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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

MTA Holds 26th Annual Auditions for Music Under New York

70 Musical Acts Vie for Coveted Spots Performing in New York's Transit System

More than 70 soloists and groups are expected to perform in Grand Central Terminal today as part of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's 26th annual auditions for its Music Under New York (MUNY) program. The auditions are held each year to add new talent to the program, which is administered by MTA Arts for Transit and Urban Design and presents 7,500 performances annually in the MTA's subways and railroads.

The auditions are expected to showcase an array of musical performances that represent the global diversity of New York City musicians. The morning session is scheduled to include instrumentalists performing the Appalachian dulcimer, a kora player from Burkino Faso, Classical Indian sitar, Baroque harpsichord, Brazilian guitar, steel drums, lute and viola. The afternoon is expected to include pianists from classical to blues, singers from Greek Rebitika to Irish folk, Indie to a one man band and a psychedelic harp.

"The Music Under New York program enlivens the experience of using the transit system," said Thomas F. Prendergast, MTA Interim Executive Director, who has been nominated by Governor Andrew M. Cuomo to serve as MTA Chairman and CEO. "In New York there is amazing talent almost everywhere you look. Our auditions attract a portion of an enormous talent pool, which enriches the experience for our customers."

The musicians are allowed five minutes to perform in front of a panel of 36 judges consisting of musicians, music and performing arts professionals, MTA representatives and others. The acts are scored numerically on a series of specific criteria, including measures of variety, appropriateness for the mass transit environment, and metrics related to overall quality.

Music Under New York 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. The MTA will announce the names of the musicians who have been accepted into the program in the coming weeks.

Poet Bob Holman, "Ringmaster of the Spoken Word" and proprietor of the Bowery Poetry Club, served as emcee for the event for the seventh year.

MUNY currently has more than 200 acts on its active roster, comprised of approximately 350 individuals. They perform in 30 transit locations around the City.