



MTA Press Releases

[Select Language](#) | ▼

Press Release

September 25, 2012

[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

Bright Lights for New Transfer: LED Artwork at the Bleecker Street Station

A major new artwork by Leo Villareal entitled *Hive (Bleecker Street)* has been installed at the Bleecker Street Station. Commissioned by MTA Arts for Transit and Urban Design, the LED sculpture takes the form of a honeycomb, dramatically filling an architectural space in the shape of an ellipse above the stairs that marks the new transfer point connecting the IRT and IND subway lines. The enormous ceiling, hovering overhead, becomes a type of illuminated diagram as vivid colors, outlining each hexagonal honeycomb shape, move across the sculpture. Villareal created an unprecedented art experience for transit riders who use the station, in its use of technology and LEDs.

Hive (Bleecker Street) has a playful aspect in its reference to games. Riders will be able to identify individual elements within a larger context and track this movement. The work explores the compulsion to recognize patterns and the brain's hard coded desire to understand and make meaning. The patterns also take inspiration from the research of the mathematician John Conway who invented the Game of Life, the best-known cellular automata program. *Hive* speaks to a diverse audience - it is abstract and evocative and can have many different meanings. It creates an experience for riders through changing patterns presented in randomized progression. Overall, the piece resonates with the activity of the station, transportation network and the city itself. The work was fabricated by Parallel Development.

Leo Villareal was born in 1967 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. He received a BA in sculpture from Yale University in 1990, and a graduate degree from NYU Tisch School of the Arts, Interactive Telecommunications Program. Recent exhibitions include a survey show organized by the San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, CA, which continues to tour several museums in the United States.

Since 1985, MTA Arts for Transit and Urban Design has commissioned public art that touches the lives of millions of city-dwellers as well as national and international visitors. As the MTA rehabilitates the subway and commuter rail stations in New York City and its suburbs through its Capital Programs, it uses a portion of the funds for the installation of permanent works of art. To date, Arts for Transit has installed more than 240 artworks that create unique visual links to neighborhoods that echo the architectural history and design context of the individual stations. Both well-established and emerging artists contribute to a growing collection of works that utilize the materials of the system—mosaic, ceramic, tile, bronze, steel, and glass.

For more on MTA Arts for Transit and Urban Design, visit mta.info/art

Villareal's artwork has been added to the Meridian Arts for Transit app so that travelers can have the art collection in the palm of their hand. The app includes links to the more than 240 permanent art projects installed throughout the MTA system.