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Press Release

May 16, 2012

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IMMEDIATE

MTA Holds 25th Annual Auditions for Music Under New York

70 Soloists and Groups Vie for Coveted Spots Performing in New York's Transit System

The sound of harmonious voices and musical instruments from across the globe echoed into the granite halls of Grand Central Terminal today as the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) held its 25th annual auditions for its Music Under New York program.

About 70 soloists and musical groups sought a spot in the program, which presents musical performances throughout the transit system. The musicians were allowed five minutes to perform in front of a panel of judges consisting of musicians, music and performing arts professionals, MTA representatives and others. The acts were judged on the criteria of quality, variety, and appropriateness for the mass transit environment.

Open to the public, the auditions showcased a diverse array of performances. This year, vocalists sang a range of styles such as pop, R&B, jazz, gospel and more. Musicians played a variety of instruments, including classical piano, violin, accordion, ukulele, balafon, vibraphone, steel drums and harp. Those seeking a spot in the program included a range of ensembles such as an all-female mariachi band, a woodwinds quintet, a brass quartet, Latin gypsy fusion group, bluegrass trio and others.

"I love seeing the way New Yorkers enjoy the Music Under New York program," said MTA Chairman Joseph J. Lhota. "Some people just like a quick pick-me-up after a long day's work. Some people get really into these groups as they stop and listen. But it always puts a smile on peoples' faces."

Music Under New York is a program of MTA Arts for Transit and Urban Design. It received more than 200 applications from acts seeking to perform at the auditions. Based on the panelists' evaluations, approximately 20 new performers are expected to be added to the MUNY roster as a result of today's auditions. Shortly after Memorial Day, the MTA will announce the names of the musicians who have been accepted into the program. Poet Bob Holman, "Ringmaster of the Spoken Word" and proprietor of the Bowery Poetry Club, served as emcee for the event for the sixth year.

Currently, MUNY has more than 350 individuals and groups on its roster, performing 7,500 weekly performances in 25 transit locations around the City. MUNY is one of many visual and performing arts programs administered by MTA Arts for Transit and Urban Design to enhance the station environment for the customer.