



## The James New York Debuts New Public Art Project In Collaboration With Grey Area And Contemporary Artist Paul Wackers

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The James New York, a sophisticated, artistically approachable hotel in Manhattan, announces the unveiling of a new public art installation created in partnership with Grey Area. Kyle DeWoody, Owner and Creative Director of Grey Area, commissioned Brooklyn-based artist Paul Wackers to create an original mural for the hotel's 6th Avenue facade, in support of The James' longstanding commitment to local arts communities.



Art, culture and community are important components of The James' hotel experience in Chicago, Miami and New York. The brand's Art at The James program features a mix of local, national and international artists that is intended to enhance the visual journey - from corridors to public spaces to guestrooms.

At The James New York, artist and curator Matthew Jensen worked with the Irving Sandler Artists File to select pieces for *Stand Here and Listen*, a collection displayed as a vertical gallery with one artist to each floor. And now, The James' newest installation by Paul Wackers marks the brand's first public-facing extension of its dedicated art program. Created with its surrounding neighborhood in mind, The James' public art initiative strives to elevate the local community through art that is approachable, engaging and interactive.

"The James is committed to inspiring experiences," said Lisa Zandee, Senior Vice President of Brand Management for The James. "Whether it's celebrating local creativity through our Cultural Collection, or now with the first piece of James public art - we are dedicated to connecting travelers and locals alike with the surrounding vibrant cultural landscapes," added Zandee. "Both Grey Area and Paul

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Wackers have an engaging approach to art and expression, which made them the ideal partners to kick off the brand's commitment to public art."

"Paul Wackers was a clear choice to create this work of art for The James New York," said Grey Area's Kyle DeWoody. "His use of bright colors, dynamic shapes, and natural motifs complements the aesthetic of the hotel and provides an engaging and dynamic visual experience for passersby that will continue to evolve with the growth of the foliage throughout the seasons."

The public-facing art installation entitled "Slow Dance and the Daylight" creates a complex yet playful narrative through Wackers' signature use of vivid colors and dynamic composition. An intimate tableau of potted plants, personal mementos, geometric shapes and lines, the vibrant still-life blurs the line between reality and abstraction. The piece engages visitors and locals alike by establishing a sense of familiarity in a seemingly impersonal city.

"Working with the shape of the wall, I was able to create a narrative with this piece by using compositional elements and recurring motifs: a cabinet with familiar but intangible objects, plants, pots and vaguely historical imagery," said artist Paul Wackers. "This installation depicts the version of a passage of time," added Wackers. "The first object has a sense of potential energy and growth as you make your way through the mural, you see a human manipulation of this energy in conflict and in conjunction with the natural, and end with the hopeful balance of the two."

The James New York's new public art project is currently on display on the hotel's 6th Avenue facade, located between Grand Street and Thompson Street. Guests, locals, and passersby are invited to join the conversation via social media and engage with the piece by sharing "selfies" captured in front of the mural. Select photos using the hashtag #jamespublicart will find their way to jamespublicart.com, which will exhibit a collection of images celebrating the inspiring interaction between people, art, and the public space. To further build a sense of community around the installation, The James New York is working with the hotel's own David Burke Kitchen to provide complimentary homemade apple cider to passersby who post and show their #jamespublicart "selfie" throughout the month of February. For more details, follow @jameshotels on Twitter/Instagram or check out jamespublicart.com.

Additionally, The James New York has tapped Grey Area to develop an art-inspired itinerary for its exclusive "See Art Soho" package, which celebrates the neighborhood's vibrant art scene. In addition to two seasonal cocktails at the hotel's Treehouse Bar and in-room breakfast for two, Grey Area's expertly-curated walking tour created especially for the package highlights the neighborhood's best art spaces, exhibits, and galleries. For more details on the "See Art Soho" package, please visit jameshotels.com.

## About The James

In the realm of hospitality, The James Hotels, with ideally situated locations in Chicago, New York, Miami and opening in Los Angeles in 2016, are warmly modern, locally infused hotels that deliver an inspired blend of exquisite hand-crafted design surrounded by liberated touches. The James' core guest-centric philosophy is evident in the properties' residential yet social environment and personal, intuitive service. For more information, follow The James Hotels at [twitter.com/jameshotels](https://twitter.com/jameshotels),

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## About Grey Area

With art as a starting point, Grey Area seeks to push the limits of creative engagement and expression through collaboration, installation and programming. Led by Creative Director and Owner, Kyle DeWoody, Grey Area provides creative consulting services with a focus on incorporating art into everyday life. Working with brands, artists, designers, corporations and institutions to produce collaborations, experiences and limited artist editions that re-contextualize how and where art can exist.

## About Paul Wackers

Utilizing bright colors and dynamic compositions, Paul Wackers sheds new light on everyday objects. Born in New Haven, Connecticut in 1978, Wackers graduated with his MFA from San Francisco Art Institute, and with his BFA from Corcoran College of Art and Design in Washington, DC. Some of Wackers' solo exhibitions include Morgan Lehman Gallery (New York, NY), Narwhal Projects (Toronto, ON), Alice Gallery (Brussels, Belgium), and Eleanor Harwood Gallery (San Francisco, CA). Wackers has also been in several group and two person shows, including New Image Art (Los Angeles, CA), Halsey McKay (East Hampton, NY), Frosch and Portmann (New York, NY), and Headlands Center for the Arts (Sausalito, CA). His work is in many prominent private and public collections, including Chevron Corporation and Fidelity Investments.