

HEIGHTSARTS

Spotlight: Gregory Johnson

August 18–October 15, 2023

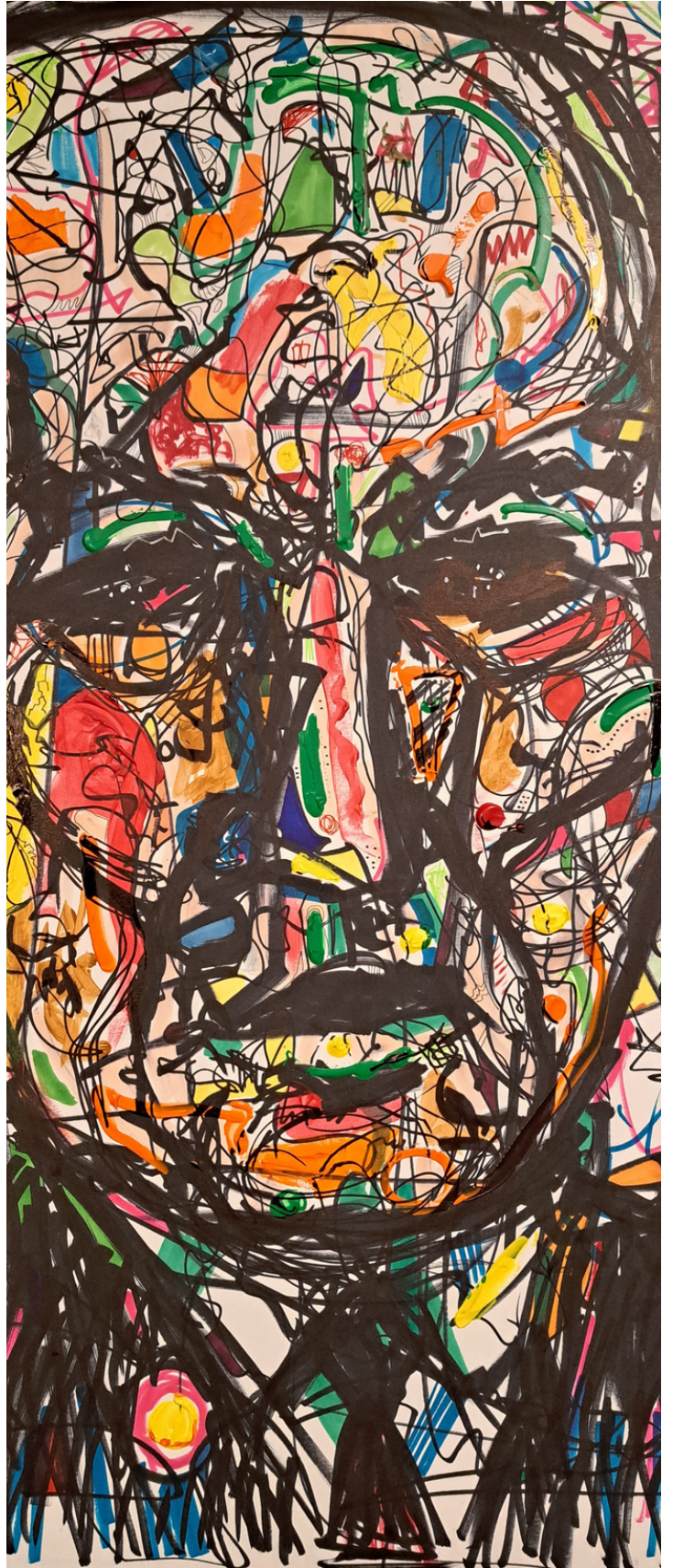
WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO THE
EXHIBITION COMMUNITY TEAM

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2175 Lee Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio



Gregory Johnson

ARTIST STATEMENT

My art is all about the exploration of the inner. How can I touch people in a way that transcends words? I aim to connect on a deeper level with people of like minds. In other words: I believe art is love.

People who view my pieces generally describe them as “unique,” which is exactly what I’m striving for. My work is also very eclectic; I don’t get stuck in one particular style, which is good on the one hand but can be somewhat confusing on the other. Some are pure abstract, probably mostly influenced by de Kooning, some are more cartoonish in feel (I spent time as a freelance cartoonist), but mostly my work is expressionist in nature, sometimes bordering on the surreal. (Think Edvard Munch as a cartoonist.) But the vast majority of them share one thing in common: An expression of the inner. This is the one constant.

I suppose I come under the label of a “late bloomer,” and I have to admit that is exactly the case. I can only attest to the absolute fact that I am having the best time in all my 68 years on this planet, right now. How popular my work is, or how well it sells, is secondary to my belief in the pure joy of the creative act. I believe that art is, in fact, a form of love in all its manifestations; be it dance, music, cinema, sculpture, stage, visual, or whatever form it takes. In this current world with all its problems, art is a refuge, a place of shared experience in which to delve deeply into ourselves, through each other. I wish for my work to do just that.

BIOGRAPHY

Gregory Alan Johnson was born in 1954 and grew up in Brook Park, Ohio, a suburb of Cleveland. He began doodling as a child, a practice that his father encouraged by bringing unused forms home from work, the blank backs of which he would use for his random drawings. He soon noticed that he was better at art than any of his schoolmates, which further encouraged him to continue. Upon graduating high school, he enrolled at Cooper School of Art in 1974. Majoring in illustration, Gregory discovered felt-tip markers, which were used in illustration layout work. These would prove to be the center of gravity for the majority of his art. He worked as a freelance illustrator for many years, creating ad content for many local businesses. Upon retiring from his day job, he has decided to share his work with a wider audience. He has been an exhibitor in several galleries, including 934 Gallery, 83 Gallery, Pennington Arts, and the OAL Fall show at Studio 18—all in Columbus. He recently completed a solo exhibition at Stella’s Art Gallery in Willoughby, Ohio, entitled: “Inward Outward: New Art from an Old Soul.” (Feb. 1st through Feb. 28th, 2023.) He will be featured in a solo show at the Ashtabula Arts Center in February 2024.

Anatomy for the Artist, 2023, Felt-tip marker on Illustration Board, 30" x 40", \$450

Anima Animus, 2022, Felt-Tip marker and acrylic on Illustration board, 30"x40", \$300

It's All So Complicated, 2023, Felt-tip marker in Bristol board, 9"x12", \$150

In Charge, 2022, Felt-tip marker and acrylic on Illustration board, 20"x30", \$200

Samson's Dilemma, 2022, Felt-tip marker and ink on Bristol board, 11"x14", \$500

Mushroom Cloud, 2023, Felt-tip marker on Illustration board, 20"x30", \$250

Trudge, 2023, Felt-tip marker on Foam Core, 24"x36", \$300

Two, 2022, Felt-tip marker and acrylic on Illustration board, 30"x40", \$200

Universe #33, 2023, Felt-tip marker on Illustration board, 20"x30", \$300

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