



Media Announcement

MTA Arts & Design Unveils Artwork by Acclaimed Artist Yayoi Kusama at Grand Central Madison



A Message of Love, Directly from My Heart unto the Universe (2022) © YAYOI KUSAMA, Grand Central Madison. Commissioned by MTA Arts & Design. Photo: Kerry McFate, courtesy of Ota Fine Arts, David Zwirner.

(NEW YORK, NY — November 30, 2022) MTA Arts & Design is pleased to announce a spectacular new artwork by Yayoi Kusama commissioned for Grand Central Madison, a new 700,000-square-foot Long Island Rail Road terminal below Grand Central Terminal along Madison Avenue between 43 and 48 Streets in Manhattan. Mosaic artwork by the acclaimed artist, titled *A Message of Love, Directly from My Heart unto the Universe (2022)*, enlivens the Madison Concourse of Long Island Rail Road’s new eastside terminus.

“Yayoi Kusama’s extraordinary mosaics for the new Grand Central Madison terminal is unlike any public work she has created before,” said **Sandra Bloodworth, Director, MTA Arts & Design**. “This new, flowing composition, originating from her extensive body of *My Eternal Soul* paintings spills energy and joy out into the Grand Central Madison passageway. The mural is a journey itself, inspiring incredible moments as you walk along the grand mosaic artwork.”

Expanding upon Kusama’s iconic *My Eternal Soul* series, the new glass mosaic artwork, located on the Madison Concourse level between 46 and 47 Streets, is an exploration of lines and forms, detailed with bold colors. At once abstract and figurative, the artwork highlights a variety of motifs for visitors to discover. They convey the messages of LOVE, UNIVERSE, PEACE, OWE TO ALL MANKIND, which are central to Kusama’s oeuvre. She hopes that the work will bring joy for those who encounter it as they pass through the incredible new space.

Kusama began the *My Eternal Soul* series in 2009. The paintings in the series feature the signature all-over qualities of her *Infinity Net* paintings and echo the obsessive, recurring geometries of her decades-long output. An exploration of form, subject matter, and space, the compositions combine

abstract and figurative elements that allude at once to microscopic and macroscopic universes. *A Message of Love, Directly from My Heart unto the Universe* offers viewers a continuous, flowing expanse that renews these familiar motifs and symbols from *My Eternal Soul*.

The permanent artwork, fabricated by Miotto Mosaics Art Studios, measures 120' W x 7' H, totaling approximately 875 square feet of glass mosaic. *A Message of Love, Directly from My Heart unto the Universe* is a heartfelt gift to New York City by the internationally renowned artist. An accompanying poem written by Kusama speaks directly to all that will experience her artwork from near and far.

This is Yayoi Kusama.

I offer you a message of love, directly from my heart unto the universe.

May you all experience the true beauty of loving humanity.

Human life is beautiful.

My wish is to deliver this vision, with all that is my life, to the people of New York.





A Message of Love, Directly from My Heart unto the Universe (2022) © YAYOI KUSAMA, Grand Central Madison. Commissioned by MTA Arts & Design. Photo: Kerry McFate, courtesy of Ota Fine Arts, David Zwirner.

In addition to the expansive artwork by Kusama, the new Grand Central Madison terminal will also feature artwork by artist Kiki Smith. Titled *River Light, The Water's Way, The Presence, The Spring, and The Sound* (2022), Smith's artwork can be seen on the Madison Concourse at 44 Street and within four caverns on the lower level. Two of the most celebrated artists of our time, Kusama and Smith have contributed their visions to this new destination in a way that will shape the public experience and be part of a meaningful encounter waiting to happen. Grand Central Madison is set to be the new destination in Manhattan, a space that is not only a portal into and out of New York City, but a place where people will gather to eat, drink, shop and see powerful and thought-provoking art.

ABOUT YAYOI KUSAMA

Born in 1929 in Matsumoto, Japan, Yayoi Kusama's work has been featured widely in both solo and group presentations. She presented her first solo show in her native Japan in 1952. In the mid-1960s, she established herself in New York as an important avant-garde artist by staging groundbreaking and influential happenings, events, and exhibitions. Kusama's work has transcended two of the most important art movements of the second half of the twentieth century: pop art and minimalism. Her highly influential career spans paintings, performances, room-size presentations, outdoor sculptural installations, literary works, films, fashion, design, and interventions within existing architectural structures. Her work gained renewed widespread recognition in the late 1980s following a number of international solo exhibitions, including shows at the Center for International Contemporary Arts, New York, and the Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, both of which took place in 1989. She represented Japan in 1993 at the 45th Venice Biennale, to much critical acclaim. In 1998, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art, New York, co-organized *Love Forever: Yayoi Kusama, 1958–1968*, which

toured to the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (1998-1999), and Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo (1999).

More recently, in 2011 to 2012, her work was the subject of a large-scale retrospective that traveled to the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Tate Modern, London; and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. From 2012 through 2015, three major museum solo presentations of the artist's work simultaneously traveled to major museums throughout Japan, Asia, and Central and South America. In 2015, the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art in Humlebæk, Denmark, organized a comprehensive overview of Kusama's practice that traveled to Henie-Onstad Kunstsenter, Høvikodden, Norway; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; and Helsinki Art Museum. In 2017-2019, a major survey of the artist's work, *Infinity Mirrors*, was presented at the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, DC; Seattle Art Museum; The Broad, Los Angeles; Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; The Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio; and the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia. *Yayoi Kusama: Life Is the Heart of the Rainbow*, which marked the first large-scale exhibition of Kusama's work presented in Southeast Asia, opened at the National Gallery of Singapore in 2017 and traveled to the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art in Brisbane, Australia and the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Nusantara, Jakarta.

A comprehensive retrospective of the artist's work was on view at Gropius Bau, Berlin in 2021, and traveled to the Tel Aviv Museum of Art in 2022. *KUSAMA: Cosmic Nature* was on view at The New York Botanical Garden in 2021. Tate Modern, London, is presenting *Yayoi Kusama: Infinity Mirror Rooms* through June 11, 2023. In Montreal, the PHI Foundation for Contemporary Art, is currently presenting *Yayoi Kusama: DANCING LIGHTS THAT FLEW UP TO THE UNIVERSE*.

Kusama has been represented by David Zwirner since 2013. The gallery's inaugural exhibition in 2013 with the artist, titled *I Who Have Arrived in Heaven*, spanned all three spaces at West 19th Street in New York. Her second gallery solo show was held at David Zwirner, New York, in 2015. Subsequent solo shows of the artist's work at David Zwirner, New York, include *Give Me Love* in 2015; *Festival of Life*, concurrently presented with *Infinity Nets*, in 2017; and *EVERY DAY I PRAY FOR LOVE* in 2019. In 2021, David Zwirner, Victoria Miro, and Ota Fine Arts jointly presented *I WANT YOUR TEARS TO FLOW WITH THE WORDS I WROTE* in London, Tokyo, and New York.

ABOUT MTA ARTS & DESIGN

[MTA Arts & Design](#) encourages the use of public transportation by providing visual and performing arts in the metropolitan New York area. The Percent for Art program is one of the largest and most diverse collections of site-specific public art in the world, with more than 350 commissions by world-famous, mid-career and emerging artists. Arts & Design produces Graphic Arts, Digital Art, photographic Lightbox exhibitions, as well as live musical performances in stations through its Music Under New York (MUSIC) program, and the Poetry in Motion program in collaboration with the Poetry Society of America. It serves the millions of people who rely upon MTA subways and commuter trains and strives to create meaningful connections between sites, neighborhoods, and people.

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