# MUSE JOHNSON

Cultural Producer • Artist • Storyteller • Creative Entrepreneur • Civic Cultural Strategist

## Profile

Phoenix-based founder of The MUSE•eum and We Produce Culture; cultural producer working across Black storytelling, exhibitions, participatory events, visual art, creative placemaking, and cultural discovery. Previously founded/operated Your Art Party and developed MuseTease Prints and Centered.PHX.

## Selected interviews, press and third-party coverage

2023-05-25 | Meet Arizona Artist Ebone “Muse” Johnson
Desert Botanical Garden • Interview / institutional editorial
First-person interview covering artistic journey, Your Art Party, MuseTease Prints and Centered.
Source: https://dbg.org/meet-arizona-artist-ebone-muse-johnson/
2021-03-12 | ASU Gammage’s The Local spring series brings artists together
ASU News / ASU Gammage • Institutional arts feature
Artist profile/participation in The Local series.
Source: https://news.asu.edu/20210312-asu-gammages-local-spring-series-brings-artists-together
2019 approx. | Tempe Falls in “Love” with Black Women
PhxSoul • Independent event coverage
Coverage of performance and commentary as Venus Clapback co-host with Collette Watson.
Source: https://www.phxsoul.com/tempe-falls-in-love-with-black-women/
2025 Spring | Learn about the NEW PCA Members from Spring 2025
Phoenix Community Alliance • Institutional member interview
First-person Q&A about Centered.PHX, MuseTease Prints, downtown Phoenix and community-building.
Source: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/learn-new-pca-members-from-spring-2025-phoenixcommunityalliance-gv8fe
2024 | Black History Month in Arizona
Fabulous Arizona • Event listing / media
Independent calendar coverage naming Johnson and Centered at Desert Botanical Garden.
Source: https://fabulousarizona.com/arizona-best/black-history-month-in-arizona/
2024 | Black History Month 2024 in Phoenix
Black River Life Media • Independent cultural roundup
Editorial event roundup identifies Centered.PHX as hosted/curated by Johnson.
Source: https://www.blackriver.life/blog/bhm2024phoenix
2023 | Protecting Life: Axon Mosaic + The Meaning Of Juneteenth

Axon • Third-party partner mention
Company article names Johnson as host of Centered with Desert Botanical Garden.
Source: https://www.axon.com/blog/protecting-life-axon-mosaic--the-meaning-of-juneteenth
2023 | GCC-Juneteenth23
Glendale Community College Juneteenth page • Event listing
Community event listing describing Centered/DBG partnership.
Source: https://sites.google.com/gccaz.edu/gcc-juneteenth23/home

# Selected collaborations and event history — source-backed

2023 — Centered: Liberation at Desert Botanical Garden (Garden interview; Axon; GCC listing).
2024 — Centered at Desert Botanical Garden, Black History Month (Fabulous Arizona).
2021 — ASU Gammage The Local artist series (ASU News).
2019 approx. — Venus Clapback / When I Fell in Love With Black Women (PhxSoul).
2024 — Centered.PHX Black History Month programming (Black River Life).
2025 — Phoenix Community Alliance member spotlight / Downtown cultural leadership (PCA).

# Honors and professional affiliations — verification pending

Arizona Central “24 Who’s Next”; Greater Phoenix Urban League Young Professionals Top 40 Diverse Leaders Under 40; African American Leadership Institute Fellow; Valley Leadership Catalyze Fellow; South Mountain Community College Community Storytelling Fellow; Phoenix Community Alliance membership.

