

Date: April 17, 2024
To: Visual Arts Committee
From: Mary Chou, Director of Civic Art Collection and Public Art
Re: New design of Alex Nieto Memorial

SFAC staff is bringing the new design of the *Alex Nieto Memorial* by Lucia Gonzalez Ippolito and Mehmet Alademir for installation at Bernal Heights Park for review and approval by the Arts Commission.

Following Board of Supervisors ordinance No. 088-17 directing the Recreation and Park Department (RPD) to install in Bernal Heights a memorial in honor of Alex Nieto, SFAC has been working with RPD and the Alex Nieto Memorial Committee (Committee) on the design and installation of a memorial to Alex Nieto.

In 2019, the Full Commission approved under Resolution #0204-19-036, a design of the memorial by Josue Rojas and Armando Vasquez. The Committee has since been working with a new artist, design team, and project sponsor. The attached proposal shows the updated concept.

RPD will enter into agreement with the Committee's fiscal sponsor Calle 24 for the creation and installation of the memorial. The Arts Commission will enter into agreement with Calle 24 for a gift of funds to maintain and conserve the artwork for an anticipated 20-year period.

SFAC staff is requesting Commissioners to rescind the following motion:

RESOLUTION NO. 0204-19-036: Motion to approve the *Alex Nieto Memorial Monument*, a design by Josué Rojas and Armando Vasquez. The memorial will be installed at Bernal Hill, located at Bernal Heights Park. The monument will be constructed of concrete with painted imagery and measure approximately 4 ft. high by 2 ft. wide by 4 ft. deep on a 12 ft. circular concrete base. The project is sponsored by the Alex Nieto Memorial Committee and Acción Latina; the memorial will not become part of the Civic Art Collection.

And to approve the following motion:

Motion to approve the *Alex Nieto Memorial*, a design by Lucia Gonzalez Ippolito and Mehmet Alademir. The memorial will be installed at Bernal Heights Park. It will be constructed of stone, tile and concrete, and measure approximately 4 ft. 6 in. high by 5 ft. wide by 5 ft. deep with a 12 ft. diameter circular stone base. The project is sponsored by the Alex Nieto Memorial Committee; the memorial will not become part of the Civic Art Collection.

ALEX NIETO MEMORIAL



ALEX
3.04.1986 - 3.21.2014



ALEX
3.04.1986 - 3.21.2014

“Alex Nieto was 28 years old when he was killed, in the neighbourhood where he had spent his whole life. He died in a barrage of bullets fired at him by four San Francisco policemen. There are a few things about his death that everyone agrees on: he was in a hilltop park eating a burrito and tortilla chips, wearing the Taser he carried for his job as a bouncer at a nightclub, when someone called 911 on him a little after 7pm on the evening of 21 March 2014...”

Guardian 3.21.2016

ALEX NIETO MEMORIAL

Bernal Heights is situated in the southeast of San Francisco. This scenic area boasts an old radio station, a beautiful park, and numerous captivating trails waiting to be explored. The memorial site is nestled on the northwest side of the park, offering breathtaking views of the city skyline. It serves as a perfect stop for dog walkers, joggers, and hikers alike.

In Bernal Heights, the tradition of coloring stones holds significant meaning. Stones are imbued with color to celebrate births, honor individuals, or shed light on important political and social issues.

An existing memorial dedicated to Alex Neto can be found on the northern side of the park. This memorial stands as a testament to the respect and admiration people hold for Alex, symbolized by the stones they have brought to this site.

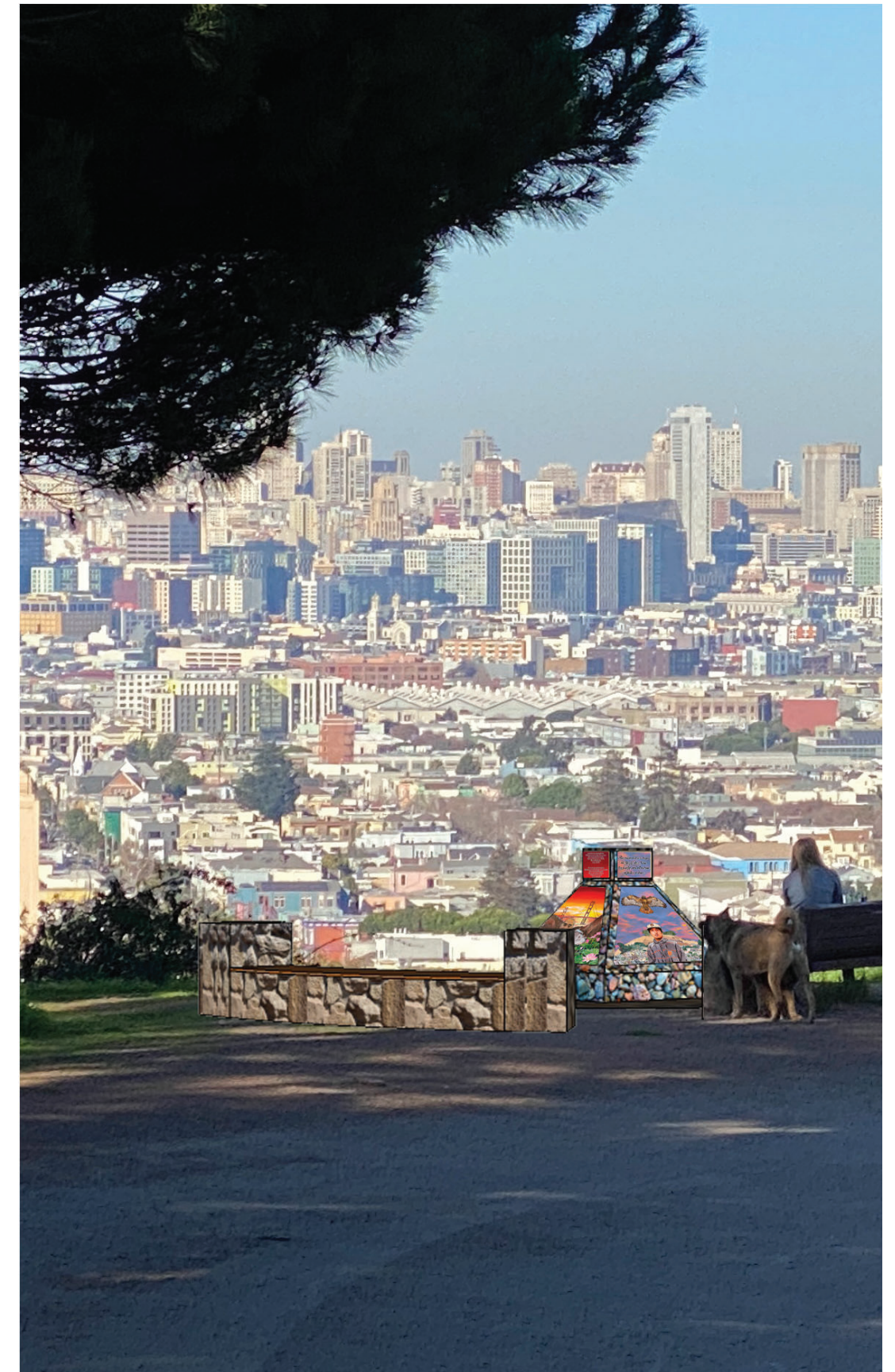
For the new Alex Neto Memorial, our vision is to collect and unite the colorful stones to harmonize with the vibrant tapestry of our city. In doing so, we aim to pay homage to each of the victims, ensuring that their memory is cherished and celebrated.

