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MTA unveils colorful new subway mosaics at Bedford and 1st Avenue L train stations

This week, the MTA unveiled two new mosaic series at the 1st Avenue and Bedford Avenue L train stations. In the East Village, artist Katherine Bradford created *Queens of the Night*, a fanciful tribute to the creatives and essential workers (depicted as superheroes) who ride the L train. And in Williamsburg, artist Marcel Dzama created *No Less Than Everything Comes Together*, a collection of theatric fairytale-like figures under the sun and moon.

For her pieces at the 1st Avenue station, Bradford wanted to depict the diversity of those who ride the L train. As MTA Arts & Design explains:

The intriguing, ethereal figures seen in the mosaic panels represent the riders of the L train, which transports creative folk pursuing their dreams and the real-life heroes who provide essential services. In New York, these riders are dressed most often in black, which the artist believes is "merely a cloak over an inner life that is wildly colorful and unconventional". This group of figures expresses the energy of camaraderie when people are gathered together and inspires viewers to consider the outward expression of one's own interior vivacity.

The mosaic seen above, located in the 1st Avenue north mezzanine, depicts riders gathered in a group, all underneath a massive moon. "I'm pleased to have my work featured on the 1st Avenue stop on the L subway line, which is the train I take to my studio each day. Hopefully, *Queens of the Night* will transport train takers elsewhere, a brief moment of otherworldliness in the hustle and bustle of their day," Bradford shared with the MTA. She is a painter best known for her depictions of swimmers, superheroes, and ships, forms that resonate within these mosaics.

And finally, at the staircases, there are two panels titled "Superhero Responds," meant to portray NYC's heroic essential workers.

Both of the murals were fabricated by Mayer of Munich, a German mosaic company that has done many other works for the MTA, including William Wegman's dog portraits at the 23rd Street F,M station, Vic Muniz's 36 life-size human portraits at the 72nd Street Q station, and, most recently, [Nick Cave's "Soundsuits"](#) at the 42nd Street Shuttle passageway.



Katherine Bradford, "NYC Transit Times 1 Avenue Station", 2021. COURTESY OF: MTA/JASON MANDELLA

