



Arts &
Design

Media Announcement

MTA Arts & Design Unveils New Artwork by Darryl Westly at LIRR Westbury Station



(NEW YORK, NY — September 27, 2023) MTA Arts & Design has unveiled a new public art commission at Long Island Rail Road (LIRR) Westbury Station by New York visual artist Darryl Westly. Titled *Illuminations*, Westly's commission is a dynamic, allegorical reflection of the people and places of Westbury that employs glass, metal, light, and shadow as equal counterparts, creating symbols of remembrance and an environment for transitory contemplation.

The commission is based on original paintings by Westly that gather the past and present histories of the village and community, which have been translated into 782 square feet of painted glass by Glasmalerei Peters Studio, and 140 square feet of etched metal work fabricated by KC Fabrications. Spanning the station's ticket office to the overpass towers, the work blends divergent narratives, archival imagery, and motifs from Westbury's past into hyper-realistic dreamscapes.

"The artwork immediately draws attention to the beauty and richness that is Westbury," said MTA LIRR Interim President and Metro-North Railroad President **Catherine Rinaldi**. "The vibrant portrayal of Westbury by Darryl Westly is uplifting and affords travelers a sense of appreciation for the community and its history."

"Darryl Westly's stunning work is a welcome tribute to the cultural legacy of Long Island and Westbury specifically," said MTA Arts & Design Director **Sandra Bloodworth**. "Westly's vibrant paintings have been translated into shimmering glass windows and elegant railing that will greet locals and visitors alike for years to come. This artwork acts as a beacon, announcing commuters' arrival to Westbury."

“Through *Illuminations*, Darryl Westly has used his creative talents to capture the spirit and essence of Westbury by depicting people and places that represent our diverse and vibrant community,” said **Mayor Peter I. Cavallaro**. “We are so grateful for his dedicated vision, which has brought this very meaningful work to our community, a gift that will welcome visitors to Westbury, and that we will continue to enjoy and appreciate, for many years.”

The painted glass is interspersed with patterns inspired by Wampum Belt designs, juxtaposing Tuskegee Airmen, farm stands, and the local children’s library. Recurring floral and bouquet motifs reference the gardens of the historic Orchard Hill Estate, serving as metaphors for the ancestry of the land and the cultivation of community. Complementing the painted glass, the richly symbolic metalwork makes up the railing next to the station house.



Etched race cars and horses harken back to the old Roosevelt Raceway, boats reference the migration of Quakers to the area, and chain-links take on the dual meaning of both the history of enslavement and the bonds that now hold diverse communities together. Decorative flower and vine motifs give the impression of a garden trestle suspended in time.



As transparency indicates the presence of light, opacity denotes its absence, and in between is shadow. This umbra is the subject of *Illuminations*, namely the past, present, places, and people of Westbury and consequently, its future.

Illustrating broader themes of inclusivity and connection inspired by foregrounding Quaker abolitionist and notable 18th century Westbury resident Elias Hicks, Westly implements bold colors and grand architectural elements to frame scenes while also making space for transparent light breaks between each narrative. Both the glass and metal components of *Illuminations* create an interplay between light and shadow inspired by the Quaker philosophy of an inner light—an inward purpose that is believed to exist within every person and is manifested by working for the good of others.

The narratives within *Illuminations* unfold in consideration of temporal shifts and the moving perspective of the traveler. Up close, works appear as abstracted color fields of color, bathing the platform and station house in gentle washes of reflected light. From a distance, significant figures and places from the past emerge, connecting the work with the present time and place.

“With this project, I’ve been thinking quite a bit about how certain forms of decoration are also an outlet for either interrogation or reverence,” said **artist Darryl Westly**. “At times I feel as though there’s been a pressure against that idea of celebration in public art, as opposed to rumination or edification. My hope with this work, through its use of picturesque landscapes juxtaposed with iconography of the perils within America, Westbury, and New York, is that it prompts an opportunity to parse through the different elements of history and everyday life, creating an understanding that all those things are part of a legacy—a legacy that I live as an American.”

Westly's use of *Illuminations* as a remark on the significance and malleability of public art and perception honors Westbury history while also leaving space to contemplate its future. It's a memorialization of moments in history where people can find meaning, understanding, and connection, regardless of race, creed, or class.

ABOUT DARRYL WESTLY

Darryl Westly's work reflects a study on the beauty of duality. His process-driven, allegorical paintings fluctuate between representation and abstraction. Layering hyperrealism and architectural elements with idealized landscapes and art historical references, Westly's work is steeped in research, context, and explorations of representation and identity. Westly holds a BFA from Cooper Union. His work is exhibited widely nationally and abroad.



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 380 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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CREDITS

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