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Press Release

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[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

28 Acts Invited to Join to MTA Arts & Design's Music Under New York Program

This Year's Auditions Were Most Competitive in Program's 30-Year History

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) today announced that 28 groups and soloists have been chosen to join MTA Arts & Design's Music Under New York following the program's 30th annual auditions and its most competitive to date.

Arts & Design, which presents musical performances in the MTA transit network through Music Under New York (MTA MUSIC), received a record 335 applications to join the program this year after the applications process became web-based in January. Sixty-five finalists were then invited to perform live before a panel of judges and the public at the program's annual auditions, held this year on May 18 at Grand Central Terminal.

This year's 28 additions join a roster of more than 350 performers and groups that are part of MTA MUSIC, which was founded in 1987. This year's auditions marked the 30th anniversary of the program, which started as a 3.5-month-long pilot in 1985 and was officially added to MTA Arts & Design's public arts programming in 1987. To commemorate the milestone, three musical acts who successfully auditioned 30 years ago returned for a special lunchtime concert at this year's auditions.

"This year's auditions showcased Music Under New York's continued success in attracting some of the most talented performers in and around New York, and our musicians from 30 years ago reminded us of the rich history of this program. We welcome this new group of musicians and can't wait to see how they will engage our customers with their talents," said MTA Arts & Design Director Sandra Bloodworth.

Finalists who were invited to audition were scored on criteria such as variety and appropriateness for the mass transit environment. The judges included representatives from cultural institutions, music professionals and MTA operations staff. Arts & Design typically adds 20 to 25 acts each year to the Music Under New York program.

Once accepted into the program, performers are scheduled at 30 select high-traffic locations within the New York City Transit system and at MTA commuter rail stations such as Grand Central Terminal and subway station, Penn Station, Fulton Center and the 42 St-Times Square subway station complex. Arts & Design hosts approximately 7,500 performances each year.

Editors: Photos from this year's auditions are available [MTA Arts & Design's Facebook](#) page.

This year's additions to MTA MUSIC are:

Arkawa*South American music***Rob Armus***one-man band***Big Mama***soul singer***Carla Bordonada***piano & pop singer*

Calliope Brass
female brass quintet

Anthony Carrera
world music: sitar, handpan, guitar

German Cova
flamenco guitar

Guy Daniels
singer/songwriter, guitarist

Adrian DiMatteo
blues, jazz trio

Gemini Hasu
neo tribal: koto & djembe drum

Jorge Glem
Venezuelan folk, cuatro

Nathan Gosselin
classical flute

Matt Grabowski
singer/songwriter

Heartland Nomads
American roots band

Robert Lind
ragtime piano

Luca Bertaglia Project
jazz, funk ensemble

Mario Forte
jazz & world music duo

Oak & Ash*rock, pop, soul band***Carly Ozard***pop & cabaret singer***Parranda Vallenata***Colombian vallenato music***Felipe Pavani***Brazilian & American pop***Jonathan Russell***violin & looping***Sterling Strings***classical & contemporary ensemble***TOO MANY ZOOZ***brass house trio***Hui Wang***erhu***Chris Zurich***guitar & vocals***HeaveN Beatbox***"music all from the mouth"***High & Mighty***brass ensemble*

Applications for MTA MUSIC open each year in January with a deadline for [completed submissions online](#) in March. Finalists are invited to audition before judges, and performers are chosen based on their scores from the auditions. Music Under New York is one of many visual and performing arts programs administered by Arts & Design to enhance the station environment for customers.

All performers can play in the NYC Transit subway system as long as they follow [NYCT's Rules of Conduct](#), which are enforced by the New York City Police Department.

About Music Under New York (MTA MUSIC):

Through Music Under New York, more than 350 individual performers and ensembles participate in more than 7,500 performances in approximately 30 locations throughout the transit system annually. A variety of performers entertain the public, such as classical strings, jazz ensembles, world music bands, folk, a cappella groups, singer-songwriters and more, playing instruments ranging from Gambian kora, Korean drum, West Indian steel drums, Andean pipes, cello, Celtic and baroque harps to guitars, violins, hammered dulcimers and musical saws.

About MTA Arts & Design:

MTA Arts & Design encourages the use of mass transit in the metropolitan New York area by providing visual and performing arts in the transit environment. The MTA Percent for Art program is one of the largest and most diverse collections of public art in the world, with more than 300 commissioned works by well-known, mid-career and emerging artists including Jacob Lawrence, Nancy Spero, Romare Bearden, Milton Glaser, Xenobia Bailey, Elizabeth Murray, Roy Lichtenstein, Shinique Smith, Al Held, Duke Riley, Faith Ringgold and new projects by Chuck Close, Vik Muniz, Jean Shin and Sarah Sze. Arts & Design produces award-winning graphic and digital art, photography installations, live musical performances, the Poetry in Motion program and other special events. It serves more than 2.6 billion people who ride MTA subways and trains each year and strives to create meaningful connections between sites, neighborhoods, and people. To learn more, visit mta.info/art.