Our design draws inspiration from the grandeur of ancient Mayan temples, embodying the spirit of the Alex Neto Memorial. Taking cues from the timeless architecture of pyramids, known for their enduring significance, we have created a design that resonates with strength and permanence. Each of Alex's paintings adorns a facet of this modern pyramid, much like the intricate ornaments on the Mayan pyramids.

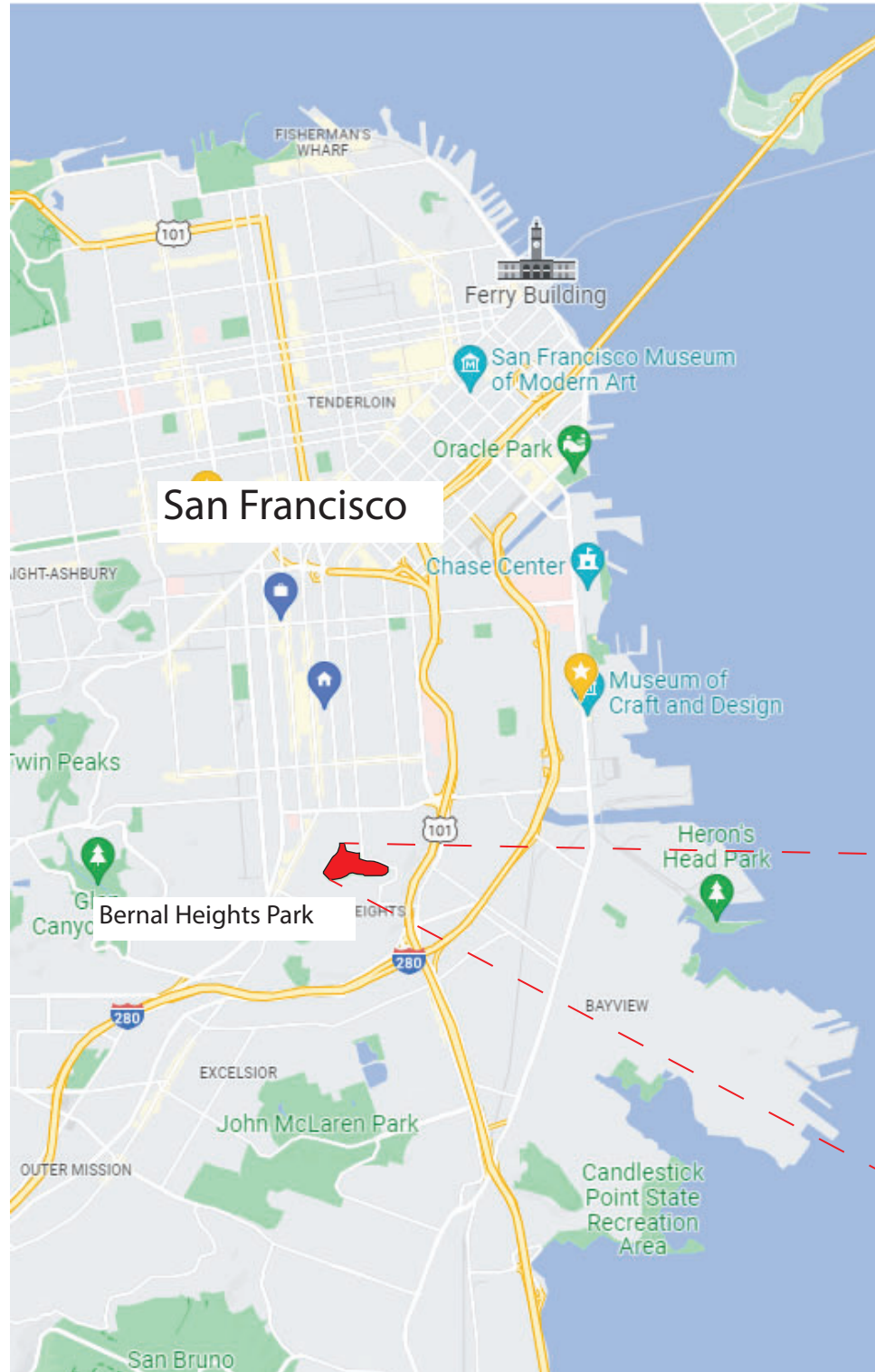
To enhance the memorial's focus and continuation of its thematic elements, we have introduced a seating area. This seating area is part of an ongoing effort to manipulate and improve existing features. In the future, it can be expanded into a more extensive corridor, creating a more immersive experience.

With a height limit of 4 feet 6 inches, the memorial is encircled by a 6-foot radius circle. This circle not only separates the memorial from the surrounding ground but also defines its borders. The surface of this border circle is intentionally even, although each stone differs by half an inch in height. This intentional variation encourages visitors to pause, reflect on their surroundings, and approach the memorial with the respect it deserves.

In line with our commitment to community and sustainability, we have consciously chosen to utilize locally sourced materials, including stones and wood, and have actively engaged local volunteers in our project. Much like Alex Nieto's dedication to fostering community unity, our own community has grappled with deep-seated issues such as social justice and gentrification over the years. The act of transforming scattered stones into a cohesive form serves as a powerful symbol of our collective effort to reunite and rebuild our community. Every participant involved in this endeavor is a dedicated volunteer from within our community, exemplifying our shared belief in the potential for sustainability within our neighborhood. Through this project, we aim to demonstrate that our community can thrive and endure.



