

Envisioning Peace

Inspired by local, national, international and personal conflict, “*Envisioning Peace*” elucidates the positive impact that peace can have within our expanding global society through its interpretation of peace in various contexts within our communities and ourselves.

Ascending the stairs to MMAP’s office entrance on the left of the mural, a silhouette shows an East Palo Alto teenager receiving international news. The news comes from a Sri Lankan teenager located on the bottom right-hand corner of the mural in the foreground. The Sri Lankan youth sails a newspaper airplane that evolves into birds before reverting back to a newspaper with information regarding the genocide in Sri Lanka that he wishes to bring attention toward. The burning sunset of red, orange and yellow kissing the sky behind them represents the strength that propels the news from one teenager to another. Below the stairs, a silver pistol with a knotted barrel shoots flowers instead of bullets to symbolize the spread of love instead of pain. A *Sagrado Corazon* (Sacred Heart) represents a heart-filter that suctions bad blood full of hatred and negative energy and then pumps out peace, positive energy, strength and happiness, as symbolized by the flowers surrounding it. Good blood of peace and love will then flow out into the community to all who need it.

The central figure of the mural is a Tree of Peace, which symbolizes peace within us. Nearby, a teenager is in communication with nature through engaging in a peaceful yoga pose. Shaded by the tree, the youth of our community stand united while holding a banner of peace as they recruit others in the community to LIVE IN PEACE. The eye above the mountain is envisioning peace and rises out of the mountain with the strength of the sun sending peace with each warm ray of sunlight that shines on our community. Our peaceful sun monitors conflict and rises up to patrol and protect our communities from danger.

Peace Mountain immortalizes two Nobel Peace Prize Laureates: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Rigoberta Menchú Tum and two key leadership figures of peace movements: Cesar Chavez and Mahatma Gandhi. These leaders struggled to bring peace to communities throughout the world. The river of harmony flows from the mountains, which descends into a lake of tranquility and symbolizes the voyage that peace has made to reach our community.

The lake is filled with crystal-clear blue water, representing the pureness in the journey towards peace. Working under the watchful eye of Peace Mountain, a young boy folds paper planes and sends them out into the world. The young boy in the foreground works to deliver information to the sheltered community about the international horrors we often do not hear about. Over the tree of peace, the planes transform into doves delivering the message of conflict and the idea of peace throughout the world.

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Inspired by local, national, international and personal conflict, “*Envisioning Peace*” elucidates the positive impact that peace can have within our expanding global society through its interpretation of peace in various contexts within our communities and ourselves. It will be the first public art mural on MMAP’s new office located at the corner of Euclid and O’keefe St. in East Palo Alto. This mural represents how peace is interpreted in different parts of the world and the vision that East Palo Alto youth have for themselves, their immediate community and the world abroad.

“We wanted to show what peace would look like through the eyes of others and the connection between our community and other places in the world that are experiencing similar conflicts.”

Striving for peace within, a young Latin girl receives a newspaper in the form of a paper plane informing her of international conflict. Conflicts such as the genocide in Sri Lanka and the civil war in Darfur are often kept hidden from our community because of limited media coverage. She is followed by an African-American father and son, who are supporting her in this search for peace. They pass a burning sunset of red, orange, and yellow kissing the sky behind them. A silver pistol with a knotted barrel shoots flowers instead of bullets, symbolizing the spread of love instead of pain. The heart-filter takes in bad blood full of hatred and negative energy and pumps out peace in order to reciprocate the positive energy. Good blood of peace and love flows out into the community to all who need it.

Standing in the center of the mural is Mother Nature as the Tree of Peace, which symbolizes peace within ourselves. Shaded by the tree, the youth of our community once divided by different neighborhoods stand united holding a banner of peace. The eye above the mountain is representative of envisioning peace; it rises out of the mountain as the sun, depicting the community striving towards a more peaceful world. The sun casts its rays on the world below, sending the vision throughout the community. Inside the eye rests a peace sign symbolizing the struggles that peace overcomes and within the peace sign lies the sun shining on the community. The watchful symbol glows with orange and red color, comforting the world with its warmth. The all seeing eye monitors conflict and rises up to patrol and protect the communities from danger.

Peace Mountain immortalizes our leadership figures that fought their entire lives for peace. The figureheads of peace are represented by; Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Cesar Chavez, Gandhi and Rigoberta Menchu, who won the Nobel Peace Prize for publicizing the plight of Guatemalan people. The mountain range is a cool teal color that represents a barrier for the community to live in a more civilized fashion. Together, through their struggles, these leaders have brought peace to communities throughout the world. The river of harmony flows from the mountains, which descends into a lake of tranquility and symbolizes the voyage that peace has made to reach our community.

The lake is filled with crystal-clear blue water, representing the pureness in the journey towards peace. Working under the watchful eye of Peace Mountain, a young boy folds paper planes and sends them out into the world. The young boy in the foreground works to deliver information to the sheltered community about the international horrors we often do not hear about. Over the tree of peace, the planes transform into doves delivering the message of conflict and the idea of peace throughout the world.