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Press Release

May 15, 2019

[MTA Headquarters](#)

IMMEDIATE

### MTA Arts & Design to Host 32nd Annual Auditions for Music Under New York

*Approximately 70 Finalists to Compete for Limited Spots in Program*

MTA Arts & Design announced today that its 32<sup>nd</sup> annual auditions for the Music Under New York program (MTA MUSIC) is scheduled for Tuesday, May 21, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in Grand Central Terminal's Vanderbilt Hall.

"The Music Under New York auditions are one of our favorite times of the year, because we have the opportunity along with the public to experience incredible new talent and diverse performances as each act competes for a spot with MTA MUSIC," said MTA Arts & Design Director Sandra Bloodworth.

This year, MTA Arts & Design received 318 [applications](#) representing a span of musical genres and instruments from across the region. Finalists are asked to perform for five minutes at the auditions, during which dozens of judges review them 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. The judges include music industry professionals, members of cultural institutions, fellow musicians and MTA operations staff.

The auditions are grouped into two sessions: morning and afternoon. This year, the morning session includes performers of Cajun bluegrass, Latin jazz, Middle Eastern and Balkan folk music, Brazilian ensemble music, African-inspired guitar loops, a brass band and a cappella. The afternoon schedule includes reggae, R&B, Colombian and Caribbean music, classical cello, steel pan, vibraphone and others. Approximately 20 performers will be added to the program roster after the auditions. MTA Arts & Design will announce the new program members in June.

MTA MUSIC has [more than 350 performers](#) representing genres as wide-ranging as classical music (violin, opera, harp, etc.) to contemporary (blues, doo wop, folk, acapella, popular music, etc.) to experimental (fusion, alternative hip hop, beat box), and the culturally diverse (Chinese classical, Irish folk, kora, mariachi, aboriginal didgeridoo, etc.). Once accepted into the program, performers are hosted at approximately 30 locations throughout the MTA network, including subway stations and MTA commuter rail terminals, as well as the Staten Island Ferry terminal. They perform in designated locations with a Music Under New York banner that features their name and the Music Under New York logo.

As with all performers in the subway system, MTA MUSIC performers must abide by NYC 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.

#### 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 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, Mickalene Thomas, Rico Gatson, Derek Fordjour, Firelei Baez and Diana Al-Hadid. 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](http://mta.info/art) or follow on Twitter at [@MTAArtsDesign](https://twitter.com/MTAArtsDesign).