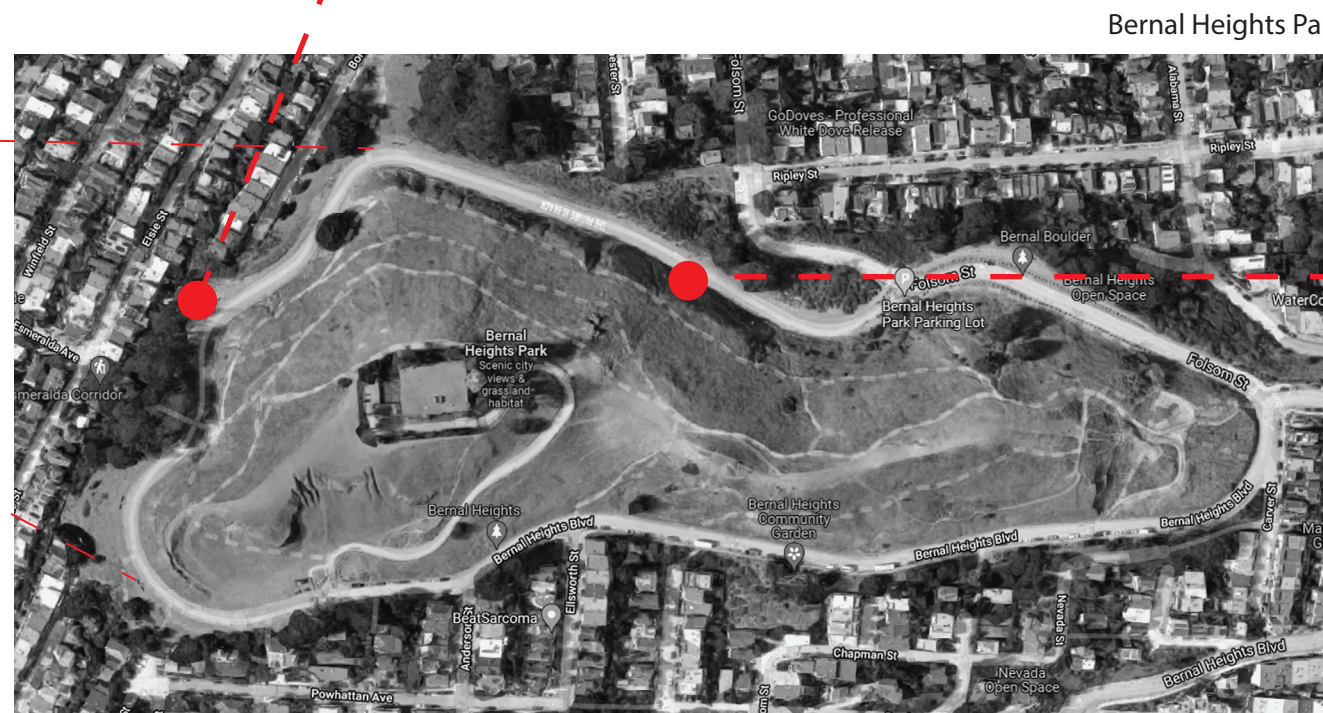
ALEX NIETO MEMORIAL



Alex Nieto
Memorial Location

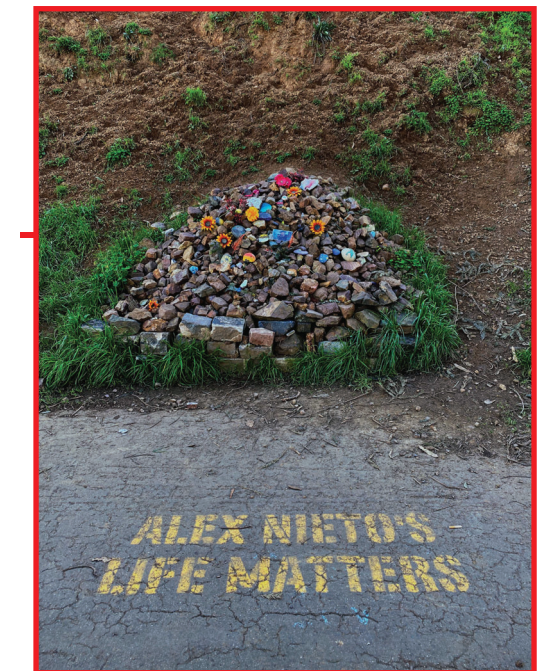
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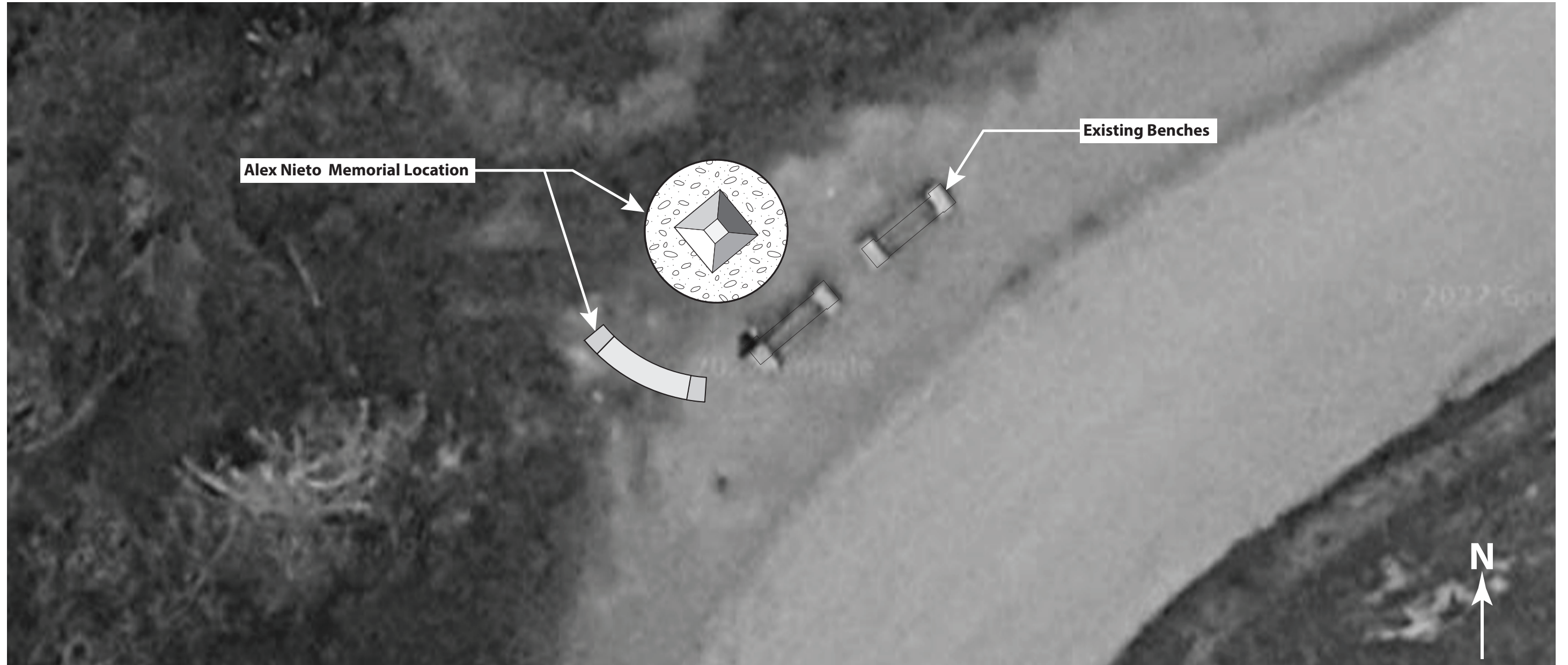
Bernal Heights Park

