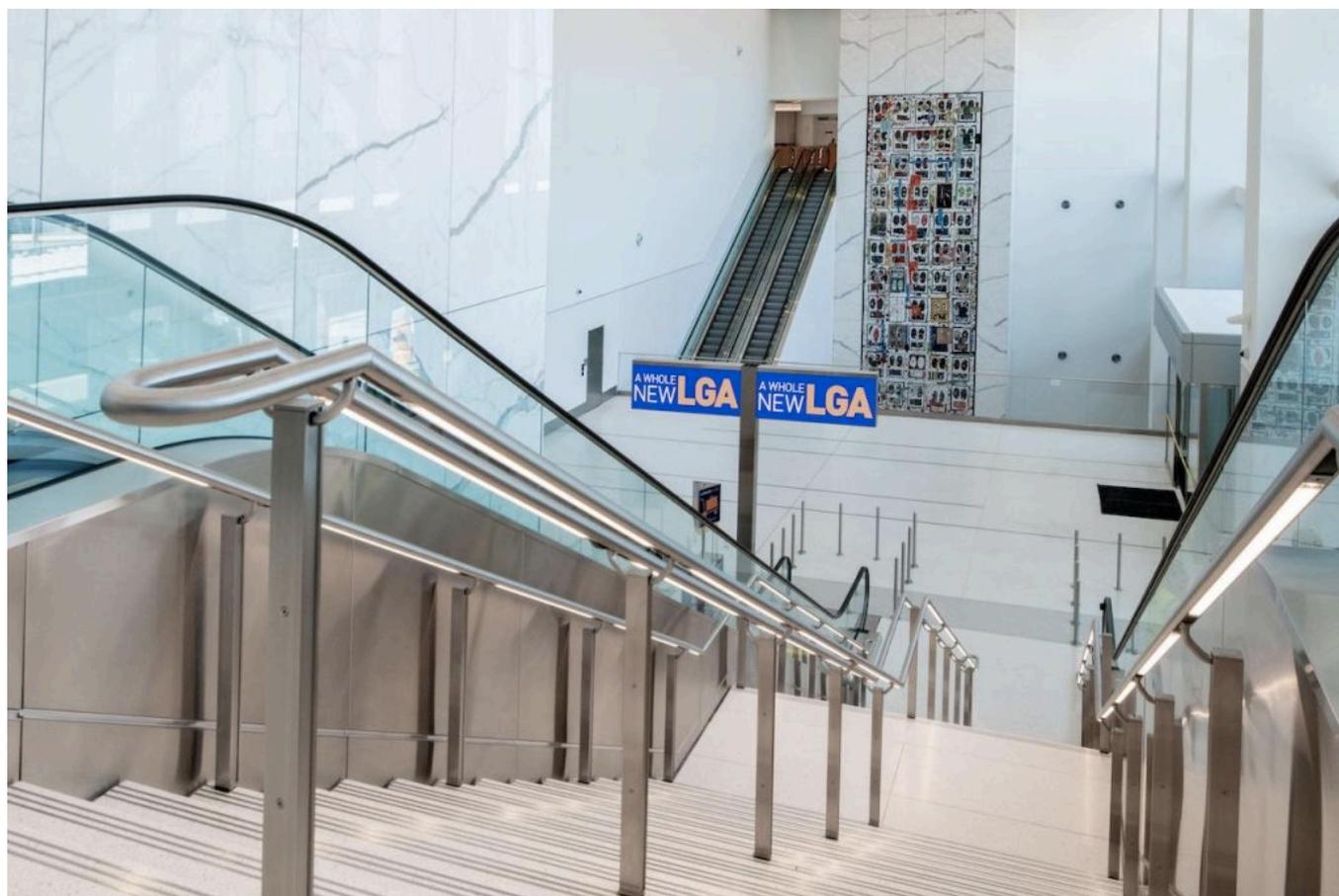


New York's LaGuardia Airport Unveils New Permanent Artworks by Mariam Ghani, Rashid Johnson, and Others

Queens's formerly decrepit LaGuardia Airport has brand new large-scale art installations by leading artists.

