MTA Launches Living Memorial to Honor Transit Workers Lost to COVID-19

MTA

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Digital Art Installation Named After 'TRAVELS FAR' Poem Written by Former U.S. Poet Laureate Tracy K. Smith; Features Poignant Portraits of Transit Workers Shared by Families

Memorial Will Appear on 138 Three-Panel Digital Screens Across System Today Through Feb. 7

Visit the Online Memorial (https://new.mta.info/covid-memorial)

View Memorial Unveiling (https://flic.kr/s/aHsmTUqHgg)

The global pandemic has led to unimaginable loss to the MTA family, with 136 employees dying of COVID-19 since the pandemic began. To honor and pay tribute to those who have been lost too soon, the Metropolitan Transportation Authority today launched an engaging visual memorial to those employees, heroes who dedicated their lives to moving New Yorkers through the city and region.

Built around photographs shared by family members, the memorial was designed by MTA Arts & Design at the request of Sarah Feinberg, Interim President of MTA New York City Transit. It is entitled "TRAVELS FAR" after a poem by Tracy K. Smith, former U.S. Poet Laureate, that was commissioned for this project and will appear in multiple languages at stations. The online version is accompanied by an original score of the same name by composer Christopher Thompson, which was also commissioned for the memorial. This special tribute involved many people in various disciplines including New York City Transit liaisons to the family, and in-house talent from marketing, web and digital content teams.

The memorial will appear as an eight-minute video running on 138 three-panel digital screens at 107 subway stations today, Monday, Jan. 25, through Sunday, Feb. 7. The video will play twice consecutively three times per day, at 10:30 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 8:30 p.m. and is available to view on a website (https://new.mta.info/covid-memorial) featuring the memorial and portraits.

"COVID-19 has been a devastating scourge on our entire country and, tragically, that includes the MTA's workforce," **said MTA Chairman and CEO Patrick J. Foye.** "We quickly made sure that those families who lost an MTA worker to COVID were taken care of financially, but the launch of today's memorial is aimed at personalizing the legacies of those who died during the pandemic. It is a moving tribute to the members of our heroic workforce who lost their lives and we will continue to make sure those who perished are not forgotten."

“The pandemic has marked an unimaginably challenging and painful time at New York City Transit,” **Feinberg said**. “Today marks the next step in our ongoing efforts to honor the colleagues, friends and family members who were taken from us too soon. These men and women were the heroes of the transit system - conductors, bus and train operators, cleaners – but they were also mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, sons and daughters. We think of them daily and we continue to mourn them with their friends and families.”

“TRAVELS FAR, with its poignant title and thoughtful words by Tracy K. Smith, helps us remember these courageous members of the MTA family in a way that pays tribute and honors them and their workplace contributions,” **said Sandra Bloodworth, Director of MTA Arts and Design**. “Surrounded by a spectrum of colors, the portraits in black and white allow us a glimpse into unique personalities known to their families and colleagues. This memorial shows that art can be a powerful messenger, conveying loss and honoring the memory of our colleagues.”

“Transport Workers Union Local 100 will never forget our union brothers and sisters who perished in service to the city,” **said Tony Utano, President,**
Transport Workers Union Local 100. “It’s our fervent hope that with this memorial the riding public also keeps them in their hearts and minds. Stop for a moment during your daily travels and reflect on these departed heroes, the lives lost, and the heartbreak being carried by their families and co-workers. May they rest in peace.”

TRAVELS FAR by Tracy K. Smith

What you gave—

brief tokens of regard,

soft words uttered

barely heard,

the smile glimpsed

from a passing car.

Through stations

and years, through

the veined chambers

of a stranger’s heart—

what you gave

travels far.

A full list of the stations where the memorial will appear is included below.

103 St
137 St-City College
145 St
157 St
18 St
23 St
50 St
59 St
66 St
79 St
86 St
Canal St
Cathedral Pkwy (110th St)
Christopher St
Cortlandt St
Houston St
Rector St
103 St
110 St
116 St
23 St
33 St
51 St
77 St
96 St
Astor Pl
Bleecker St
Canal St
Spring St
Court House Sq
Hunters Point
Times Square

Vernon Blvd-Jackson Av
Times Square
116 St
125 St
135 St
Bergen St
Borough Hall
Fulton St
Wall St
Atlantic Av
Bowling Green
Fulton Center
Wall St
125 St
14 St-Union Square
59 St
86 St
Dyckman St
59 St-Columbus Circle
W 4 St
23 St
Clinton-Washington
Franklin Av
Kingston-Throop
Lafayette Av
Nostrand Av
Ralph Avenue
103 St
116 St
135 St
81 St-Museum of Natural History
96 St
161 St-Yankee Stadium
Grand St
42 St-Bryant Park
50 St-Rockefeller Center
Broadway-Lafayette St
Avenue H
Avenue J
155 St

50 St
Jamaica Center Parsons/Archer
5 Av-53 St
Court Sq-23 St
21 St-Queensbridge
Bergen St
Delancey St
4 Av
Ft. Hamilton Pkwy
Smith-9 Sts
14 St
Broadway
Classon Av
Clinton Washington Avs
Court Square
Flushing Av
Fulton St
Greenpoint Av
Metropolitan Av
Myrtle Willoughby
Nassau Av
Essex St
Flushing Av
Hewes St
Lorimer St
Marcy Av
Broad St
Fulton St
Kosciusko St
14 St-Union Square
3 Av
Bushwick Av
Dekalb Av
Graham Av
Grand St
Halsey St
Jefferson St
Lorimer St
Montrose Av
Morgan Av

Central Av
Knickerbocker Av
36 St
46 St
63 Dr
65 St
Elmhurst Av
Northern Blvd
Steinway St
Woodhaven Blvd
Spring St
Canal St
14 St-Union Square
45 St
49 St
5 Av
77 St
9 St
Canal St
City Hall
Cortlandt St
Pacific St
Rector St
Union St

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