

## Metro Red Line Station Welcomes Back Missing Artwork

By CHRISTINA ESPARZA

(June 7, 2002) Metro Red Line riders getting off or on the train at the Hollywood/Vine station may have the feeling that something was missing for the past few months.

From palm tree sculptured columns to the flicker of an antique movie projector, the station has captured everything that makes Hollywood special. But for the past four months, one essential ingredient in the station's LA mixture has been missing — the cars.

Car sculptures that once sat on the benches of the train platform were removed in January to be repaired because of damage from etched and scratched-on graffiti. Tuesday night, however, the cars came back to the station as good as new.

"I was wondering what happened to them," said patron Juan Manuel Criollo, who has been riding the Metro Red Line for the past five months. "They're nice. They look a lot better. It looks kind of flat without them."

Epoch Industries, the company that repaired the cars, used polyester resin to fill in deep cracks and chips, said Ralph Wanlass, an MTA conservation consultant. The cars were then completely sanded down and repainted by an artist named — appropriately — Barbara Grill.

### Easier to clean, harder to scratch

The cars also were painted with a graffiti release clear coat, which makes it possible for paint and marker ink to wash off easily. The coat is also thicker, which makes it harder to scratch.

However, vandals can still get the better of the cars.

"There's no such thing as a bullet-proof coating," Wanlass said. "It's harder and thicker, but it can still be damaged."

The benches, which were in place for less than three years,

V Bench artwork was returned to the Hollywood and Vine Metro Red Line Station Tuesday night following about four months of refurbishing.

PHOTOS: CHRISTINA ESPARZA



cost the agency \$14,504.72 to refurbish. And less than three days later, a tagger had already struck.



A vandal scrawled graffiti on a United States Postal Service sticker – called a “slap tag” – then stuck it on one of the cars’ windows.

✓ Graffiti vandals used knives and sharp objects to scratch the cars. It cost the MTA nearly \$15,000 to fix the damage.

Carefully peeling off the sticker, Wanlass commented, “It’s going to take more than that to mess these up.”

---

EDITOR’S NOTE: Christina Esparza, a Transit Operations Correspondent Intern, graduated this month from Cal State Long Beach with a degree in Journalism. June 7 is her last day with the MTA. She will now begin an internship with the LA Times’ Valley edition.

[Back to MTA Report](#)