Sarah Cascone, June 2, 2022



Rashid Johnson, *The Travelers' Broken Crowd* at New York's LaGuardia Airport. Photo courtesy of the Queens Museum.

For the second time in as many years, New York has opened a new, state-of-the-art terminal at Queens's formerly decrepit LaGuardia Airport—and it's once again filled with large-scale art installations by leading artists.

The \$12 million in art is the work of artists Mariam Ghani, Rashid Johnson, Aliza Nisenbaum, Virginia Overton, Ronny Quevedo, and Fred Wilson and is part of a collaborative effort by the Queens Museum, Delta Air Lines, and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

“Commissioning permanent artworks by this incredible group of New York-based artists is an exciting way for the museum to play a part in making the new Terminal C a world-class cultural destination,” Queens Museum director Sally Tallant said in a statement.

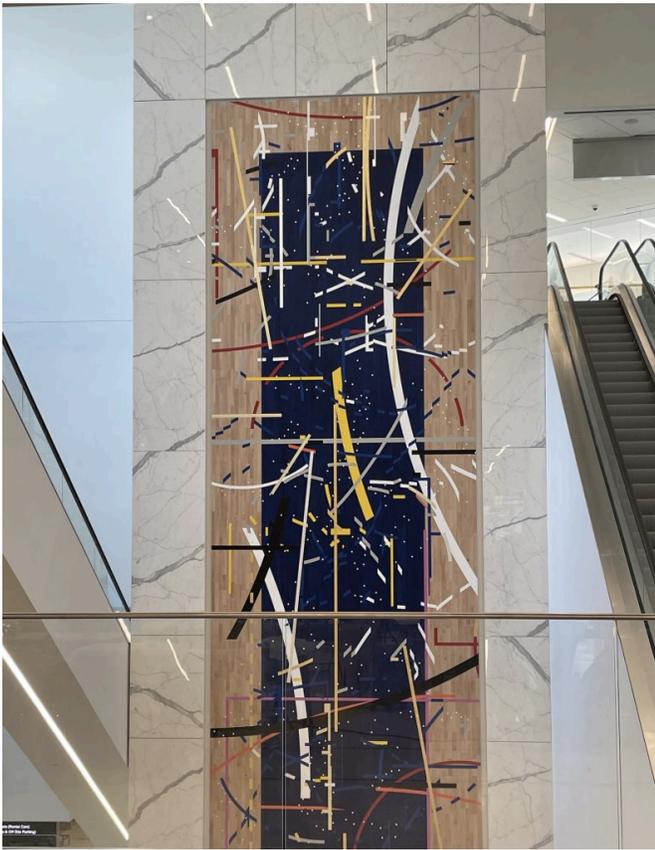
The baggage claim area is home to Ghani’s *The Worlds We Speak*. Inspired by the many languages spoken in the New York tristate area, the artist has visualized this linguistic diversity with handmade ceramic tiles, using data from the latest census and the Endangered Language Alliance to represent over 700 languages and dialects spoken in the metropolitan region.



