



## **AC GRIT**

### **Opening Reception:**

Saturday, July 8, 2023, 1 – 3 pm

### **Introduction:**

AC Grit is a group exhibition highlighting ten South Jersey-based artists known for their use of vibrant colors, gestural mark-making, and texture. Each artist selected for the exhibition is known in the Atlantic City arts community with public-facing work throughout AC including mural arts, graffiti, and street art. Their determination to solidify Atlantic City as a hub for the arts matches the definition of grit: firmness of mind or spirit: unyielding courage in the face of hardship or danger.

### **Artist Biographies:**

#### **Robert (Nexus) Ortiz – Atlantic County, NJ**

[@og\\_nexus\\_408](#)

Bob Ortiz is a self-taught graffiti artist from San Jose, California, who is popular for his vibrant, captivating murals. Although Ortiz began creating art at the early age of five, it was not until high school that he was exposed to graffiti style and found his passion for street art. For over 40 years, Ortiz has been creating murals that strengthen communities and redefine graffiti art in a positive, expressive way. Known for being the originator of the “3D wild style” technique, composed of interwoven letters and images, Ortiz has been named a legend throughout the San Jose Bay Area and continues to build his legacy in South Jersey as a muralist.



#### **Michael Clineman – Atlantic County, NJ**

[@clineman.surf.art](#)

[Mclineman.com](#)

Through working in film and television with Nickelodeon Studios, to then thriving in the live music industry for about 20 years, and now becoming a well-known multimedia artist, Clineman is easily considered a multifaceted talent in the art industry. Today, he lives in Atlantic County where he combines his love for the beach and art by using recycled and reclaimed materials to create stunning, oceanic pieces. Clineman uses a plethora of mediums including oil, acrylic and mixed media to depict the critical message regarding excessive consumption and environmental pollution. His inspiration stems from his passion for nature and respect for the world’s oceans driving him to create beautiful, yet introspective pieces.

**Charles Barbin – Atlantic County, NJ**

[@barbin.charles](#)

[Dunesartgallery.com](#)

Charles Barbin established himself early in his career while working with the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program where he was able to create an outstanding collection of work due to his skills and passion for the arts. A former student at the Tyler School of Art, Barbin has had his art shown in publications including The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Barnes Foundation, and many more. Charles Barbin is a highly acclaimed artist and the visionary founder of Dunes Art Gallery in Brigantine, NJ. His art captivates viewers with its remarkable blend of colors, intricate details, and profound emotional depth. Barbin's works often explore the interplay between nature and humanity, inviting contemplation and sparking a sense of wonder.



**Kenneth Lazan Faulk Jr. – Atlantic County, NJ**

[@Lazan Design](#)

Atlantic City native Kenneth Lazan Faulk Jr. is a multidimensional artist known for his skills in creating fine art, photography, mural art, graphic design, and textile art. With more than a decade of experience, Faulk is known as a unique creator with a keen eye for capturing beauty in everyday scenes and turning them into stunning works of art. He is the founder of the Art Students League of Atlantic City, a nonprofit organization dedicated to fostering the community's next generation of artists.

**Tatiana Nieves – Collingswood, NJ**

[@tnieves](#)

Tatiana Nieves is a 32-year-old Mamá currently residing in Collingswood, New Jersey. She shares her home with a beautiful tribe of artists, including two 12-year-old girls, a 4-year-old boy, and her husband, Anthony Johnson, who is also an artist. Nieves artwork on display today is inspired by his personal growth amidst the dichotomy of good and evil, which has allowed her to connect with her innermost being. She incorporates street art into her work to infuse the essence of Atlantic City's grit. Through her art, Nieves speaks out loud, bravely showcasing her courage and the struggles that remain hidden from others. As a mother, Nieves maintains her purity and radiance, despite enduring hardships. The texture and layering in her art symbolize the complex emotions within her own skin. Understanding the tendency to conceal painful experiences, she rises above and demonstrates inner strength, even in the face of abuse. Nieves strives to be a positive example of resilience, emphasizing the power of girlhood. Through art, she finds solace, expressing her authentic self and enhancing her role as a mother. This is her chosen path to experience freedom: IMOS (In My Own Skin).





**Valerie Feo – Atlantic County, NJ**

[@soval\\_art](https://www.instagram.com/soval_art)  
[sovalart.com](http://sovalart.com)

American figurative artist Valerie Feo lives near the ocean in South Jersey and holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Stockton University. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, Feo began to solely focus on creating art, leading her to create pieces that received international features in galleries such as the Palazzo Ducale Museum in Genoa, Italy, and the Van Gogh Gallery in Madrid, Spain. Feo creates portraits based on muses, composed of vibrant colors and bold lines to convey authentic human emotion and beauty.

