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Press Release

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IMMEDIATE

82 Finalists Invited to Audition for MTA Music Under New York

Program's 31st Annual Auditions Scheduled for May 15 in Grand Central Terminal

MTA Arts & Design announced today that 82 musicians and groups have been invited to audition this year for the Music Under New York (MTA MUSIC) program on Tuesday, May 15, at Grand Central Terminal's Vanderbilt Hall.

MTA Arts & Design, which administers MTA MUSIC as part of its public arts programming, received 309 applications to join the program this year. The finalists invited to audition represent a variety of musical genres and instruments and encompass a geographic background spanning New York City, Long Island, Westchester County and neighboring states such as New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania.

"Music Under New York celebrated its 30th anniversary last year, and the application process is more competitive than ever. We're excited to see how this year's finalists will pour their hearts into performing for the judges and the public to secure a coveted spot in Music Under New York. New Yorkers are the greatest audience in the world, and NYC Subway offers a stage like no other," said MTA Arts & Design Director Sandra Bloodworth.

The auditions begin at 9 a.m. and are open to the public to watch. Each finalist, whether a group or a soloist, has five minutes to impress a panel of dozens of judges that include music industry professionals, members of city cultural institutions, current MTA MUSIC members, and Metropolitan Transportation Authority staff. They judge the finalists on criteria such as quality, appropriateness for the transit environment, musical variety and cultural diversity, with the goal of increasing the number of genres represented in the program.

Once accepted into the program, MTA MUSIC performers are hosted at approximately 30 high-traffic locations throughout the transit network, including MTA subway stations and commuter rail terminals. They can be spotted by a bold Music Under New York banner, which announces each act.

As with all performers in the subway system, they must abide by MTA New York City Transit's rules of conduct, which are enforced by the New York Police Department. MTA Arts & Design presents more than 7,500 musical performances in the transit system every year, with schedules revised every two weeks.

Approximately 20 performers will be added to the program roster after the auditions. MTA Arts & Design will announce the performers who have been accepted in June. Currently MTA MUSIC has more than 350 performers representing genres as wide-ranging as classical music to experimental (e.g., fusion, alternative hip hop, beat box, etc.), and as culturally diverse (e.g., Chinese classical, Irish folk, kora, mariachi, aboriginal didgeridoo, etc.) as the city itself.

About Music Under New York (MTA MUSIC):

Through Music Under New York (formerly known as MUNY), 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 close to 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, Vik Muniz, Sarah Sze and Mickalene Thomas. 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 or follow on Twitter at [@MTAArtsDesign](https://twitter.com/MTAArtsDesign).