Alex Nieto Temporary Memorial

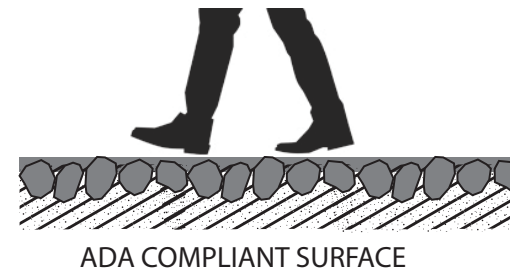
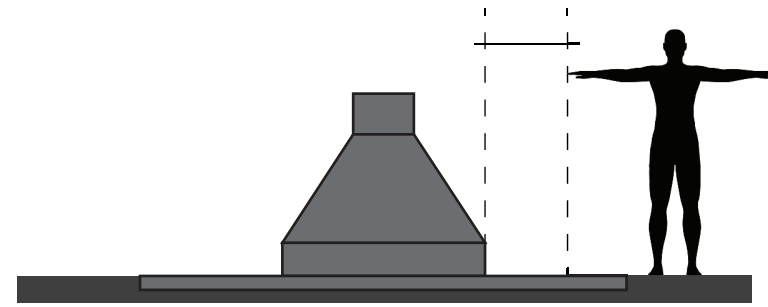
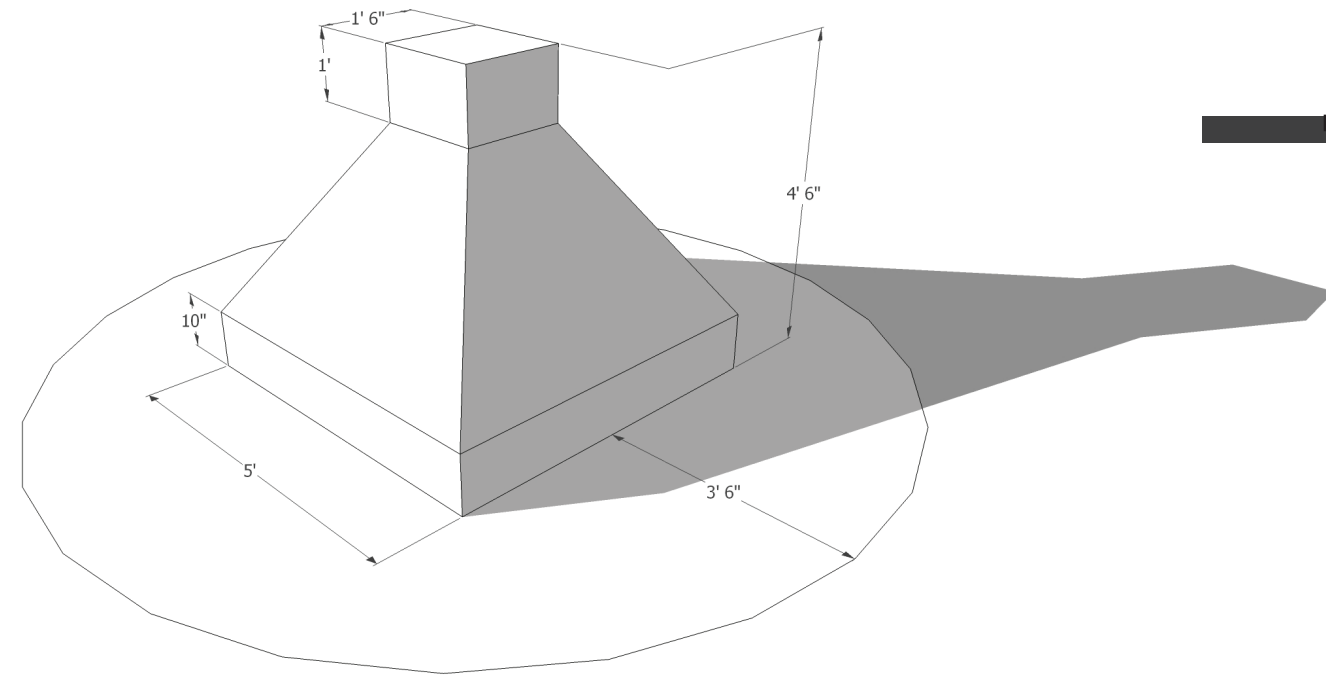


ALEX NIETO MEMORIAL

SITE PLAN



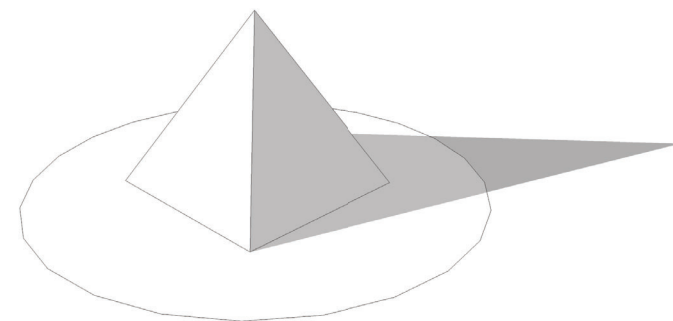
ALEX NIETO MEMORIAL



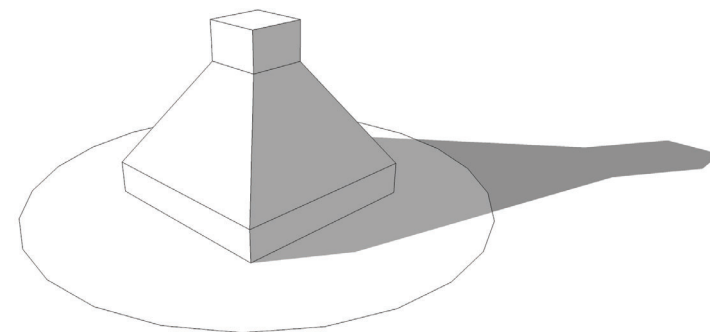
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INTERNATIONAL