**Gary Lindley – Ocean City, NJ**

[@garylindley\\_art](https://www.instagram.com/garylindley_art)

After receiving his B.A. in fine arts from the San Francisco Art Institute in 2000, Lindley returned to his home in Ocean City, NJ, where he continues to contribute to the art world and surf at South Jersey's local beaches. Lindley is an abstract artist who views art as a subjective form of expression. None of his pieces are titled, giving the viewers room to form their own opinions and emotions about the artwork. Using unconventional textures and unique materials, Lindley's work reflects him, his obstacles, and his life.



**Anthony Johnson – Collingswood, NJ**

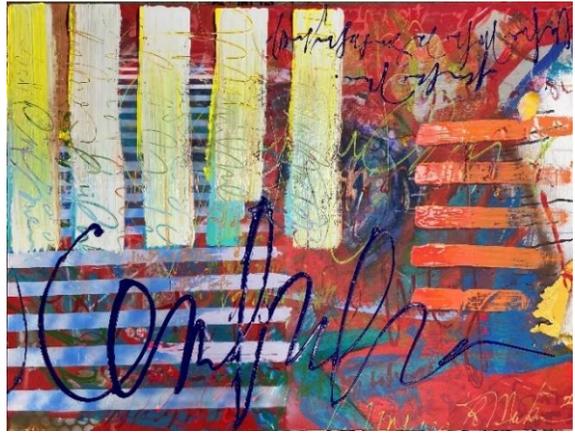
[@anthonyjohnson\\_arts](https://www.instagram.com/anthonyjohnson_arts)  
[Emergingartistplatform.com/anthonyjohnson](http://Emergingartistplatform.com/anthonyjohnson)

Anthony Johnson is a self-taught artist whose artistic journey began based off inspiration from street art and has now evolved into self-expressive, mixed media. Johnson uses a plethora of stencils, oils, acrylic, spray paint, fabric and more to exude the thoughts in his mind. Johnson's work could be described as daring and dauntless, with bold colors, complimentary patterns, and a street-art flair that creates harmonious, eye-catching pieces.

**Randi Meekins – Atlantic County, NJ**

[Dunesartgallery.com](http://Dunesartgallery.com)

Randi Lauren Meekins is a talented self-taught artist residing in Atlantic City, NJ. Meekins artistic journey has been marked by her exceptional ability to capture the essence of her subjects through expressive and exploratory techniques. Her artwork has been showcased at prestigious locations throughout the city, including the renowned Noyes Arts Garage. Drawing inspiration from recognizable imagery, pop culture, and symbolism, Meekins mentor describes her work as a captivating blend of expressionism. Presently, Meekins serves as a resident artist and part-owner at the esteemed Dunes Art Gallery in Brigantine, NJ.



**William Butler – Camden, NJ**

[@artistwilliambutler](https://www.instagram.com/artistwilliambutler)

[Thomaslift.com](http://Thomaslift.com)

William Butler is a well-known, established artist, with over 20 years of experience, who specializes in producing stunning and motivational commissioned, in-person, and studio works of art. Butler's work has been showcased all around the country, creating pieces for incredible charities, celebrities, and even former President of the United States, Barack Obama.

His striking paintings filled with vibrant colors, evocative imagery, and profound symbolism weave a tapestry of optimism and resilience, fostering unity within communities and empowering individuals to envision a brighter future.

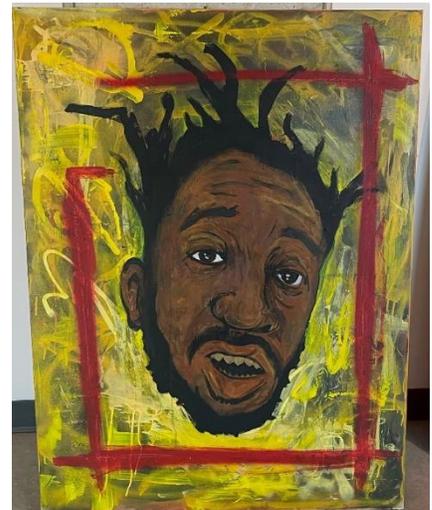


**Johnny Blockhead – Absecon, NJ**

[@johnnydreamawake](https://www.instagram.com/johnnydreamawake)

[Johnnydreamawake.com](http://Johnnydreamawake.com)

Johnny Blockhead is a co-owner and resident artist at Drips ArtxFashion, an art gallery and studio in Absecon, New Jersey. He has been collaborating and working alongside creatives in the Atlantic City area for over 10 years. He has participated in 4 different Arteriors exhibits: a unique pop-up art installation exhibit that is designed to breathe life into used spaces in Atlantic City. He first gained recognition in the early 2000s for his urban-inspired paintings and clothing. Dreamawake's work has been featured in galleries and exhibitions around the TriState area, and he has gained a reputation as an artist who pushes the boundaries of traditional art. His skulls have become his signature style, for this current period, and his work continues to inspire and challenge viewers.



**The Noyes Museum of Art of Stockton University** · <http://www.noyesmuseum.org> · (609) 626-3420

**The Noyes Arts Garage of Stockton University** · [www.artsgarageac.com](http://www.artsgarageac.com) · (609) 626-3805

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