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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

MTA Hosts Grand Central Terminal “Poetry in Motion” Event on April 7

Poets Write Poems for the Public in Celebration of National Poetry Month

Come enjoy some personalized poetry written just for you!

On Friday, April 7, MTA Arts & Design and the Poetry Society of America will celebrate National Poetry Month with “Poetry in Motion” by offering specialized poems for the traveling public.

Furnished with a typewriter and their talents, award-winning poets will craft original poems for visitors to their desks at Grand Central while musicians from MTA’s Music Under New York program play throughout the day.

The celebration is named after the poetry program in the subways and buses, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary, and features “The Poet is In” and Music Under New York.

Now in its third iteration, “The Poet is In” was conceived by Marie Howe (New York State Poet 2012-2015) as a way of taking poetry off the shelf and bringing it to the busy, traveling public. In 2017, it is sponsored by the Ford Foundation’s Good Neighbors Initiative, which encourages creative projects and conversation in midtown New York.

Free and open to the public, the celebration takes place in Grand Central Terminal’s Vanderbilt Hall on Friday, April 7, 2017, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. “The Poet is In” will feature an array of award-winning poets, including former New York State Poet Marie Howe and Frost Medal winner Marilyn Nelson, among others, who will sit in a booth and write poems for those who request one.

“MTA Arts & Design is thrilled to once again celebrate National Poetry Month and our long-standing partnership with the Poetry Society of America. Our beloved Poetry in Motion program will truly come to life on April 7th, when visitors to Grand Central Terminal’s Vanderbilt Hall can bask in the creative process and come away with an original poem written by one of the myriad acclaimed poets participating in the event,” said MTA Arts & Design Director Sandra Bloodworth.

“What a treat for all to have ‘The Poet Is In’ in Grand Central Terminal’s glorious Vanderbilt Hall again. Both the poets and the recipients of poems written individually for them on the spot are enchanted by the process. It is so moving and dear, reflecting the enduring power and appeal of the art and the special delight of direct encounters between poets and appreciative readers,” said Poetry Society of America Executive Director Alice Quinn.

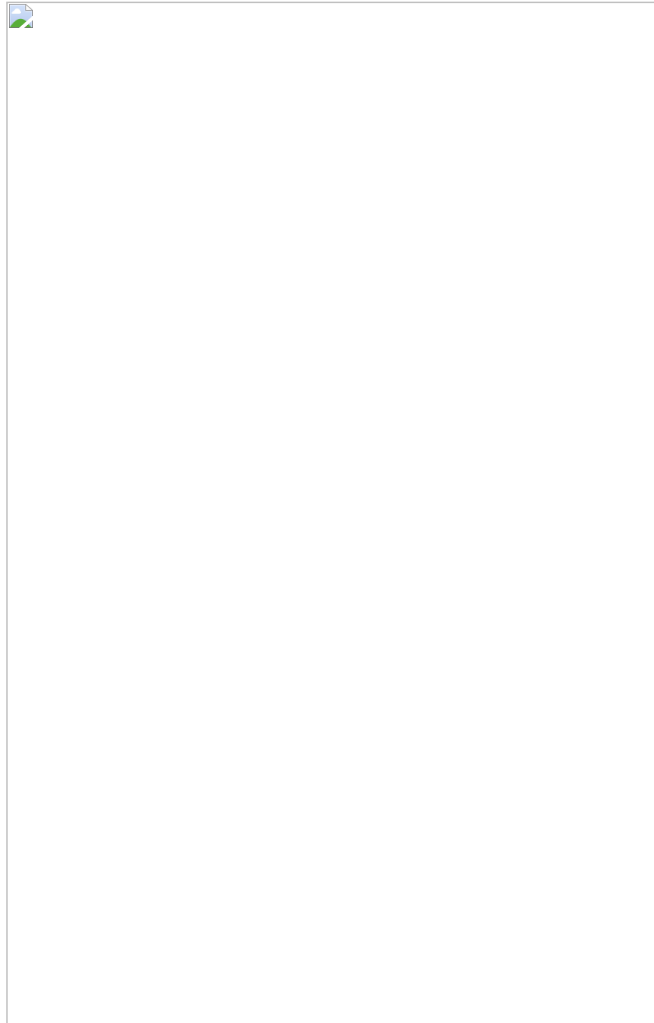
“Poetry is a living art, and it’s thrilling to be a part of a public experience which is also deeply private. What happens between the person who speaks with the poet and what the poet gives in return is magical and transformative. And it happens in Grand Central Terminal: one of the great crossroads of the world,” said poet Marie Howe.

Musicians will accompany the poets throughout the day. Each performance is scheduled to last two hours.

- 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., The F-Tones (violin & guitar duo)
- 1 to 3 p.m., Sean Grissom (Cajun & classical cello)
- 3 to 5 p.m., Melissa Elledge (accordion)
- 5 to 7 p.m., The Poor Cousins (Irish fiddle & guitar)

For a full schedule of events, visit mta.info/art or poetrysociety.org/events.

The event will also feature artwork by illustrator Johanna Goodman, who created “Subway Muses,” a new poster currently installed on platform and mezzanine walls of New York City subway stations across the city. The Nyack, N.Y.-based artist and illustrator pays tribute to women and the transit system in a portrait of four majestic women resplendent in a dazzling collage of contemporary and historical references. “Subway Muses” plays off Goodman’s ongoing “Catalogue of Imaginary Beings” series exploring portraiture, collage, magical realism, surrealism and symbolism.



“Subway Muses” by Johanna Goodman. Commissioned by MTA Arts & Design

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.

About the Poetry Society of America

The Poetry Society of America, the nation’s oldest poetry organization, was founded in 1910. Its mission is to build a larger and more diverse audience for poetry, to encourage a deeper appreciation of the vitality and breadth of poetry in the cultural conversation, and to place poetry at the crossroads of American life. For more information, visit poetrysociety.org.

About Marie Howe

Marie Howe is the author of four volumes of poetry, the most recent book is "Magdalene," (W. W. Norton, 2017). She has been a fellow at the Bunting Institute at Radcliffe College and a recipient of NEA and Guggenheim fellowships, and Stanley Kunitz selected Howe for a Lavan Younger Poets Prize from the American Academy of Poets. In 2015, she received the Academy of American Poets Poetry Fellowship which recognizes distinguished poetic achievement. From 2012 to 2014, she served as the Poet Laureate of New York State.

About Music Under New York

Since 1985, MTA Arts & Design has managed the Music Under New York (MUSIC) program presenting quality music to the commuting public. At present, more than 350 soloists and groups participate in Music Under New York providing more than 7,500 annual performances at 30 locations throughout the

transit system. Classical violinists, Cajun cellists, jazz ensembles, bluesmen, Latin guitarists, opera and folk singers are just a few of the performers in the subway and train stations contributing to the music culture of New York City.