

**March 29, 2007**



As Bronxites hurry past turnstiles on their way to work, they may think they've entered a museum —upon the vivid emergence of artwork at Bronx stations along the #2, #4 and #5 lines.

Although the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's Arts for Transit program was created more than 20 years ago, the recent additions only took form in 2002 as part of a wider rehabilitation process, MTA spokeswoman Mercedes Padilla said.

Earlier this month, the MTA announced that at 14 station rehabilitation projects along the three lines, workers had installed permanent art on the elevated platforms. Each piece of art mirrors the borough's rich culture, diversity, and neighboring imagery, from depictions of flowers to scenes of children playing.

"The Bronx is a vibrant borough that is surrounded by train stations with very strong cultural identities and unique characteristics," MTA executive director Elliot Sander said in a statement. "The artworks inspired by the neighborhoods' energy and beauty speak to the people who use the subway and live in the community and to all MTA customers in New York."

Due to the hustle and bustle of the herds that frequent the stations, durable materials that could be upheld and preserved were a must. Hence each project was created in glass — faceted or laminated. The glass panels — now present on platforms, mezzanines and stairways — allow light to trickle in, illuminating bright hues and opening up the space.

The program selects artists through a panel of judges made up of five rolling members, Padilla said. Members may include architects, artists and Arts in Transit representatives, while community members and elected officials are invited to contribute additional input before the final decisions.



At the Bronx Park East stop while traveling along the #2/5 line, passengers can appreciate artist Candida Alvarez' work *B is for Birds in the Bronx*, created on faceted glass.



While at the 233rd Street station, along the #2/5 line, passengers can view artist Skowmon Hastanan's *A Secret Garden: There's No Place Like Home*, created on faceted glass.

Based on creativity and the representation of the neighborhood landscape, Padilla said, the panel chose artists who they felt best matched the eminence of the Bronx at each station.



At the 174th Street stop along the #4 line, Juan Sanchez' work titled Reaching Out for Each Other brightens up the station through faceted glass.



At the Allerton Avenue stop along the #2/5 line, passengers can view artist Michelle Brody's work Allerton Mandalas, created on faceted glass.



At the Freeman Street stop while catching the #2/5 line, passengers can view artist Daniel Hauben's work The El created on faceted glass.

Beginning their journey at the Woodlawn stop on the #4 line, Manhattan-bound riders can now catch a glimpse of artist Josie Gonzalez Albright's work, Children at Play, which features scenes of children playing games and otherwise having a good time.

Just a few stops south at Fordham Road, Patriasana Homeland by Moses Ros may also lift Bronxites' spirits

with a depiction of two abstract figures dancing, one holding an umbrella, the other a large sombrero.

There is even artwork that reflects unity — three stops down at the E. 176th Street station. In Reaching Out for Each Other, Juan Sanchez features a collage of multicolored hands reaching out in a show of togetherness.

At Mt. Eden Avenue, The Procession of Folk #3 by artist Amir Bey presents numerous faces reflective of local residents and — again showing a mix of size, shape and appearance. Next, at the W. 170th Street stop, artist Dina Bursztyn creates aerial depictions of the surrounding neighborhood in Views from Above.

Meanwhile, riders traveling southbound on the #2 and #5 lines will also notice that artwork has brightened up these tracks quite a bit — with nine stops on the line boasting art.

First up at the Nereid Avenue stop is artist Noel Copeland's Leaf of Life, a picturesque nature scene of leaves and flowers from local community gardens. At the following stop at E. 233rd Street, marine scenes of gleaming water and lilies can be seen in A Secret Garden: There's No Place Like Home by Bronxite-artist Skowmon Hastanan.

Born in Thailand, Hastanan traveled to the United States in 1973 and grew up in Pelham Bay. To ease her homesickness and nurture her nostalgia, Hastanan, then a student at Mt. St. Ursula Academy, began to frequent the nearby New York Botanical Garden to see the tropical plants.

Hastanan said the Garden was the main inspiration for her piece. Hastanan is a huge fan of the Arts for Transit program, since it gives Bronxites the opportunity to view artwork without having to go a museum.

"I believe it improves the quality of life," she said.



At the 225th Street stop along the #2/5 line, riders can view Nicky Enright's work titled Universal City, created on faceted glass.

One stop down at E. 225th Street, artist Nicky Enright's Universal City, captures the urban essence with scenes of skylines and rooftops. Next, at E. 219th Street, Homage by artist Joseph D'Alesandro outlines shadowed figures involved in various activities, including dance, music and sports.

At the next stop, Gun Hill Road, Andrea Arroyo's My Sun (Mi Sol), My Planet (Mi Planeta) and My City (Mi Ciudad), grabs the attention of passers-by by using varied colors to create a worldly warm feeling.

Then at the Burke Avenue stop, in a work titled Bronx Literature, Béatrice Coron showcases Bronx literary heritage by picturing a village-like scene with open books floating through the streets.

Epitomizing the entire Arts for Transit initiative, Michele Brody uses a normally busy-looking subway map as the base of her creation titled Allerton Mandalas. Recreating the Bronx subway lines with bands of color, Brody gives the riders at the Allerton Avenue station quite a different and more attractive map.

B is for Birds in the Bronx by Candida Alvarez is only a short ride away, and in this illustration, birds fly through a cool blue sky creating a brilliant contrast in colors. Finally, at the Freeman Street stop, artist Daniel Hauben, famous for his realistic Bronx landscape pieces, bestows an everyday scene in The El and supplies passengers with one last image before continuing on their trip.

For more information about the MTA's Arts for Transit program, visit [www.mta.info/mta/aft](http://www.mta.info/mta/aft). ■



At the Gun Hill Road, along the #2/5 line, artist Andrea Arroyo's work My Sun (Mi Sol), My Planet (Mi Planeta) and My City (Mi Ciudad), is featured on faceted glass.

**All Photos courtesy of MTA/JP**