the NMC 2016 Horizon Report, “[m]obile devices are playing a major role in facilitating more inclusive learning experiences” (2016), and the MET is definitely an example of a museum rising to use this resource to make its collections more accessible. However, though it is a part of the MET in name, the Cloisters itself could use more specific programs to draw attention to its stunning collection; or, at least, its own section of the app, and its own social media accounts. The Cloisters suffers the unique situation of being part of a large, well-funded museum, while also technically being small and less well-known. Perhaps, with more specific off-site connections provided for the Cloisters, it could see a greater amount of visitors, both to the museum itself and also to its collections.

References

“Metropolitan Museum of Art NYC”. App Store. Accessed July 13, 2019.

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/metropolitan-museum-of-art-nyc/id977211908>

“Mobile Content and Delivery”. *NMC Horizon Report: 2016 Museum Edition*, (2016): 22-23.

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<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/472387>