

Subway graffiti and lack of crime control plague city dwellers

Subway art

Making their own curious additions to the already long list of pop, romantic, and modern art which flourish in New York, adventurous youth have created their own art form—subway art. At the moment, exhibitions of the new artistic endeavor are on display anywhere between Times Square and Coney Island. The works vary from early “PETE”, to the classical “TAKI 120”, and even to the modernistic, multi-colored “DAGO 144”. As an added attraction, a special showing of some of the best-loved four-letter words is also open to the public.

These and other illustrious examples of “subway art” are the contributions of juvenile *artistes* throughout New York. In most cases the setting for the artwork is the railroad yard. Here, subway cars are sitting ducks, easily vulnerable to the deadly aim of a spray-painter.

Notorious notoriety

Armed with ample supplies of paint, scores of youth attack the cars daily and color them with the graffiti of their choice. When several of these “artists” were asked on a recent news program why they chose to paint on subway cars, the replies were similar. They all seemed to experience ecstatic notoriety whenever a train with their name emblazoned on the doors passed them. All searched for some recognition in life, and this was the only way they could achieve any. Although most of the designs that have been painted are colorful and original—on which the individual artist prides himself—most train riders prefer the older, drabber look. For the record, painting on a subway car is a deliberate violation of the law regarding defacement of Transit property. This is a law that has been repeatedly broken, and evidence is blatant throughout the rail system. If the persons in-

involved had any intention of beautifying the railroad cars, they could discuss it with the Transit Authority. Nevertheless, one fails to see the beauty in a new car with “Mel” smeared along the side of it.

Whatever reasons New York’s budding artists may have, the deliberate defacement of subway trains is a violation of the law, which should be more stringently enforced. Such precautionary measures would entail the augmentation of guards near parked trains, thereby causing prospective “Picassos” to think twice before dabbling. If the law is properly enforced and more care is given to the open rail yards, we will be forever ridden of the “SLIM’S” and “JIM’S”, and again faced with all the dents, cracks, and slashes we have grown to know and love.

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