# Supplemental archival discoveries — affiliation-led search (October 2026)

2014-03-28 | schmooze — Episode 2: Entrepreneurs
Direct interview: Ebone Johnson identified as owner of Rejected Thrifts, discussing entrepreneurship alongside two other Phoenix founders.
Source: https://schmooze-ladyconnected.com/author/jmroessel/page/2/
2019-03-02 | PhxSoul — Tempe Falls in Love with Black Women
Direct event coverage and quote: identifies Ebone Johnson as “the Muse,” Venus Clapback co-host, in Tempe Center for the Arts program.
Source: https://www.phxsoul.com/tempe-falls-in-love-with-black-women/
2024-02-05 | Black River Life — Black History Month 2024 in Phoenix
Independent roundup explicitly identifies Ebone “Muse” Johnson as curator/host of Centered.PHX at Desert Botanical Garden.

Source: https://www.blackriver.life/blog/bhm2024phoenix

# Selected Curated Events, Themes & Public Programs

## Rejected Thrifts (est. 2013)

Pumps and Paint — Shoe upcycling, creative reuse and wearable self-expression.
Retail, styling and fashion activations — Vintage fashion, sustainable shopping and reinvention.

## Your Art Party (est. 2017)

Your Art Party paint-and-sip experiences — Participatory painting and creative social connection.
City of Phoenix park art series — Accessible public art and neighborhood activation.
Private and group art experiences — Shared artmaking and creative celebrations.

## MuseTease Prints (est. 2020)

Art and merchandise collections — Black representation, beauty and self-definition.
Digital illustration and collage releases — Visual storytelling and creative autonomy.
Art-market and pop-up appearances — Artist entrepreneurship and accessible art ownership.

## Centered.PHX (est. 2022)

Liberation with Muse / Centered at the Garden (2023) — Juneteenth, liberation and self-love.
Afros and Cornrows: When Did You Fall in Love With Your Hair? (2024) — Black hair, beauty and identity.
Centered: HBCU Stories (2025) — Alumni identity, memories and belonging.
Centered at the Garden (multi-year) — Black storytelling in partnership with Desert Botanical Garden.
Black Love: The Exhale (Feb 2026) — Love, intimacy and emotional connection.
Dear Black Woman (Mar 2026) — Black womanhood, voice and self-definition.
Dear Black Father / Dear Black Man (Jun 2026) — Black fatherhood, masculinity and family.
Celebrate Soul at MIM (Jun 2026) — Juneteenth, heritage and music.
Juneteenth Picnic Sessions × The Square PHX (Jun 2026) — Community gathering and Black joy.
Toni Cade Bambara documentary screening and conversation (2026) — Black feminist literary legacy.

When Did You Fall in Love With Your Hair? (late 2026) — Hair, identity and intergenerational stories.

# PHX HBCU Connex

Quarterly HBCU Socials (2026) — Alumni connection and HBCU school pride.
Homecoming Out West (2026) — From the Yard to the Desert: music, culture and alumni gathering.
HBCU Fall Meet & Greet (Oct 2026) — Alumni networking and homecoming.

# Curatorial Throughlines

Reinvention and self-authorship • Participatory creativity • Black narrative sovereignty • Cultural memory and lineage • Gathering as cultural infrastructure.

# We Produce Culture — Programs, Events, Listings & Public Coverage

April 11, 2026 — Cultural Transit Hack + Demo | Arizona Tech Week
2–5 p.m., The MUSE•eum at Chic Artistry, Phoenix. Participatory cultural-mobility prototype demonstration mapping Phoenix cultural routes onto Valley Metro light rail. Independently listed by Vincent Orleck (Apr 1, 2026) and referenced by ASU News (Apr 3, 2026). Event listing verified; actual attendance and delivery not independently verified.
Evidence: https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/arizona-tech-week-2026-hidden-gems-vincent-orleck-hebjc | https://news.asu.edu/20260403-science-and-technology-firstever-az-tech-week-highlight-asu-student-faculty-innovations?page=%2C%2C0
August 15–October 3, 2026 — We Produce Culture: The Launch Lab
Eight-week live incubator for artists, entrepreneurs, nonprofit leaders and community builders. Topics include strategy, budgeting, sponsorship, marketing, fundraising and launch planning. Public LinkedIn promotional listing; delivery and participant outcomes not independently verified.
Evidence: https://www.linkedin.com/in/muse-johnson-696ba452
2026 — Cultural Blueprint: Story, Space, Systems
Foundational cultural strategy framework, not an event. Useful for talks, workshops and thought leadership.
Evidence: https://themuseeum.com/pages/meet-the-muse

