



Alameda County Arts Commission  
1401 Lakeside Dr., Suite 603  
Oakland, CA 94612  
(510) 208-9646 phone  
[www.acgov.org/arts](http://www.acgov.org/arts)

## **For Immediate Release**

October 6, 2017

### **Contact:**

Rosa Valdez, Program Coordinator

(510) 208-9646 or [rosa.valdez@acgov.org](mailto:rosa.valdez@acgov.org)

Note: Images of the proposal designs and captions are available

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Three Artists Selected to Create the Community Identifiers in Ashland/Cherryland, Castro Valley, and San Lorenzo**

(Oakland, California) – The Alameda County Arts Commission is pleased to announce that three Bay Area artists have been selected to create Community Identifiers: Nico Berry for Ashland/Cherryland, Robert Minervini for Castro Valley, and John Wehrle for San Lorenzo. The artists and their designs were chosen by three separate selection committees comprised of local community members. The overall goal of this project is to create community gateway markers on freeway overpasses to help support a positive and welcoming environment for both the community and visitors. It is anticipated that the artists will begin hand-painting the Community Identifiers in late Spring of 2018.

Each Community Identifier will feature the name of the community along with other design elements. Nico Berry's design celebrates Ashland and Cherryland with vibrant images of leaves from the Oregon Ash tree and blossoms of the Cherry tree. Rob Minervini's design honors Castro Valley through a panoramic landscape that features Lake Chabot and the Bay. John Wehrle's design celebrates San Lorenzo through images of the San Lorenzo Creek including the depiction of water, Sycamore tree leaves, and other natural elements such as a dragonfly, turtle, duck, and butterfly.

The Community Identifier Project concept was developed through community interest and support. In August 2016, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors designated this as an official project of the Alameda County Arts Commission. Community involvement and engagement has been at the core of this project. Community members have been involved in the project throughout the last year by serving on the artist selection committees, contributing to community surveys about their neighborhoods, participating in

community roundtables and community meetings, as well as providing comments about the artists' proposal designs.

The artist selection committees chose the three final artists through an open, competitive process with multiple steps. In September 2017, each selection committee interviewed five semi-finalist artists who created proposals for each project site. Each committee also reviewed and discussed the comments submitted by community members when the proposals were available for public comment. The selected artists live throughout the Bay Area: Nico Berry resides in San Francisco; Robert Minervini resides in Oakland; and John Wehrle resides in Richmond.

The freeway overpasses identified for the Community Identifier Projects are under the control of the CA State Department of Transportation (Caltrans). The freeway overpasses identified for the projects include the I-238 Highway Overpass at Mission Blvd / E. 14th Street in Ashland/Cherryland, the I-580 Highway Overpass at Redwood Road in Castro Valley, and the I-880 Highway Overpass at Hesperian Boulevard in San Lorenzo.

In October, the recommendation of each selected artist and their proposal design will be presented to local community groups. Then the recommendations will be forwarded to the Members of the Alameda County Arts Commission for review and approval at the regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, November 8, 2017 at 4:00pm, located at 1401 Lakeside Drive, Oakland. The artists' contracts will be presented to the Alameda County Board of Supervisors for approval in late 2017; contact the Arts Commission office at 510-208-9646 for the exact date. All meetings are open to the public. Upon approval by the Board of Supervisors, a proposal for all project sites will be submitted to Caltrans for review and approval. Completion of all projects is contingent on Caltrans approval.

Community members who want to receive updates about the projects should send an email to [artscommission@acgov.org](mailto:artscommission@acgov.org) to be added to the Arts Commission's email list. For more information about the Community Identifier Projects, contact the Alameda County Arts Commission at (510) 208-9646 or visit [www.acgov.org/arts](http://www.acgov.org/arts)

###

Caption Information for attached images:

Image of Community Identifier proposal design for Ashland/Cherryland by selected artist Nico Berry.  
Image of Community Identifier proposal design for Castro Valley by selected artist Robert Minervini.  
Image of Community Identifier proposal design for San Lorenzo by selected artist John Wehrle.