



nimbus news brief

2023 FALL/WINTER HIGHLIGHTS

Piecing Together Art & Community for 18 Years

Things always seem busy and active around the Nimbus Arts studios—and they are! Art is being made while connections throughout our community are being developed and renewed. It's only when we look back—18 years—that we realize how far we've come and what we've accomplished. Thousands of young people, teens, adults, and seniors have added their creativity and vitality to our mission through classes, camps, and especially our free community artmaking events, and we know our continuing programs will engage and activate thousands more.



Nimbus Arts began and earned its name from our first Cloud Camps, a youth art & sculpture camp where students explored cloud shapes and forms. Since then, we've expanded vastly and are now a community asset serving all of Napa County. Nimbus provides art education and instruction to people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds, keeps art accessible and available, and also provides income and employment opportunities to local artists. **Nimbus Arts all came together "piece by piece," just like our many Hundreds of Hands™ mosaic projects, and we continue through the support and participation of people like you.** We thank you for your continued belief in the power and importance of art!

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We're "Kiln'ing" It!

We're really "fired-up" about our new kiln! Our new kiln is allowing us to accommodate the growth and enthusiasm of our ceramics program and speeds up delivery of finished wares. Made possible by donations to Nimbus Arts and a generous designated donation, the new kiln has already become an essential

tool and asset. The new kiln supports 98 ceramics classes and 3 ceramics summer camps per year, with participation expanded to more than 765 attendees.

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Hundreds of Hands™ Project: #018 Mosaic Stone Stacking: A Nimbus Arts + Mentis Teens Connect Community Art Collaboration

Balance, Connection + Stability — are important attributes for a healthy life, and essential attributes for the practice of stone stacking. Nimbus Arts recently teamed with Mentis, Napa Valley's center for mental health services, to launch its latest *Hundreds of Hands* project, engaging teens and community members in art-making + highlighting health and wellness.

Young people in the **Mentis Teens Connect** program are working with Nimbus artists to hone their mosaic art skills so they can work with our team to engage our community in mosaic



art-making gatherings and events. These individual mosaics will be collected and assembled onto large-scale stone sculptural forms and transformed into a visual expression of our community's connection and strength. The completed mosaic-adorned stone stack sculptures will be up to ten-feet+ high and will become a **public art installation in the city of Napa**. A pool of natural stones will surround the installation to invite personal stacking, peaceful reflection, and inspiration.

Nimbus has joined with the Bay Area Creative Corps, a collection of artists and creative changemakers, to build connections between ancient stone stacking traditions spanning the globe, and their relevant historic and cultural meanings. Cultural storytelling opportunities will also be a highlight within these *Hundreds of Hands* free community art gatherings.

We are grateful for support from The Bay Area Creative Corps, San Francisco Community Foundation, California Arts Council, Arts & Culture Advisory Committee, PG&E, the Nimbus Arts Leadership Circle, and donors from our community.



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Teen Tuesday: A Safe + Welcoming Space to Create

Art-making delivers proven health + wellness benefits, and making art together creates opportunities for self-expression and deep interpersonal communication. As the school year began, Nimbus Arts relaunched Teen Tuesday—a place for teens in our community to learn, share, create and express themselves every Tuesday with FREE art programming. Melissa and Mercedes Baker, our acclaimed Nimbus dynamic duo, along with a team of Nimbus Arts' best teaching artists, provide a diverse array of art instruction, and a place to create and/or just be together in a relaxed creative zone. Young people 12 - 18 years of age are welcomed every Tuesday from 6-8pm to engage with each other and take part in an inspiring, rotating variety of art media and themes.



15th Annual Día de los Muertos: A Community Celebration!

