

Nehemiah “Nemo” Edwards

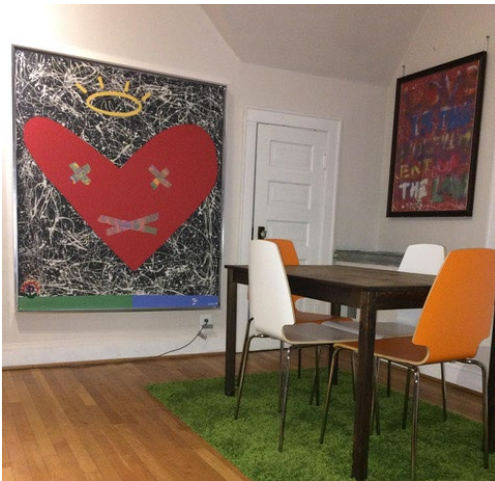
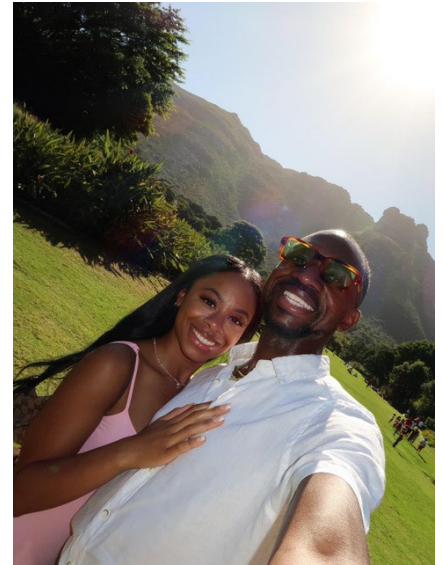
Owner, LOVE X Nemo
Rotary Member Since July 2024

Nehemiah “Nemo” Edwards’s love for creating art began with a blank wall. The electrical engineering graduate had just moved into his own apartment and could not feel at home amidst plain white walls.

Nemo was already feeling his chosen career path was not his life’s purpose, finding himself more excited to leave work to produce music. And now he found himself staring at the blank canvas that was his apartment.

He began searching for artwork to purchase. Yet everything he found was not quite his taste, not the correct dimensions or not the right price. That was when Nemo had a genius idea.

“I thought, ‘I’m a creative person, let me make something myself.’ I took it upon myself to buy some wood, some unstretched canvas and just painted what was on my heart, which was literally a heart. I feel that’s the beauty of art; it really does bring life to any space and place.”



That heart occupies the formerly blank wall to this day. Filling a basic home need soon morphed into fulfilling work. During his research, Nemo found inspiration in abstract and expressionist art with artists such as Jean-Michel Basquiat, Mark Rothko and Jackson Pollock. Nemo is now an electric creative bringing art—and love overall by way of art—to Milwaukee.

“Life has a way of informing you on what you ought to be doing and where you ought to be,” he said. “That research made me realize that you can have your authentic voice come through in your own creations.”

Creative Collaborations

In finding his own artistic voice, Nemo has inspired others to explore their inner world through art. He has been a part of many creative collaborations. Imaginative career advising with Adobe. Leading a youth art project with the Greater Milwaukee Foundation for ThriveOn King. Even a live painting performance with input from sexual assault survivors during Aurora Health Care’s fundraising gala supporting survivors.

One out-of-this-world collaboration was facilitated by Arts @ Large, a local nonprofit dedicated to building environments that support arts-rich learning. The Art Vs. Food fundraising gala partnered artists with chefs for extraordinary art and food pairings. Nemo was partnered with The Diplomat restaurant owner and James Beard Award-winning Chef Dane Baldwin.

“Food is its own art practice. The combination of flavors that you put together, how you design the plating, the spices you use, everything about it is art,” Nemo said. “We created an experience for the diners called Planet Heart.”

Through a two-minute video, Nemo led a visualization session for diners to imagine they were transported to an alternate planet, and each guest was now king or queen of a territory on this new planet. The diners were now on Planet Heart—HEART being an anagram of EARTH—where everything is as loving, peaceful and abundant as it was meant to be on Earth. Diners followed the session by sharing all the ways they created and cultivated love, peace and abundance in the psychological lands they ruled.



Chef Dane then served an amazing dinner inspired by Nemo’s artistic visualization of an imagined journey to Planet Heart. The chef mimicked a spacecraft in the form of a pithivier, a sort of domed pie dish with a hearty filling inside puff pastry.

“I like to engage in community with the visual arts. It’s a way to tap into our playful side, but also the side of us that’s innate to our being as humans. We are creators, that’s all the human does is create. Look around us, outside of nature itself, everything you see is a human creation,” Nemo said. “We’re meant to experience nothing but joy, nothing but peace, nothing but love, and nothing but expressing your true, creative, authentic self. Giving people just a piece of that is what’s important to me.”

Seeing the World

Nemo was born and raised in Milwaukee, graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and spent an educational summer in Los Angeles. For all of his work and dedication to Milwaukee, Nemo is also passionate about expanding his experiences and knowledge beyond his hometown and even beyond his comfort zone.

Earlier this year Nemo and his girlfriend took a life-changing trip to South Africa, his first time in the Eastern Hemisphere. Next on his to-go list are additional African nations as well as Europe and Asia. He is also seeking to expand his own creative world with more conceptual and multimedia art projects.



At the forefront remains Nemo’s commitment to his artist statement, "I create art to help others find the inner peace they are searching for within themselves. To feel safe and seen, to know our value and how to be of value, to be understood and to know true Love—this is the journey we are all on. The only barrier between you and the realization that you already possess, complete peace and total freedom—is yourself."

Editor’s Note: *Rotary People of Action* is a bi-monthly series written by a group of Rotarians. This feature was written by Lindsey McKee.