



NEWS

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MTA'S PUBLIC ART PROJECTS SCORE TRIPLE HONORS AT 1998 ROSE AWARDS

Three of MTA's public art projects were honored in the Best Public Art Project and Best Good Idea categories at the 1998 Roses and Lemons Awards celebrated late last week.

The annual awards have been celebrated since 1981 when the Downtown Business Club was formed to honor people, places and projects which enhance the Los Angeles downtown community.

The MTA garnered the 1998 Rose Award for Best Public Art with its photo-essay bus card project. The interior posters feature the images and life-stories of several MTA employees. The texts were written by poet Marisela Norte as a tribute to the over 6,000 men and women who operate the Metro system. Los Angeles photographer Willie Garcia captured the faces and expressions of the workers for a total of twelve black and white bus cards which were displayed on all MTA buses circulating throughout Los Angeles County.

MTA's Bookmark Project was selected as one of the three finalists for a Rose Award in the Best Good Idea category. Artists and poets across the country collaborated on a series of full-color bookmarks which were distributed onboard Metro Buses and trains allowing the over one million daily MTA customers to take home their own little portable artworks. The project celebrated National Poetry month and encouraged the public to take the Metro system to their community libraries.

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MTA's live theatre on board a Metro Bus parked inside the Geffen Contemporary at the Museum of Contemporary Art also was honored as a finalist in the Best Good Idea category. Mini-plays produced by the Cornerstone theatre group included a cast of professional actors as well as real MTA employees and members of the Bus Riders' Union. The series sought to capture and celebrate the cultural diversity in Los Angeles.

"The many artists, poets and playwrights who have worked on these three projects have enhanced the bus riding experience for literally tens of thousands of MTA customers," said Maya Emsden, MTA Director of Metro Art. "They are to be congratulated for the tremendous power of their work and its ability to add a touch of humanity to our public transit system."

The Award ceremony was held Thursday, April 9, at the Biltmore Hotel with over 350 downtown business, community and government leaders present.

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