



Second Avenue Subway will be NYC's 'most expansive' art installation

By Michael Gartland

December 19, 2016 | 8:20pm



Andrew Cuomo announces the art installments in a presentation at MoMA.

Gregory P. Mango

The new Second Avenue Subway stations set to open New Year's Day will be covered in images from four high-profile artists — a seven-year undertaking the MTA described Monday as “the most expansive permanent public art installation in New York history.”

Most of the pieces incorporate mosaic tile designs common to subway stations, but the art is nothing like what straphangers are now accustomed to seeing.

The artists are Chuck Close, Jean Shin, Sarah Sze and Vik Muniz, but seven fabricators also pitched in, taking seven years to produce the artwork that will appear underground.

Close, whose work will appear at the 86th Street station, is world-famous for his hyper-realistic, extreme close-up portraits, which have appeared at MoMA and the Whitney. His portraits will include renderings of composer Philip Glass and Lou Reed.

CRISTIN TIERNEY



Artist Jean Shin will have her work featured at the 63rd Street Station.

Gregory P. Mango

Sze, Muniz and Shin have also had their work exhibited in galleries and museums around the world. Their art will appear at the 96th, 72nd and 63rd street stations. The artwork will cost the MTA \$4.5 million – a fraction of the project’s \$4.5 billion budget. “It is worth seeing just for the art,” Gov. Cuomo said Monday during a presentation at MoMA.

He noted that 33 other subway stations throughout the city are also being refurbished.

MTA Chairman Tom Prendergast said projects like subway stations need to have art in them because they’re for the public use.

“It’s great to go to a museum, it’s great to go places where there’s a lot of concentration of art and we need to do that, but having it in everyone’s daily life is just as important,” he said.