

FAR LEFT

Curlee Raven Holton (American, b. 1951)
***Hands Up, Nimbus*, 2020**

Digital, serigraph, gold leaf, blood, 10/30
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In this work, Holton contributes to the political and social revolution sparked by the murder of George Floyd. The subject's strong arms extend from a blue stripe as if in surrender, to acknowledge Black oppression. His shirt is stained with the artist's own blood, signaling police brutality. Nevertheless, a halo celebrates the subject's divine strength. The word *nimbus* means both dark and divine cloud, and thus simultaneously identifies both the oppression and the inherent power of the men who are oppressed. Holton's "tribute to young Black men" celebrates the heroism of Black individuals while drawing attention to contemporary violence. —**Leah Canel '21**

Made during the height of the Black Lives Matter protests, *Hands-up, Nimbus* asks us to reflect on current events. According to the artist, "[the] segmentation of the image refers to barriers that perpetuate Black and white encounters." The figure has a gold halo, honoring the subject. Though halos were usually used in paintings as religious symbols, this one represents "heroism and valor as well as the unique value of each individual." As an identification for the innocent Black man who was killed as a hero, the gold halo serves to remember the loss in the protest. Though the incident was a tragedy, it created social change that resonated with so many in the society. —**Rachel Yiran Liu '22**

Hands Up, Nimbus captures the subject, as he stands in a vulnerable position presumably in a clash with law enforcement. This piece encapsulates the idea of heroism in the face of tragedy against the Black community with the inclusion of a halo above the subject's head. In creating *Hands Up, Nimbus*, Holton included his own blood, which can be seen below the subject's right pocket in order to represent "residue of violence seen and unseen." —**Hannah Coleman '22**

Hands Up, Nimbus is a recent piece in a comprehensive career spanning over three decades. As an artist and educator based in Easton, Pennsylvania, Holton uses this piece as a tribute to young Black men. The infamous "hands up" position, speaks to decades of mistreatment, most notably by law enforcement. The golden halo found behind the subject's head is used to honor him, his individuality, and his heroism. —**Kate Goodwin '22**

Hands Up, Nimbus was created as a response to the protests that erupted in the United States after the death of George Floyd. The different segments of the piece reference the different encounters that white vs. Black people face in America. Much of Holton's work expresses a desire to engage in a dialogue with the viewer in order to achieve social awareness through an artistic lens. —**Isabel Barone '21**