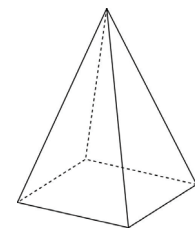
REIIONAL



LOCAL



PERSONAL



Pyramid



Chichen Itza Pyramid



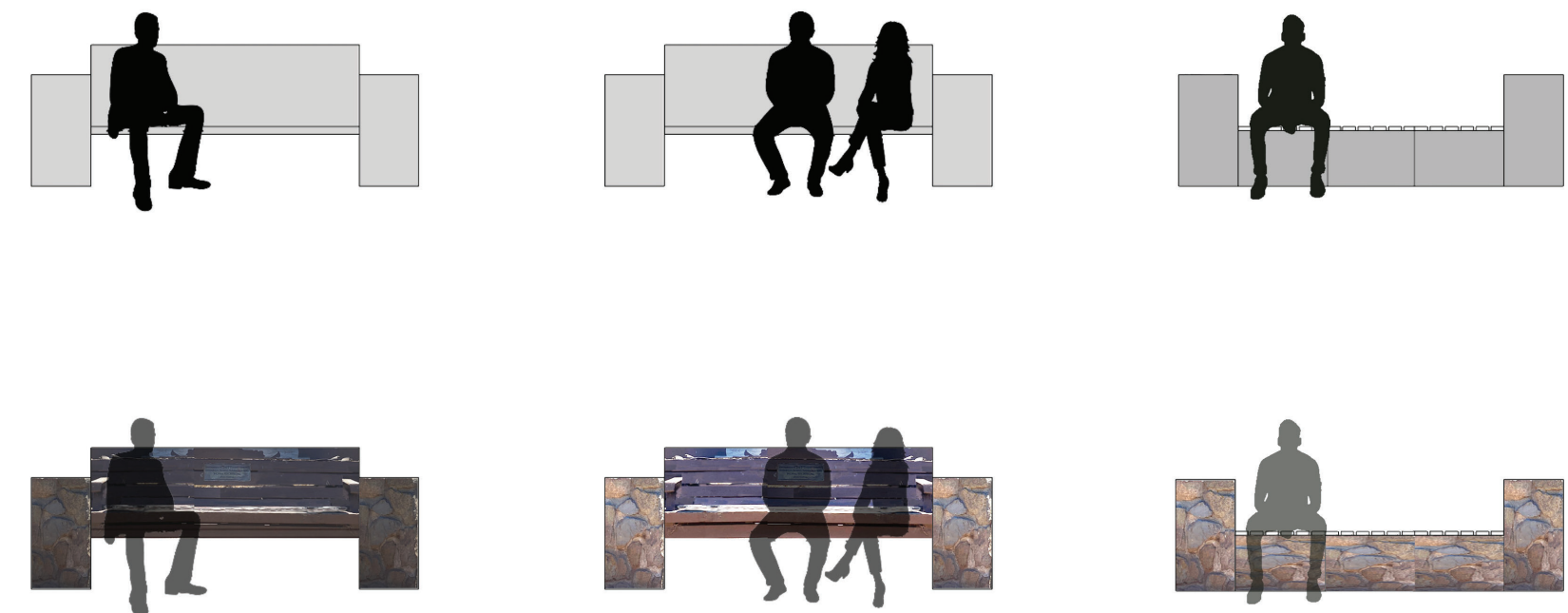
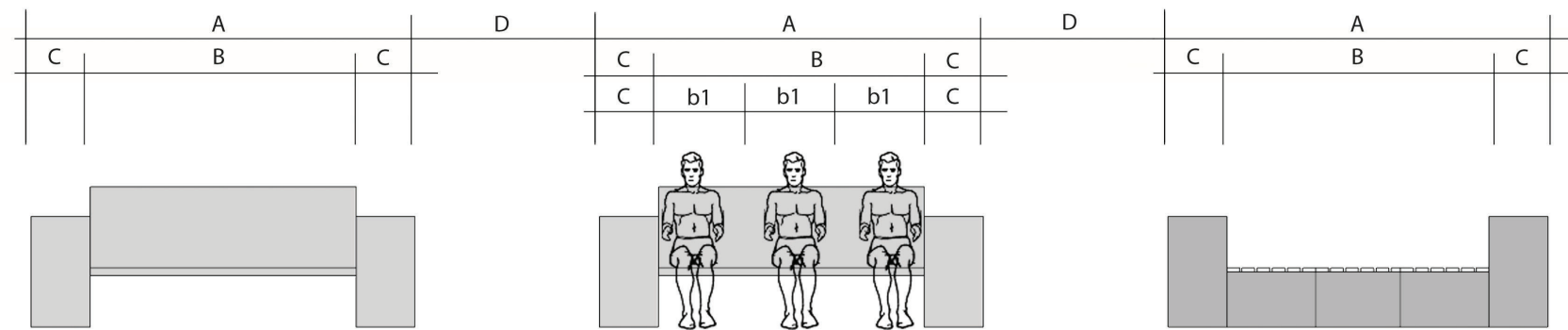
Stones from Bernal Heights Park



