



NEWS

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THEY JITTERBUG AND FLAIL BUT THEIR PAINTING NEVER FAILS
ANDROIDS PICK UP THE PACE AT MTA'S BUS PAINT SHOP;
63 PERCENT MORE BUSES TO BE PAINTED THIS YEAR

At the same time the MTA's bus fleet is becoming more dependable as a result of an accelerated bus purchase plan, the existing fleet is becoming more attractive as a result of an accelerated bus painting program and gyrating automatons.

Computer-controlled robots at the MTA's Regional Rebuild Center, who have never uttered the words: "Danger Will Robinson, Danger," in fiscal year 1999 are expected to paint 350 buses blemished by wear and tear compared to 214 in 1997 and 128 buses in 1996. The paint job and associated bodywork, a 150-hour job, costs approximately \$6,500 per bus.

It is estimated that the whirligig robots get the job done in 25% less time than their human counterparts.

The media can visit the paint shop along with a class of 5th graders from Hoover Elementary School in Los Angeles on Thursday, November 12 at 9:30 a.m. (see later advisory for more information or call Gary Wosk of MTA Media Relations at (213) 922-2712.

"Our maintenance workforce, however, will always have an important place in the paint shop since the bodywork that must take place before the buses reach the clutches of the robots accounts for 90 percent of the work," said Richard Hunt, MTA deputy executive officer for Transit Operations, not to be confused with Dr. Smith of "Lost in Space." "While the robots are simply amazing when it comes to painting, bodywork is not up their alley."

MORE...

Page 2 Paint Shop Robots

Hunt believes the combination of new buses, better overall service and re-painted buses will instill a sense of pride in passengers and bus operators alike.

“Preventive maintenance, improving on-time performance and reducing passenger loads without question deserve the highest priority but having a neat look is extremely important as well,” continued Hunt. “Although the service might meet the passenger needs, having a professional appearance can mean the difference between someone continuing to use or try public transit.”

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MTA-118