PUBLICATIONS, ESSAYS & CULTURAL COMMENTARY

Anthologies and contributed works
We the People Anthology - Contributing author, Unknown Project Trail. https://unknownprojecttrail.com/projects/we-the-people-anthology/

Original essays - We Produce Culture Substack (2026)
Publication: https://weproduceculture.substack.com/
2026-05-26 - How We Became the Ones Who Host Things | Nobody Told Us We'd Have to Build Community Ourselves
2026-06-01 - I Was Just Trying to Find My People | What We Go Looking For
2026-06-08 - The Future Favors the Cultural Producer | What happens when culture moves from the margins to the center.
2026-06-15 - Phoenix Has No Culture... | Yet Millions Keep Moving Here.
2026-06-23 - Phoenix Has No Culture, Pt. 2 | So What Are We Missing?
2026-06-29 - What if Phoenix doesn't have a culture problem at all? | It has a continuity problem.
2026-07-07 - Cities Don't Produce Culture. | We Do.
2026-07-13 - The Missing Infrastructure: The Cities of Tomorrow Need Culture Producers | Why culture producers may be the most important city builders you've never heard of.
2026-07-20 - Who's Funding the Culture? | People Say They Want Free Events. But Free Has Never Meant Free.
2026-07-27 - The Anatomy of Culture - Part I: Culture Is Not Entertainment.
2026-08-03 - The Anatomy of Culture - Part II: What Is Culture Made Of?
2026-08-12 - The Anatomy of Culture - Part III: The Rise of the Culture Producer | An Appreciation for the Club Promoter - One of Our OG Culture Producers
2026-08-17 - The Anatomy of Culture - Part IV: Give People Enough Tuesdays | On soft socializing, cultural familiarity, and the slow work of belonging.
2026-08-31 - We Produce Culture. And Then Culture Produces Us. | Who Were You Taught to Become? On Hippolyta, cultural inheritance, and the invisible instructions we mistake for identity.
2026-09-08 - Ya'll Said Ya'll Wanted This, Right? Part 1 | Field notes on Phoenix, buyer behavior and the difference between wanting culture and sustaining it.
2026-09-13 - Am I the "N-Word's" Keeper? | Why are Black American people responsible for preserving, policing, and protecting a word white supremacy created to harm us?
2026-09-21 - Phoenix, Put Your Money Where Your Culture Is | Y'all said y'all wanted this. Pt. 2
2026-09-26 - I Retired From Being a "Sister". Then I Met Toni. | On Toni Cade Bambara's "sistering", the big sister who needed a big sister, making paper and what culture preserves for us.
2026-09-28 - Who Produces Phoenix After Dark? Culture Doesn't Clock Out at 5 P.M. | Phoenix Is Becoming an 18-Hour City. Now what?
2026-10-05 - From the Yard to the Desert, What Did You Bring With You? | HBCU culture has been traveling to Arizona for generations.
2026-10-12 - Who Needs a Different World Now? | On HBCUs, the myth of the "real world," and who gets to decide what an education should prepare us for.
2026-10-21 - Who's Funding the Culture? Part II: The Price of an Encore | Two symphonies. Two financial emergencies. One $10 million corporate rescue.
2026-11-02 - Whose Imagination Wins? The Dream, the Burning House, and the Culture We Inherit

2026-11-12 - Everybody Loves Mississippi Now | We Were Never Stuck in Time: Mississippi, the Politics of Possibility, and the People Who Couldn't Imagine Us in the Future

Recorded programming
2026-08-01 - We Produce Culture - 8 Week Launch Lab. Recording of a live session (1:13:33). Published on We Produce Culture Substack.