



openskies

HELLO TOMORROW

UNDERGROUND IN STOCKHOLM





UNDERGROUND

IN

THE WORLD'S LONGEST ART EXHIBITION SPANS DECADES AS WELL AS KILOMETRES. A METRO SYSTEM THAT BORROWS FROM THE ARTISTIC PIONEERS OF THE '50S AND HIGHLIGHTS THE AVANT GARDE ARTISTS OF THE NOW. WARNING: YOU MIGHT JUST MISS YOUR TRAIN...



WORDS & IMAGES: GEOFF BROKATE

STOCKHOLM



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RÅDHUSET

The Swedish artist Sigvard Olsson has created what has now become the signature style of the metro station. The bare blasted rock, painted a browny-orange, gives the feeling of a deep cave, as though you've just entered the very bowels of the Earth. Olsson called his artwork *The Findings* and was inspired by Kungsholmen's historic evolution. Farmland that was donated by the crown to the military and artisans, in the 19th century the area became industrialised and is now predominantly an urban residential landscape. Olsson has planted into the walls of the station imaginary architectural finds that chart the island's evolution, none more impressive than the large cement column at the base of the escalators.





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SOLNA CENTRUM



The standout feature of this incredible station has to be the bright red bedrock ceilings that double as the foreboding sky in Anders Åberg's political murals. Environmental issues such as deforestation, pollution and population migration were important topics during the '70s and Åberg daringly broached these tough subjects by painting a kilometre-long spruce forest with various scenes playing out around the station. Farmers can be seen fertilising their crops while the infrastructure of industry begins to loom in the distance. Stuffed elk and models of old traditional villages inside glass casing have been built into the walls of the station, in an attempt to preserve something that has been lost.





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UNIVERSITETET

Found in the Frescati district north of central Stockholm, this area is known for its botanical gardens and the Museum Of Natural History. It's this that inspired the Belgian artist Françoise Schein to create frescoes – including maps and texts, statistics and images – designed to reimagine the journey that the influential Swedish botanist, Carl Linnaeus, made to Lapland in 1734. Schein said of her work: "I wanted to question how, from a gaze on things of the world, one reaches a better understanding of the consequences of our actions on the planet." The station is also known for its playful take on emergency exits that appear on the platform, showing a repeated pattern of a man running as though late for the train.





UNDERGROUND IN STOCKHOLM



TENSTA

In an act of solidarity, the artist Helga Henschen opted to address the social issues faced by the Tensta district with her artwork. Known as an area that houses a high number of immigrants, it faces social isolation as a result of its ethnic diversity. In Henschen's work *A Flower To The Immigrants*, the walls are painted with murals of animals, flowers and plants. They appear as old cave paintings, recalling a time when humanity was less complicated and life was simpler. Throughout the station are quotations written in 10 different languages. One, found on the wall of an American cell, reads: "Freedom is the most important thing man has. You can jail a man but never jail the thought of freedom."

