



Media Announcement

New Artwork *Abstract Futures* Maps a Journey at 42 St-Grand Central Station



Abstract Futures (2025) © Hilma's Ghost, 42 St-Grand Central Station. Commissioned by MTA Arts & Design. Photo: Etienne Frossard.

(NEW YORK, NY — April 23, 2025) MTA Arts & Design announces *Abstract Futures*, a new artwork by Hilma's Ghost, at 42 St-Grand Central Station. The 600-square foot glass mosaic is installed at the 42nd Street/3rd Avenue entrance leading directly to the 7 train, on the Flushing line. The mosaic is a contemporary and dynamic contribution to Grand Central's ongoing station rehabilitation. Fabricated by Miotto Mosaic Art Studios, *Abstract Futures* is the first public commission for the artist duo Sharmistha Ray and Dannielle Tegeder. The artwork centers around the themes of "portals" and "journeys". It is intended as metaphor for an individual's transformation and spiritual development in the city. The recent reveal marks a new chapter in artistic expression within the city's iconic transit hub.

"The artwork offers a reflective space for connection, transformation, and understanding," said **Juliette Michaelson, Interim Director, MTA Arts & Design**. "Customers entering Grand Central from the street or exiting from the Flushing line will encounter the work designed to honor the ebb and flow of New York's diverse population and celebrate the resilience, grit, and ambition of the people who bring the city to life."

"This mural represents a new way of seeing the city—a journey that is both physical and spiritual," said **Hilma's Ghost artists Dannielle Tegeder and Sharmistha Ray**. "It's about the connection between people, spaces, and time, and intended to provide a powerful reflection of what New York represents to us all. The city is at once a sprawling metropolis with millions of people, but also a dynamic network of interconnectivity. As we make our way through a single day in New York, we connect with so many people from so many walks of life. The density of the mural's imagery, pattern, and color is a metaphor for the endless diversity of the city that is its heartbeat. It is that diversity that is what makes New York so special."

Hilma's Ghost, founded in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, is a two-person feminist collective dedicated to celebrating underrepresented spiritual practices in art. Inspired by Hilma af Klint, a revolutionary artist and mystic, the collective uses ritual, magic, and collaborative artmaking to challenge and uplift esoteric traditions. The mosaic at Grand Central is an extension of this mission, bringing the collective's vision of an emerging spiritual zeitgeist into the public sphere.

Ray and Tegeder's first visual project together as Hilma's Ghost, was a tarot deck of the same name, *Abstract Futures*, now in its third edition, with a circulation of roughly 1,500 decks. Tarot decks have historically been tied to gender binaries, and traditional decks have depicted a monocultural perspective

of race. Hilma's Ghost reimagined the major archetypes of *Abstract Futures* tarot deck as abstract symbols designed to be inclusive. Recognizing that everyone has a story to tell, their new mosaic commission draws from that same language of inclusivity. This piece is for all who dwell in New York, whether it's for a day or lifetime.

Using abstract systems and color symbolism to create a fictive urban landscape, Hilma's Ghost maps out a future New York on a spiritual plane. Drawing from the archetypal symbols of *Abstract Futures Tarot*, the mosaic unfolds a narrative across three distinct segments. Each part of the mural portrays a universal story—a hero's journey—symbolizing the transformative path of a New York commuter.



In the first portal, read left to right, 'The Fool' takes a big risk and goes to New

York in search of something bigger than themselves. The protagonist's act takes courage. Active reds, oranges, and pinks signify passion. A central vertical funnel thrusts energy upwards. The mural's imagery emphasizes the harnessing of creativity, vitality, and intuition as they tap into their inner wisdom and drive.

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As the journey progresses, the protagonist confronts challenges and transformations, finding balance and spiritual renewal. Earthly greens, ochres, and browns, exist in the material realm, or physical plane of the story. In the central image, 'The Wheel of Fortune,' suggests 'The Fool' has come down to earth, feet planted on the ground, to find themselves in the wheel that keeps on turning, in a city where fortunes rise and fall in a single day.

In the final segment, the protagonist faces their greatest internal struggles, ultimately achieving a deeper understanding of their true self. On the last and largest wall nearest the fare array, there are two realms of the spiritual and cosmological plane. First is the moon, denoted by the crescent, and above it is the star. These represent the shadow selves, or parts one must move through to reach the light. These parts are hidden but filled with an inner radiance of self-knowledge. Finally, those transcendent purple and blues give way to a cosmic sunrise. A return to oranges and reds around the sun. The horizontal symbols represent the 'wand' in tarot—an action element that signifies the element of fire. In reaching 'The World,' light returns and symbols of regeneration and rebirth begin the cycle again.



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Abstract Futures provides a cosmological map of transitions and awakenings that is the shared experience of every commuter. Through abstraction, it creates an inclusive experience for people of every background, culture, ability, race, gender and sexual orientation. The artwork represents a new way of seeing the city—a journey that is both physical and spiritual. Highlighting connections that exist between people, spaces, and time.

ABOUT HILMA'S GHOST

Hilma's Ghost is a feminist artist collective co-founded by artists and educators Dannielle Tegeder and Sharmistha Ray that fuses contemporary art with modern spirituality through forms of divination and ritual. Named after the Swedish artist and mystic, Hilma af Klint, the collective's work is a critique of gendered power structures, providing a critical and revolutionary platform for rethinking gender in the arts while recovering feminist histories as its ballast for critique. The collective acts as a collaborative model for feminist research, artistic production, experimental pedagogies, and community activations. Their work ranges from the traditional to the esoteric, including paintings and drawings, surrealist games, a tarot deck, ritual object-based installations, pedagogical workshops, curated exhibitions, community projects, performances, and artist books.

Hilma's Ghost began at the height of the pandemic in 2020. Since then, Tegeder and Ray have completed 20+ collaborative projects and participated in more than 80+ public programs both nationally and internationally. In 2022, the duo began an itinerant art school with generative workshops fusing art and magic that have been attended by over 10K people. Their limited-edition tarot deck, *Abstract Futures Tarot*, has a popular following amongst artists and occult practitioners and is now in its third edition.

Hilma's Ghost has been featured in solo, collaborative, and group exhibitions and projects in New York at The Guggenheim, Marlborough Gallery, and The Armory Show; nationally at The Shepherd, Detroit, MI; The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT; Hill-Stead Museum, Farmington, CT; Secrist Beach, Chicago, IL; and The Parallax Center, Portland, OR; and internationally at Museu de Arte de São Paulo (MASP), São Paulo, Brazil; and Galería RGR, Mexico City, Mexico; among many others. Reviews of their work have appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Brooklyn Rail*, *Artnet*, and *Hyperallergic*.

ABOUT MTA ARTS & DESIGN

MTA Arts & Design encourages the use of public transportation by providing visual and performing arts in the metropolitan New York area. The Percent for Art program is one of the largest and most

diverse collections of site-specific public art in the world, with more than 400 commissions by world-famous, mid-career and emerging artists. Arts & Design produces Posters, Digital Art, Photography exhibitions, as well as live musical performances in stations through its Music Under New York (MUSIC) program, and the Poetry in Motion program in collaboration with the Poetry Society of America. It serves the millions of people who rely upon MTA subways and commuter trains and strives to create meaningful connections between sites, neighborhoods, and people.

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