Murals of Alex

ALEX NIETO MEMORIAL

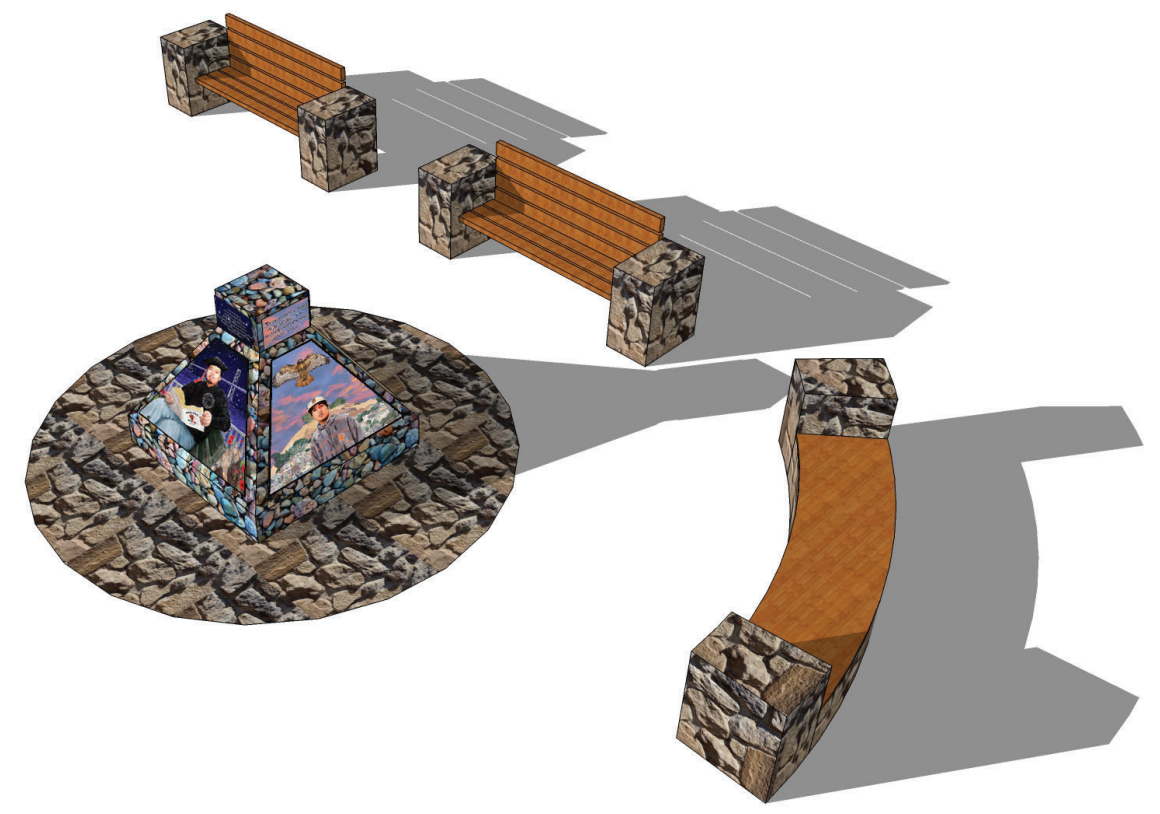
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STONES FROM EXISTING BENCHES



STONES FROM EXISTING MEMORIAL

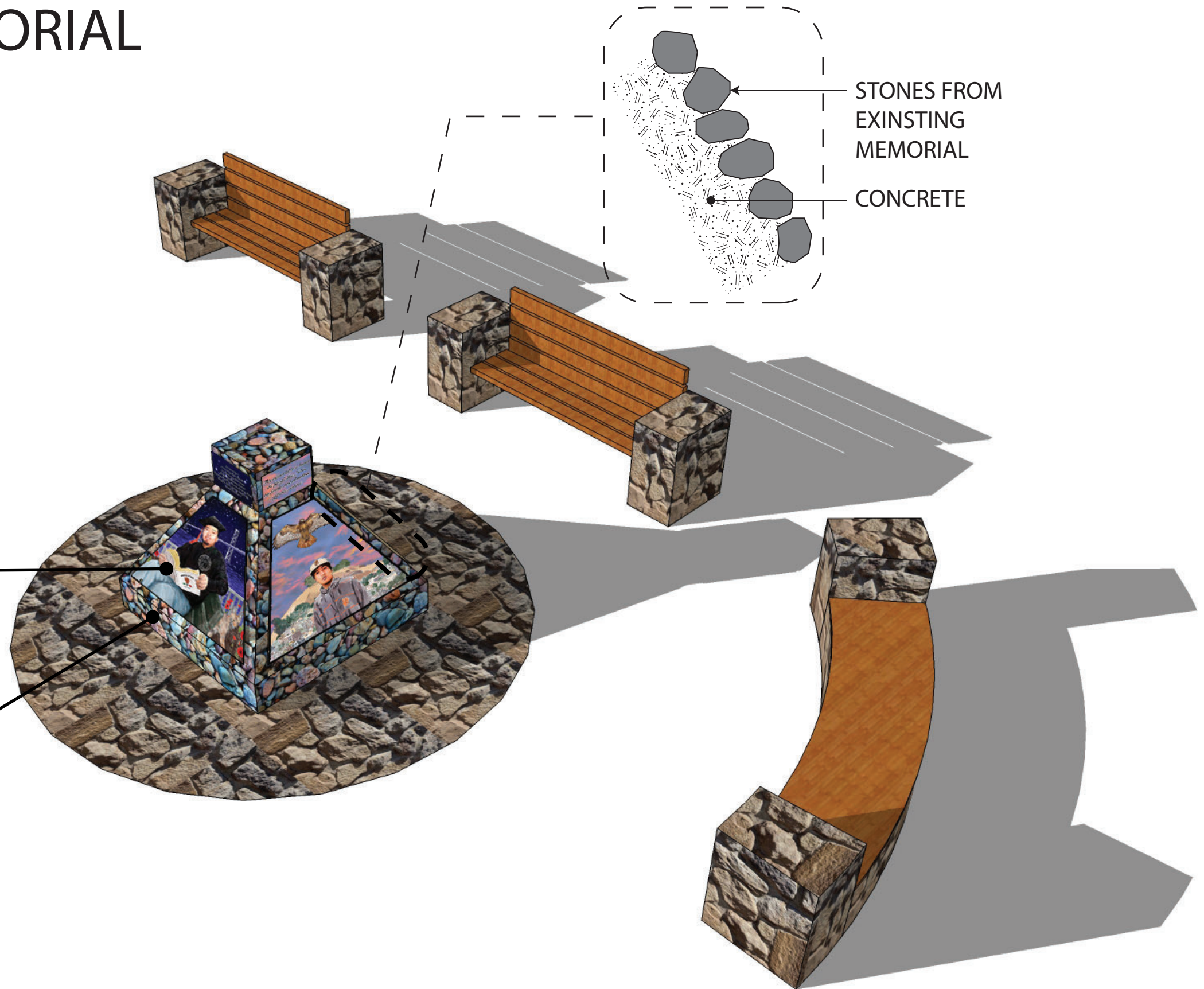


ALEX NIETO MEMORIAL

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MURALS OF ALEX

STONES FROM EXINSTING MEMORIAL



ALEX NIETO MEMORIAL

Murals:

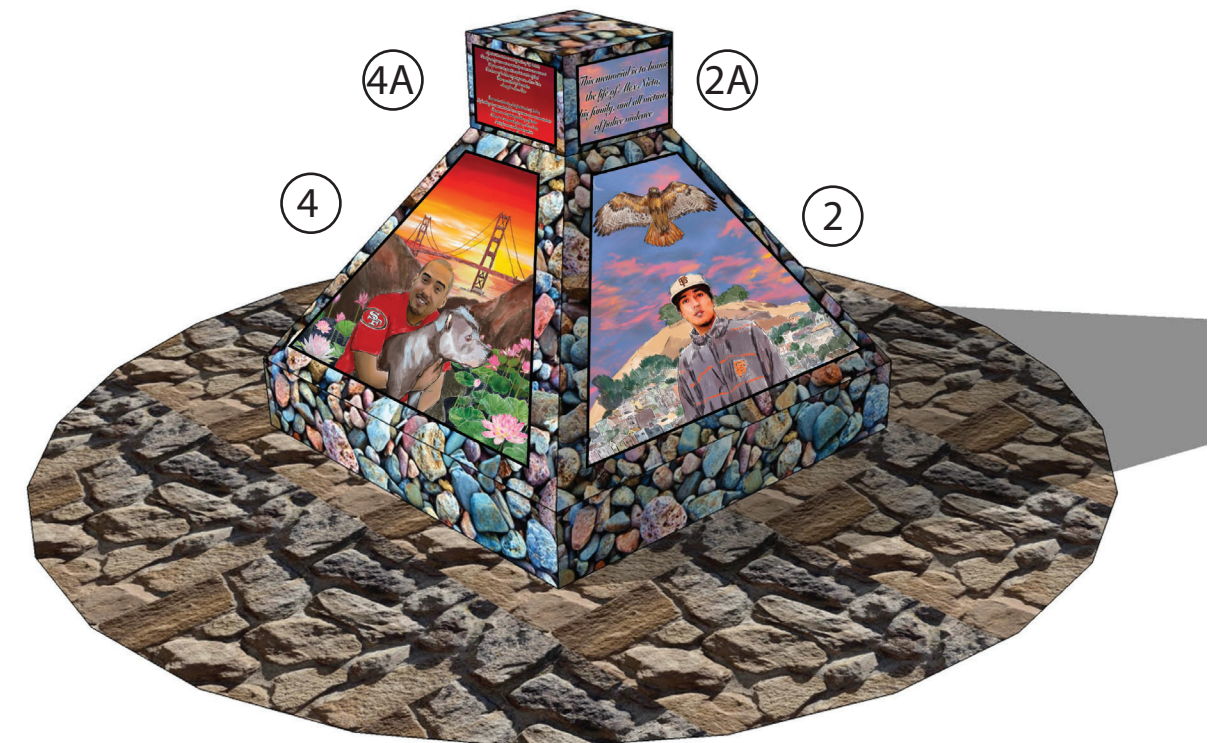
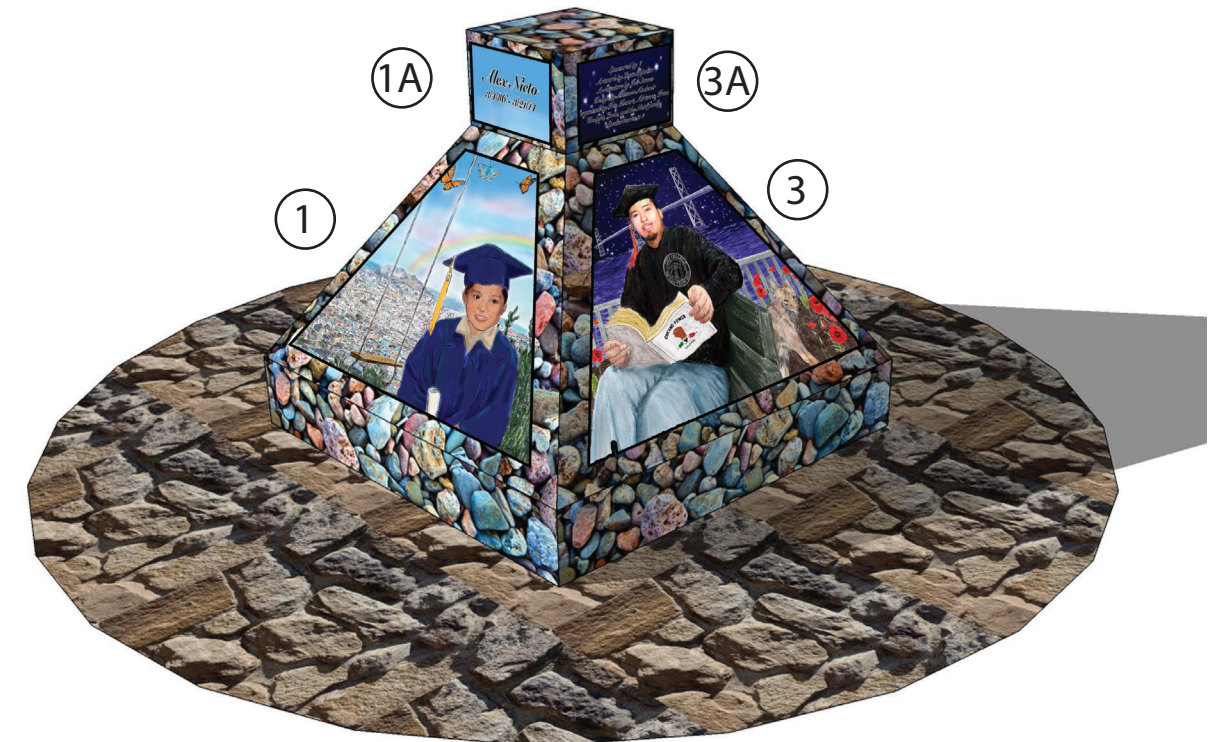
The monument for Alex Nieto, is not only a tribute to his life/legacy/family and a stand against police brutality, but it also tells a story about his life, passions, and humanity. In each illustration there are elements of San Francisco locations, meaningful animals, symbols and special times of day. While the story is not linear persay, the audience does face the image of Alex as a young boy, which his name written big above and his dates.

This image is in the morning, to start the day as well as his childhood. It shows the view from Bernal Hill with the swing that used to be there to signify his innocence of youth, as well as the rainbow in the background. In the sky are monarch butterflies which serve as a reminder to keep moving forward on your journey and in many spiritual practices, the monarch butterfly is considered a symbol of transformation, renewal, and spiritual growth. There is also a Mission Blue butterfly to not only represent that Alex was from San Francisco, but his parents are religious and many Christian churches utilize the blue butterfly symbol of transformation from a human life to everlasting life.

The next image on the pyramid is of Alex as a teenager standing in front of Bernal Hill, to signify his growth out of childhood, as sunset to show his approach into night time. A hawk above signifies spiritual awareness and when one is coming to you it is said to likely mean a need to receive a message and prepare for big changes in the future, and according to Refugio Nieto, the hawk was witness to that night's events and lives on the hill still. The text above this image will explain who this monument is meant to honor.

The third illustration is of Alex in early adulthood in his graduation uniform from SF City College. He sits by the bay bridge under the stars at night time, signifying the travel away from innocence. There are 3 bright stars in the sky representing the belt of Orion, which is said to only be seen because you and it are in the right place at the right time. It also means getting your mind in the right place and to think positively in order to be successful, which is exactly what Alex was doing. He sits on a bench reading a book titled "Chicano Power" to show his political activism and alliance with La Raza and Latino community. A coyote walks behind him, another night creature of Bernal Hill, to connect the two locations and because the coyote is symbolic of the magic in life and creation, they are also representative of intelligence and patience. On the ground grows red poppies, which signify remembrance, undying love, consolation, peace and death, to lead into the next stage of Alex's path. The text above this illustration is the credits of the project and highlighting the sponsors.

In the final drawing, the portrait of Alex is meant to represent his spirit, after life. The sky is dawn, representing a new beginning and rebirth. Alex was a buddhist, so this sky as well as the lotus flower symbolize his beliefs, the flowers are spiritually symbolizing healing, rebirth and eternity, all what we hope for Alex. He stands in front of the golden gate bridge with his dog who he loved and also passed away, to show a journey towards another path of the afterlife. The text above this image is a poem written by Alex's mother Elvira.



ALEX NIETO
3/4/86 - 3/21/14

①A

**THIS MEMORIAL IS TO HONOR
THE LIFE OF ALEX NIETO,
HIS FAMILY, AND ALL VICTIMS
OF POLICE VIOLENCE**

②A

①



②



SPONSORED BY
ARTWORK BY LUCIA IPPOLITO
DESIGN BY MEHMET ALADEMIR
& LUCIA GONZALEZ IPPOLITO
ORGANIZED BY IRIS BIBLOWITZ, ISWARI
ESPANA, ADRIENNE FONG, IRENE ARAUJO,
LUCIA GONZALEZ IPPOLITO, MEHMET
ALADEMIR AND THE NIETO FAMILY.

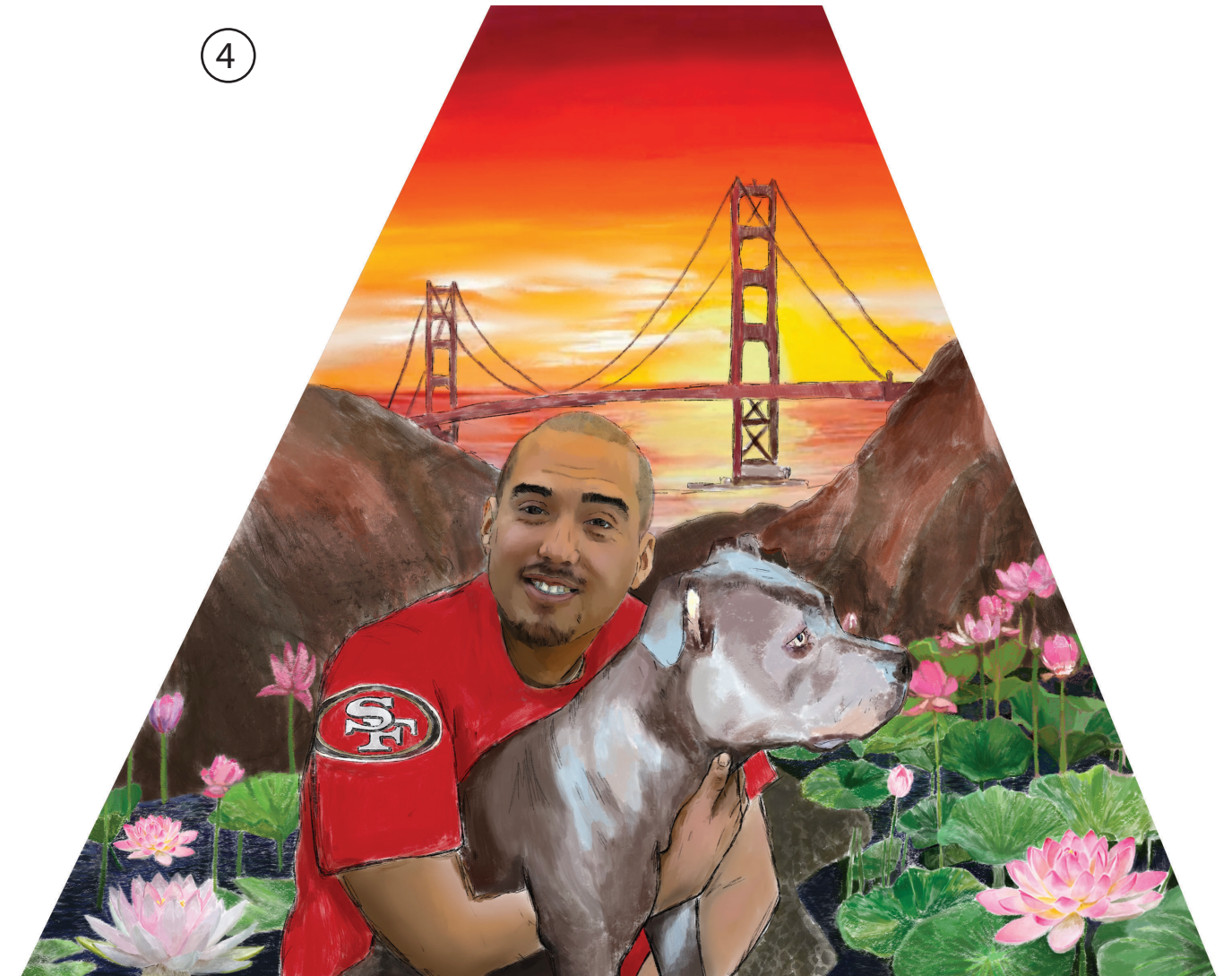
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AGAINST THE VIOLENCE AND INJUSTICE OF 59 BULLETS,
FAMILY AND GRASSROOTS COMMUNITY AROSE AS A MOVEMENT
TO PROMOTE THE POSITIVE SPIRIT AND TO DEFEND
THE HONOR OF A BELOVED YOUNG MAN, ALEX NIETO,
WHO WAS KILLED BY THE POLICE.
AMOR FOR ALEX NIETO

CONTRA LA VIOLENCIA Y LA INJUSTICIA DE 59 BALAS,
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AMOR PARA ALEX NIETO

4A



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