

LaGuardia Airport mosaic mural

Queens, NY, USA



Project Information

Project category:
Transportation

Years of construction:
2019-2020

Years of MAPEI involvement:
2019-2020

MAPEI coordinator:
Darin Shocker

Project owner:
Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

General contractor:
BRB Ceramic Tile, Marble & Stone Inc.

Installer company:
BRB Ceramic Tile, Marble & Stone Inc.

Project manager:
Ed Connors

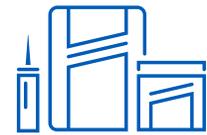
Photographer:
Virtual360NY

Project size:
25,000 sq. ft. (2 323 m²)



Project Overview

New York City's LaGuardia Airport now features one of the largest, continuous pieces of mosaic artwork ever created. Composed solely of tile, the massive 25,000-square-foot (2 323-m²) mural stretches across the entirety of the airport's recently revitalized Terminal B. MAPEI products were chosen to complete the installation.



Products Used

Keracolor® S

Mapesil™ T

Planitop® 330 Fast

Type 1™

UltraCare™ Grout Refresh™



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MAPEI helps create work of art at New York City airport

LaGuardia Airport (LGA) is an international airport located in the city of Queens, New York, that spans across 680 acres (275 hectares) of land. It was originally built in 1939 and named after New York City's mayor at the time, Fiorello La Guardia. Today, LaGuardia Airport is the third-busiest airport in New York City.

Over the years, parts of the airport interior became severely outdated and aesthetically too old-fashioned for a place such as New York City, which is known for its diverse, fast-paced, ever-evolving and unforgettable landscape. In 2019, to revitalize the layout of Terminal B, New York City's Public Art Fund teamed with LaGuardia Gateway Partners to commission an art program to capture the creativity, artistry and energy of the city.

Revitalizing Terminal B was no small feat. Because the terminal is one of the largest and busiest epicenters for travel to and from New York City, construction would need to be functional but grand, unique yet universal, beautiful and iconic — not just refreshing Terminal B but also reinvigorating it.

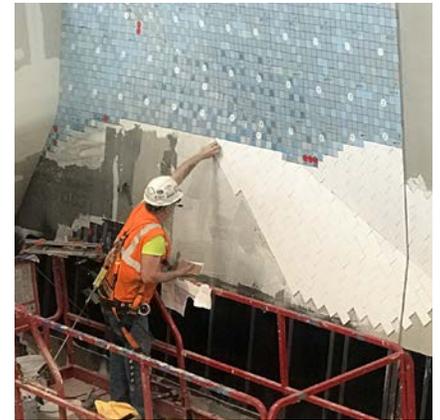
Four internationally recognized artists (Laura Owens, Sarah Sze, Sabine Hornig and Jeppe Hein) were chosen to design large-scale installations throughout the arrivals and departures hall of Terminal B. The mosaic mural was designed by Owens and serves as a celebration of the history, culture and architecture of New York City.

The mural features 80 iconic images from New York City's five boroughs, ranging from the Statue of Liberty and the Staten Island Ferry to a MetroCard and a slice of pizza — which is why the mural is aptly named "I 🍷 NY." Handmade glazed ceramic and subway tiles (sized 2" x 2", 1" x 1" and 4" x 4" [5 x 5, 2.5 x 2.5 and 10 x 10 cm]) were used to create the images, which are all connected by a backdrop of sky and clouds. 3" x 6" (7.6 x 15 cm) white subway tiles were used to form the clouds.

MAPEI on the job

Products from MAPEI's Tile & Stone Installation Systems line were put to work in order to complete the mosaic wall-tile project. The mural consists of 135 colors (36 of which were custom developed by the tile makers), three different shades of **Keracolor S** grout (in the colors "Rain," "Pearl Gray" and "White") and "LaGuardia," a customized gray grout color that is unique to this project and was provided by MAPEI.

To create depth in the sky portion of the mural, the **Keracolor S** grout color "Rain" was used predominately in the clearer sections of the sky; "Pearl Gray" was used inside the entire cloud area and acted as a transition color between darker shadows. In addition, "LaGuardia" was used in the darkest parts of shadows (generally underneath clouds) in the mosaic, while "White" was used alongside cut subway tiles in curved areas for a smooth transition.



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25,000 square feet (2 323 m²) of tile – in various shades, sizes and colors – was installed by BRB Ceramic Tile, Marble & Stone Inc. From the first day of the tile being installed in August 2019 to the final touch in May 2020, the work was consistent, significantly detailed and a big challenge for installers creating this seamless design continuity.

Used to set the tile, **Type 1** tile adhesive provided excellent adhesion, extended open time and low VOCs. **Planitop 330 Fast** rendering mortar was used to flash the wall and taper the transitions for a more fluid installation.

To touch up grout lines and create a uniform transition between colors for a clean finish, **UltraCare Grout Refresh** ready-to-use, polymer-modified colorant and sealer for grout joints was applied. **Mapesil T** 100%-silicone sealant was also used, offering excellent elongation and flexibility as well as aiding in the prevention of mold and mildew.

The mosaic mural now gracing the walls of LaGuardia Airport's Terminal B is not only welcoming and comforting in these troubled times, but is also iconic, historic and unique. In addition, the mural is now a candidate for designation by the Guinness Book of World Records as one of the largest indoor murals in the world. MAPEI is proud to be a part of this colossal work of art that will last for generations.



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