Nimbus Arts and the UpValley Family Centers jointly produced our 15th annual Día de los Muertos Community Celebration, a time-honored tradition, on Sunday, October 29th. Returning to the Napa Valley College Upper Valley Campus, the gathering brought together hundreds of people of all ages and backgrounds to celebrate the traditions of our Mexican American community. Día de los Muertos Community Altars, emblematic of the holiday, were created by families, students, and organizations, and adorned the perimeter of the event. Vendors offered traditional Mexican food and drink, while performing artists entertained the crowd with music and folklorico dance. Nimbus Arts offered a variety of culturally themed art activities and showcased Día de los Muertos-inspired artwork created by local junior high and high school classrooms during our public-school art programs, and at free family art gatherings at Nimbus.

This year's Día de los Muertos Celebration was made possible through generous grants from The City of St. Helena and The Damian Maldonado Memorial Foundation.



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7 Years of the Power of Art

"Art education and mentoring by trained Nimbus artist-instructors continues to provide a means for self-expression and also transfers art fabrication skills that can be built into a career," said Kent Bolts, Juvenile Hall Superintendent. He continued, *"This innovative and engaging initiative has evolved into a program with dozens of at-promise young people finding ways to improve their lives through the power of art."*

Nimbus Arts has been working with at-risk/at-promise youth in Juvenile Hall and Napa County Court and Community Schools for seven years, offering an important outlet for self-expression and exploration of career development through our Fine & Industrial Art program. This year, over a dozen students from Juvenile Hall worked with Nimbus Artists Anne Pentland and Margaret Dennett to create the first of four murals depicting the beauty, bounty, and diversity of California. Displayed on the outdoor walls of Crossroads School at Juvenile Hall, the completed mural includes the border desert, San Diego, and Los Angeles, as well as California Grey Whales, Poppies, and California Quail—all symbols of our state. Future mural sections feature the Central Valley, the heart of California's agricultural production, San Francisco and Napa Valley, and Northern California to the Oregon border. The final mural sections are slated for completion in Spring 2024.



Nimbus Arts Studio 4: Nim+BUS

Our three main studios are located on St. Helena's Main Street, but our fourth art studio is often parked in our very own backyard. That's right—the **Nim+BUS, our mobile art education and activity studio has arrived and is hitting the road!** Creating the Nim+BUS has been a Nimbus Arts dream for many years and was finally completed late this summer. A converted panel truck, the Nim+BUS is equipped to provide a diverse selection of art projects in locations far and wide. The Nim+BUS has already visited several locations in American Canyon and Napa and is scheduled to bring free art activities to many other new locations. Our Nim+BUS is also available for private events such as birthday parties, corporate events, family reunions, or social group programs. Future projects will extend up-valley and into the communities of eastern Napa County. Follow our arty travels on our website to see where the Nim+BUS will turn up next!



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Nimbus Artist Profile: Max Harper

Max Harper recently joined Nimbus Arts and has brought a new perspective to our team of teaching artists. **A self-described "outlaw illustrator,"** Max draws inspiration from Robert Crumb,



Antonio Prohias, and Sergio Aragon, with influences from the monochrome nightmare landscapes of H.R. Giger, Laurie R. King, and Horror Vacui auteur, Phil Kuntz. Art helped Max navigate a childhood filled with moves, confusion, and contradictions, and provided a way of processing, keeping record, and navigating his world.

Max ran with street artists from the Bay Area and drew from their courage and creativity in producing large expressive and convoluted projects anonymously. Their work to add vibrant color and energetic beauty to a dreary urban area was inspiring and challenging.

This summer Max launched an experimental animation program at Nimbus, designed to remove the most challenging barriers of animation: time investment and arcane technology. The program works with any medium and is accessible to beginners and useful for experts. Max especially enjoys working with young people, helping them find ways to express themselves through art.

We welcome Max to the Nimbus family!

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Art Scholarships: Accessible for All!

Making art accessible to everyone in our community is a cornerstone of the Nimbus Arts mission. We continue to create and activate free community art initiatives through our *Hundreds of Hands* programs, but many people are not aware that we also make our fee-based programs like classes and camps available to all through generous scholarship programs. It's only through community engagement and support—from people like you—that we can keep art always available to all!

nimbus arts

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