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FEBRUARY 28, 2015 – BuskNY condemns the wrongful arrest of Erik Meier, a talented member of New York City's subway performing community. The latest in a string of incidents of police harassment of legal subway performers, Meier's arrest comes as a strong reminder that inequities in MTA and NYPD policy have not been adequately addressed.

According to Meier, he was arrested during a legal performance on the evening of Thursday, February 26, on the Second Avenue F train platform. He was held overnight, and according to the webpage of the New York State Unified Court System, ultimately charged with “trespassing.” An additional charge, violation of MTA rule 1050.7 (c), corresponds surreally to “sleep[ing] or doz[ing] where such activity may be hazardous to such person or to others.”

New York City's subway performers have held sky-high poll numbers since 1985, when freelance artistic performance was first permitted. (Uniquely, *New York City requires no permit or licensing scheme for its performers*). Increasingly, however, musicians have faced persecution from police. Subway performers have called for improved NYPD training – and for reforms to the MTA's promotional music program, Music Under New York. With the support of video evidence from arrests in 2013 and 2014, subway performers believe that the program's mediatized auditions lead many police officers to believe that official membership is legally required.

Meier, who does not plan to cease performing, indicates that he will file a lawsuit in response. He joins a growing number of performers – totaling three active cases and \$50,000 in recent settlements – who have fought back against what they say is shortsighted persecution of their work.