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Working With Local Artist Nate Harris in Philadelphia to Bring Artwork to The Terrace

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We recently opened our doors to [The Terrace](#) in Philadelphia, a renovated former hotel that's known in the city for its unique cylindrical shape. To bring the lobby to life, we collaborated with the Philly-based Paradigm Gallery and talented local artist Nate Harris. His 18ft hand-painted mural is visible from all points in the lobby as well as from the stairwell leading to impressive 2nd floor amenities (we're talking a fitness center, game room, and communal kitchen – among others). The mural's unique design also serves as a custom wayfinding visual on Sonder's guest floors above, which helps guests to navigate the building's circular layout. Nate's eye-catching mural draws inspiration from nature to echo the curves and archways of the building's architecture, which gives the lobby an added sense of movement and artistry.



We sat down with the talented artist to ask him some questions about what inspires him, the meaning behind the project, and why he loves being an artist in Philadelphia.

Q&A

- 01 **What made you interested in working on this project?** I've worked once before with Sonder and Paradigm and really enjoyed the experience. [The opportunity was to paint in a] unique lobby area, which came with its own set of challenges.
- 02 **Can you explain the concept and what it represents? What do you hope people feel when they see this new piece?** This piece is a literal representation of a sunset or sunrise. This was a design that I've had in my sketchbook for some time, and I enjoyed the idea of

trying to recreate graphically what the sun looks like when it's at eye level with the horizon. Almost how the sun and atmosphere blend and it's not so easy to distinguish one from the other. The color bands could represent the earth itself, or rays of atmosphere. Ultimately, I felt that this imagery can be interpreted as uplifting or calming depending on if you are venturing out or settling into your stay.

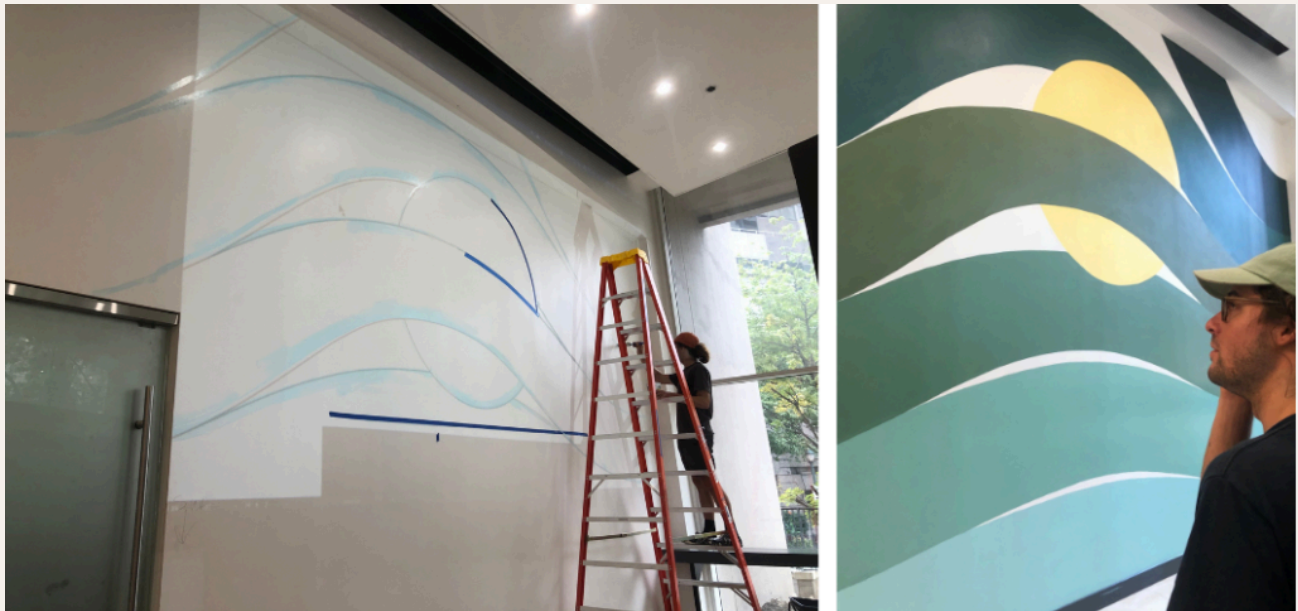
03 **Tell us about your creative process. Do you listen to music or get inspired by other artists? How do you start a project?** My process changes project to project. I like to keep a sketchbook, but I don't actually enjoy drawing. I prefer arriving at imagery that lends itself to the medium like working with wood or printmaking. I will think of an idea of how to create something, using a material or woodworking method, or I will draw something that I feel is iconic and begin there. It will ultimately grow into something different as a result of being in the studio. For instance, I would love to take this design and translate it into a woodcut print. As physical pieces, it can take on a whole new composition while coming from the same design. The color bands can be placed randomly – overlapping, etc. It has taken me a while to approach my work more intuitively, and my process is growing all of the time.

04 **How has Philadelphia shaped your art?** Philadelphia is a great place to be an artist. It has a strong, small community that I believe genuinely supports one another. Through the different spaces that I've been a part of I've been able to develop a very tactile, experimental approach to my work and benefit from the mentorship of other members of those spaces. I don't feel I would be able to freely play creatively, or push the boundaries of my own

practice without having access to communal creative spaces and the resources they allow.

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You've worked with amazing brands like the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Target, Warby Parker, and Adobe. What do you love about working with brands like these? Tell us about some of your favorite projects you've collaborated on. My favorite moments when working with these brands are when I can challenge what is expected of me, or when a project grows from a simple brief to something more interesting. I recently had the opportunity to create a custom wooden puzzle for Warby Parkers' NYC offices. Even just one year ago I would not have imagined my work would have translated to a medium like this. I am the most grateful when brands trust me and perhaps take a risk and challenge what they've done in the past as well.



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