

CBS NEWS

New York's Penn Station gets "glow up" with art installation by Rico Gatson

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Penn Station will look a little different the next time you visit.

A new, colorful art installation was unveiled Thursday called "Collective Light Transfer." It was created by Brooklyn artist Rico Gatson.

"The design, the color, the pattern, it's active, but I think it's also calming," Gatson said. "It's an extension, or expansion of my art practice is utilizing hard edge geometry to speak to things related to spirituality, native, the African, and the Indigenous culture in design."



Photo Credit: David Plakke + Debra Simon / Courtesy of Amtrak

Gatson's installation spans from Seventh Avenue to Eighth Avenue and is placed throughout the station for commuters to enjoy.

"'Art at Amtrak' is a program that we established back in 2022 to really highlight the creative energy of the region that this station here, Penn Station. And it's really a station improvement project, but also very much an effort for Amtrak to engage with the local arts community surrounding each of our stations," said Amtrak Director of Infrastructure and Planning Sharon Tepper.

Gatson said he hopes his artwork brings calm to those in such a busy, overwhelming space.

"You know, it's really about like trying to combine those two elements. That's something that, again, I think I try to do in my practice" he said.

"Instead of waiting for a renovation to be done and then unveiling the art, introducing art as a temporary art, placemaking while you're undergoing design and construction. So even construction walls and barriers and fences can all become a site for public art to enliven the experience for the user, and also to give exposure to artists that typically might show in only a gallery or at a museum," said curator Debra Simon.