

Subway misery in new graphic novel

The claustrophobic and stress-inducing journey along the L line from Grand Street to Manhattan during rush hour is the main thread throughout a forthcoming graphic novel that melds fact and fantasy while exploring gentrification and history in Williamsburg.

“Williamsburg Shorts” depicts the tale of an unnamed girl’s trip to Manhattan on the L during which she misses a train, gets pushed and shoved on a platform and trapped in a stalled train car.

During her commute, the girl — who is anonymous like the thousands of other L train riders who use the line daily are to each other — lets her imagination travel far beyond the crammed subway car. She explores the neighborhood’s rich history, looking into the stories behind landmarks like the Williamsburg Bridge, the Domino Sugar Factory and McCaren Park, according to author and graphic designer Lucio Zago.

Zago, 49, has lived on the intersection of Grand and Lorimer streets since the mid-90s and has watched the neighborhood grow and evolve in numerous ways, he said. But his daily commute to Manhattan along



L TRAIN TALES



Williamsburg Shorts by Lucio Zago

the L line has been a growing source of frustration for years.

“It’s gotten worse and worse, and now it’s going to

get really bad,” Zago said, referring to the train’s impending shutdown.

Despite the discomfort, Zago says it’s an essential

part of life in northern Brooklyn. “I’m looking at it almost like the umbilical cord of Williamsburg, how it’s keeping like a lifeline to

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the city,” he said.

While traveling through northern Brooklyn underground, the main character’s imagination drifts to the neighborhood’s past through scenes about the area’s immigrant history featuring the Italian, Polish and Puerto Rican communities. It looks into tensions between hipsters and the Hasidic community, as well as highlighting the Domino Sugar strike.

A Kickstarter campaign for the graphic novel exceeded its goal of raising \$7,800 within several days of being posted, though you can still donate to secure your own copy of the book once it’s printed next year.

As for Zago, redirecting discomfort at his tiresome commute has helped him better cope with the daily stress. “The best way that I’m dealing right now is by telling this story,” he said. “When I’m on the train right now I use it as research material ... I start looking and people and start developing ideas.”



THISWEEK

Bad Boy Family Reunion

Puff Daddy, Lil Kim and Faith Evans will be under one roof

to celebrate what would’ve been Notorious B.I.G.’s 44th birthday.

Special guests include Jay Z, Mary J. Blige and more. *Fri. and Sat., 8 p.m., \$49.50-\$299.50, Barclays Center, 620 Atlantic Ave., Prospect Heights, ticketmaster.com*



Puff Daddy

Sarah Silverman and friends

The comedian is making her Brooklyn return for the Vulture Festival. Also appearing: Todd Barry, Aparna Nancherla Lizz Winstead, and Michelle Wolf. *Sun., 8 p.m., \$47-\$67, BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave., Fort Greene, bam.org*

The 1975

This British alt-rock band returns to Brooklyn to play tracks off their latest album “I Like It When You Sleep, for You Are So Beautiful yet So Unaware of It.” *Tomorrow, 8 p.m., \$39.50-\$49.50, Barclays Center, 620 Atlantic Ave., Prospect Heights, barclayscenter.com*

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