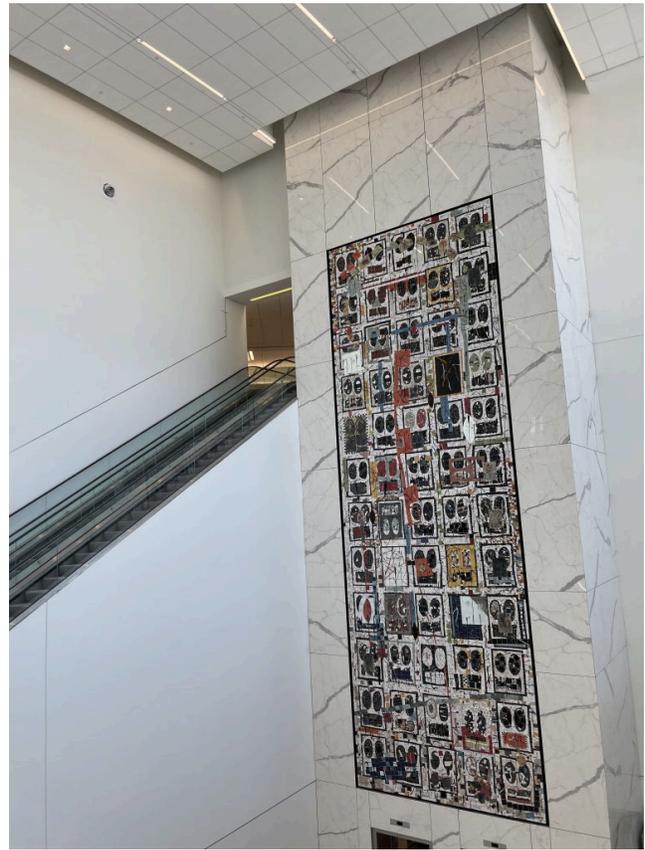
Mariam Ghani’s *The Worlds We Speak* mosaic at the baggage claim at the new terminal at LaGuardia International Airport. Photo by Chris Rank, Rank Studios

In the arrivals and departures halls, gem-shaped lamps by Overton hang at different heights from the ceiling. They are crafted from recycled security glass from city skylights sourced at salvage yards, with metal armatures.

On one wall, Quevedo has *Pacha Cosmopolitanism Overtime*, a full-scale wooden gym floor he built from scratch. The work, overlaid with abstract lines in colored paint and a constellation of silver and gold leaf stars, is reference to the importance of sports, particularly soccer, to immigrant communities.



Ronny Quevedo, *Pacha Cosmopolitanism Overtime* at New York's LaGuardia Airport. Photo courtesy of the Queens Museum.



Rashid Johnson, *The Travelers' Broken Crowd* at New York's LaGuardia Airport. Photo courtesy of the Queens Museum.

Johnson's contribution is a three-story mosaic, 45 feet tall and 15 feet wide, of 60 cartoonish faces he's nicknamed "Broken Men."

"Travel is such an interesting and complicated and beautiful and frustrating event, whether you think of it for the purpose of bettering oneself or the substantial refugee crisis right now," Johnson told the *New York Times*.

Production on Wilson's *Mother* has been delayed due to supply chain issues, but the sculpture, which features 12 globes with black oceans, will hang in the arrival and departure's three-story atrium come later this summer.

Meanwhile, Aliza Nisenbaum's first mosaic, based on a group portrait she painted of 16 Delta, Port Authority, and TSA employees, including a flight attendant, pilot, janitor, and security guard.

The state announced plans to completely renovate LaGuardia in 2015, and construction began the following year.

In June 2020, then-Governor Andrew Cuomo used one of his daily COVID-19 press briefings to unveil the airport's new Terminal B. It features works by Jeppe Hein, Sabine Hornig, Laura Owens, and Sarah Sze curated by the Public Art Fund.

The airport also features a restored James Brooks mural created under the Works Progress Administration in 1942 in Terminal A.

At yesterday's ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new terminal, Governor Kathy Hochul praised the artworks and promised New Yorkers that she was dedicated to improving the state's transportation hubs, warning: "Penn Station, I'm coming after you next!"

The most recent Penn Station expansion opened in December 2020. It features art installations by Kehinde Wiley, Stan Douglas, and artist duo Elmgreen & Dragset.

An overhaul of the station's Long Island Railroad concourse is expected to be completed in early 2023.



Artist Fred Wilson preparing his installation *Mother* for LaGuardia Airport. Photo by GmbH, Nienstaedt, Germany



Aliza Nisenbaum, *The Ones who Make it Run* (Delta Terminal C, LaGuardia Airport). Courtesy of the Queens Museum.



Virginia Overton, *Skylight Gems* at New York's LaGuardia Airport. Photo courtesy of the Queens Museum.