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Chuck Close Subway Portraits Revealed for New 2nd Avenue Line



LOU REED IS ONE OF CHUCK CLOSE'S 86TH STREET SUBWAY PORTRAITS FOR THE MTA'S NEW 2ND AVENUE LINE, PHOTO: COURTESY METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY

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Legendary Hamptons artist, now based in Long Beach and New York City, [Chuck Close](#) has created 12 large-scale portraits for the 86th Street subway station of the Metropolitan Transit Authority's long awaited, \$4.5 million 2nd Avenue Subway, slated to open January 1. The work from *Chuck Close, Subway Portraits* was revealed during a preview at the Museum of Modern Art in Manhattan on Monday, December 19. It is part of a major public art installation in four stations of the 2nd Avenue Subway line in Manhattan, which also includes *Jean Shin: Elevated* at 63rd Street, *Vik Muniz, Perfect Strangers* at 72nd Street, and artist Sarah Sze's *Blueprint for a Landscape* at 96th Street.

Close's 10 mosaic and two tile works are based on the artist's painstakingly detailed photo-realistic portrait paintings and prints, accomplished using a variety of groundbreaking painting techniques, such as breaking images down into grids or pixels.

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The people portrayed are mostly cultural figures and frequent subjects for Close throughout his nearly 50-year career, but they also represent the wide array of individuals who pass through the MTA system. Among them are Philip Glass, Zhang Huan, Kara Walker, Hamptons fan and artist Alex Katz, Cecily Brown, Sag Harbor artist [Cindy Sherman](#), and late Hamptons resident [Lou Reed](#), as well as two distinct self-portraits.

The ceramic tile, as used in Reed's portrait, is fabricated by Magnolia Editions, while the glass and ceramic mosaics are fabricated by Mosaika Art & Design. Ten of the portraits are nine feet tall.

Close is an internationally acclaimed painter and printmaker whose artwork has been featured in hundreds of exhibitions as well as private and permanent museum collections around the world. He has received a National Medal of the Arts presented by President Clinton, and was appointed by President Obama to serve on the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities.