



# ARTS EDUCATION CONNECTION

— SAN DIEGO —

Hosted at Clairemont Coffee • In partnership with  
Arts Education Connection San Diego  
Saturday, November 8, 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM  
3095 Clairemont Dr  
San Diego, CA 92117

🎨 Art + Coffee + Youth Creativity ☕

Our Creative Café Series continues, this time at Clairemont Coffee, where we showcase the abstract artwork of 8th-grade artists from CPMA (Creative, Performing & Media Arts Middle School).

Last spring, students collaborated with AECSD Teaching Artist Deron Cohen during a two-visit creative residency that brought professional art practice directly into the classroom.

Across two classroom periods with each of the 8th-grade art groups, Deron invited students into his imaginative, improvisational approach to abstract painting, one where the story reveals itself through the process, rather than being planned in advance.

Just as some authors describe discovering the ending only as they write, Deron works in real time, allowing his brush, colors, and textures to lead him. As he painted alongside students, he would pause to show how his own vision was shifting, how a color, line, or unexpected form would quietly suggest a new direction, and how artists can choose to follow those invitations.

Under his guidance, students learned to:

-  Focus on line, shape, texture, and color transitions
-  Let intuition lead rather than planning an image
-  Stay open to surprise, change, and imagination
-  Create paintings that can be viewed from any angle

This immersive, process-focused creative experience encouraged students to trust their eye, embrace curiosity, and see art-making as a journey rather than a final product. And now, the community gets to enjoy the vibrant results!

## **Join Us for the Creative Café Student Exhibition**

 Clairemont Coffee — 3095 Clairemont Dr, San Diego, CA 92117

 November 8

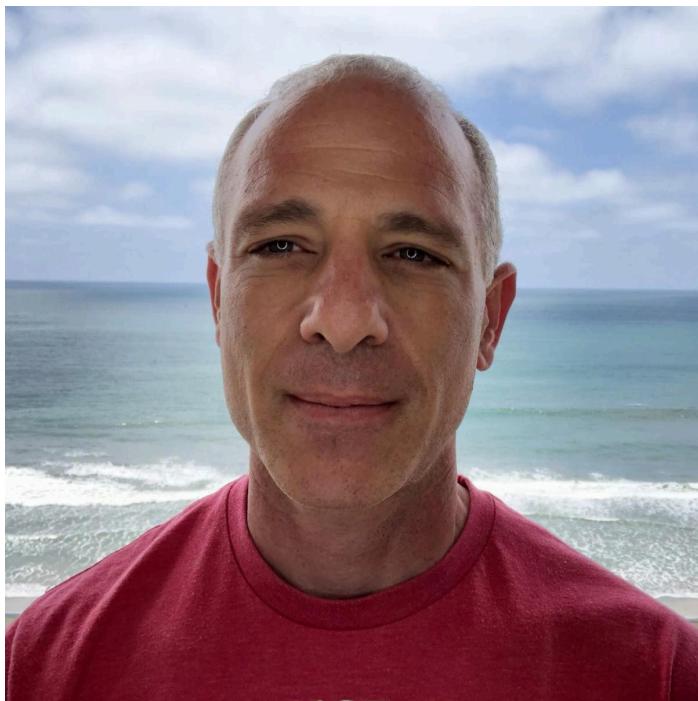
 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Sip a latte, support emerging youth artists, and celebrate the power of arts education in San Diego!

Together, we continue to create meaningful opportunities for young people to learn from and alongside working artists, fueling creativity, confidence, and community through the arts.

**We can't wait to see you there!**   

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## Teaching Artist Spotlight: Deron Cohen

[www.deroncohen.com](http://www.deroncohen.com)  
Instagram: @deroncohen

### Artist Statement:

*I paint stories that I make up as I go along. Love, War, Peace, Spirit, Nature, Birth, Life, Death, the Mind, and the Universe grapple with each other in a vivid explosion of color. Imagination runs wild and becomes a reality in these images. Imagination is an infinite vessel filled with all our knowledge and everything else that will ever be. The images I create are designed to find a crack in your consciousness, allowing them to seep into your mind and spark your imagination.*

For over 25 years, I've dedicated my life to creating and sharing art, helping people of all ages and abilities discover their creative voice. Trained at UCLA, my work has evolved from traditional methods to an intuitive, story-emerging process—beginning with spontaneous shapes and transforming into expressive, symbolic imagery. My paintings explore what it means to be human and celebrate creativity as a healing force.

Community connection has always been at the heart of my practice. I co-founded the nonprofit Global Education through Music (GET-M), partnering with the San Diego Children's Museum to bring free after-school art and theater classes to youth and curate community gallery shows. I've also helped grow artist-led communities and exhibition opportunities through Paint Night Group, VizCult, and San Diego Art Department, championing artists and fostering creative spaces throughout San Diego.

As a teaching artist, I work with diverse populations, including pre-K students, seniors, military families, and veterans facing physical and emotional challenges. Through partnerships with organizations like ArtReach, Arts for Learning San Diego, and Casa de Mañana, I've had the honor of bringing arts education to thousands of learners across the county, including some of our most underserved communities.

My hope is simple: to spark creativity, connection, and healing—one student, one painting, and one community at a time.



## ★ Partner Spotlight: Oceanside USD Adult Transition Program★

This fall, Arts Education Connection San Diego is proud to partner with the Oceanside Unified School District Adult Transition Program (ATP) to bring high-quality arts learning to young adults through an 8-week visual arts residency.

Thanks to Proposition 28 funding, ATP students are engaging in weekly art classes throughout October and November. Guided by Teaching Artist Deron Cohen, learners are exploring painting, printmaking, and clay, with lessons designed to be fully inclusive, developmentally appropriate, and rooted in creativity, skill-building, and self-expression. The impact is already being felt on campus. Teachers shared glowing feedback after the first four weeks:

“The students are so engaged — Mr. Deron has the perfect demeanor to make our learners feel comfortable and successful.”

“I am really digging the whole experience, and most importantly, the students are too! They are eager to see what each week brings and are always excited and proud of their creations! Deron is talented, calm, kind, and has the ability to connect with all students.”

We are thrilled to see ATP students grow in confidence, creativity, and community connection through the arts — and we’re excited to continue this partnership with a second residency coming this winter.

Together, we’re expanding access to meaningful arts education and supporting creative pathways for every learner.



## Strengthening Partnerships for Oceanside Students & Families

Arts Education Connection San Diego had the pleasure of attending the 3rd Annual Community Resource Mixer in Oceanside. The gathering brought together school leaders, service providers, and community organizations dedicated to student success and family well-being.

This year's theme,

*"Together for Learning, Well-being & Community Success — Working side by side to uplift our beloved community and create lasting impact,"*

Each year, this mixer serves as a vital opportunity to celebrate collaboration, strengthen partnerships, and connect with those who believe in the transformative power of community support. Together, we are helping build the foundation for thriving schools and a stronger Oceanside community.

Attendees enjoyed:

- Meaningful conversations with principals, counselors, district social workers, and community school coordinators
- Dedicated space for organizations to share resources and programs supporting students and families
- New networking opportunities designed to strengthen and sustain partnerships across Oceanside

AECSD Board Member Brooke Stites and Marketing & Program Coordinator Ryan Spicer proudly represented our organization. We had a blast connecting with partners old and new. We are very excited about the growing opportunities to expand high-quality arts education for students in Oceanside schools.

Together, we're committed to bringing the joy and richness of the arts into more classrooms and communities — and we can't wait to continue building with you!

## Art Exhibition at The University Club: “Creating New Paths”

We are thrilled to share that the *Creating New Paths* student art exhibition is now on display at the prestigious University Club Atop Symphony Towers and will remain up through January!



We feel so inspired after attending this powerful showcase. The talent of the students from San Diego County's Juvenile Court and Community Schools (JCCS) was genuinely incredible. Their work is a testament to the power of arts education that can emerge when young people are given space to be seen, heard, and supported.

The exhibition features a moving collection of student-created prints, shadow boxes, and poetry, each piece offering a window into personal reflection, hope, healing, and new beginnings. These works remind us that art does more than inspire; it can heal, empower, and help build new pathways forward.

We are honored to uplift these voices and celebrate the creativity and resilience of the young artists in this program.



 *Art changes lives, and these students are proof.*

# GIVING TUESDAY

Join Us This Giving Tuesday

On December 2, 2025, we invite you to join Arts Education Connection San Diego as we continue our mission to provide high-quality, joy-filled arts education to students across our region.

During a time when many organizations are facing financial strain, your support is more vital than ever. Arts education is not a luxury; it's a lifeline for creativity, self-expression, confidence, and connection. Yet, so many schools and communities still lack sustained resources for arts programming.

AECSD relies on the generosity of donors, partners, and community members like you to continue providing transformative opportunities in visual art, music, dance, theatre, and literary arts to thousands each year. Your gift ensures that everyone, regardless of zip code or circumstance, has access to meaningful arts learning.

**Your support can begin today and doesn't have to end on December 2nd!**

- Make a gift *now*, on Giving Tuesday, or anytime throughout the season
- Set up a recurring donation to support students all year long
- Share our mission and inspire others to give
- Host a fundraising event

Together, we create brighter futures through creativity.  
 Donate today and help keep the arts thriving in San Diego!

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**Please consider donating to Arts Education Connection San Diego!**

Your gifts support our teaching artists who bring meaningful programs that inspire and educate students through workshops, performances, and multi-week residencies. These programs enrich

the lives of students and foster a life-long love for creativity and learning.

Join us in making a positive impact on the lives of students by contributing today!

[Donate Now](#)

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