



NEWS

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HIDE-N-SEEK SCULPTURES, BASED ON DESIGNS OF SOUTH CENTRAL SCHOOL CHILDREN, TO BE INSTALLED THIS WEEK AT WILMINGTON/IMPERIAL GREEN LINE STATION

In honor of South Central L.A., where more than 50 percent of the residents are under 18 years old, painter and artist JoeSam. this week began erecting more than 55 colorful sculptures depicting the universal game of "Hide-n-Seek" at the Wilmington/Imperial Station along the Metro Green line.

The colorful, polychromatic metal sculptures appear among the 58 freeway supporting columns at this station, which sits at the intersection of the Metro Blue and Green lines.

"What makes this art so special to the community is that the artist worked with local elementary school students in designing the images," said Maya Emsden, director of the MTA's ART program, which is charged with commissioning local artists to create public works of art for MTA bus and rail facilities. "JoeSam., who has won nationwide acclaim for his work, first distributed coloring books with outlined sculptures to school children within walking distance of the station."

The children, who attend Carver Elementary, Martin Luther King, Wilson Riles, and Lincoln schools in Los Angeles and Compton, then completed the books under their teachers' guidance and returned them to JoeSam. Using their illustrations as guides, he vividly captured their work in his creations. He also had assistance from the Watts-Willowbrook Boys and Girls Club.

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JoeSam., who hails from Harlem and earned a doctorate in education and psychology from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, has had work displayed throughout the country -- from a theater in Santa Monica to a senior citizen's library in Florida, to a public health center near Seattle. His Art-Pins, all replicas of his public sculptures, are hand-painted and issued for each commissioned work and sold in museum stores nationwide. His work is exuberant, full of warmth and humor, and always colorful.

"JoeSam.'s work not only captures the energy of our ART Program, but the spirit of the people who live in the South Central community," said Franklin White, MTA chief executive officer. "I think our passengers and residents will be pleased with the creations."

EDITOR'S NOTE:

"JoeSam." -- one word with period -- is the proper reference to this artist in all usages.