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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

MTA Celebrates Public Art in the Bronx

Bronx Artist Honored for Work at Freeman Street Subway Station

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced that artwork installed last year at the Freeman Street Subway Station in the South Bronx had been recognized in a national competition as one of the most successful public art projects of the past year. The El, by Bronx artist Daniel Hauben, pays tribute to the elevated train stations located in the Bronx through six faceted glass scenes that depict daily life in Bronx neighborhood settings. The artwork was included among 40 works of art selected for Americans for the Arts' prestigious Year in Review, an overview of exemplary contemporary public art works in the United States and the only national recognition process for artwork specifically created for public space.

MTA Arts for Transit and the Bronx Council on the Arts came together today to celebrate the award, recognize the artist, and present a proclamation from the Bronx Borough President, Adolfo Carrión, Jr. The El is one of 26 art works that Arts for Transit has installed in Bronx subway stations since 1993. The event also celebrated all of them for their contribution to the public spaces and cultural life of the Bronx.

The El was installed two and a half years after MTA New York City Transit's \$10.4 million restoration of the Freeman Street Station, which is served by the 2 and 5 trains. In creating The El, Hauben collaborated with fabricator Larry Gordon, to interpret Hauben's realistic painting into faceted glass. The dramatic results showcase the artist's expressive use of color and light and serve to transform and brighten the space. On June 22, 2008, the project's extraordinary impact was recognized by Americans for the Arts, the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts, during the organization's annual conference in Philadelphia.

Year in Review juror Ted C. Landsmark, President of the Boston Architectural College, said "Growing up a half century ago on the subways between the Bronx and Harlem gave me an appreciation of how a bit of artistic beauty might give riders and workers opportunities for reflection on where they were, and where they might be going. It is a privilege to recognize the great stained glass work of Daniel Hauben, who realized this dream I'd had of subway beautification as a source of personal contemplation... [The work] struck me as exemplary in combining a dynamic elevated subway shadow and light iconography, with a street-level vernacular retail narrative that manifests New York's diversity and vibrancy."

Event co-hosts MTA Arts for Transit and the Bronx Council on the Arts have a long standing record of cooperation and support for Bronx artists. Fostering relationships with local arts organizations, such as the Bronx Council on the Arts, has been an important part of neighborhood station renovations. MTA Arts for Transit strives to commission diverse projects that reflect both the people and the place. The Bronx Council on the Arts is recognized nationally as a leading arts service organization that provides cultural services and arts programs to a multicultural constituency of more than 1.2 million residents. The success of the public art projects at Bronx subway stations is due in great measure to the role of the council in organizing artists and getting the word out about opportunities.

MTA Arts for Transit (AFT) encourages the use of public transit by presenting visual and performing arts projects in MTA NYC Transit subway and MTA Long Island Rail Road and Metro-North rail stations. AFT has completed nearly 200 permanent art projects in a variety of media and has more than 20 projects currently in development. For more information and a view of the installed artworks, please visit: mta.info/mta/aft.



