

TURNING THE TIDE IN ASBURY

PERFORMANCE ART SERIES PLANNED FOR 2ND AVE BEACH IS WHY WE LOVE ASBURY

(AT RIGHT) Hoesy Corona, Climate-Immigrants

Climate-Immigrants is a performance and series of colorful art ponchos that consider the impending plight of climate-immigrants worldwide. The clear raincoats feature vinyl cutouts depicting silhouettes of traveling immigrants against colorful floral backgrounds. These two-sided artworks are ephemera from "Alien Nation", 2017, a temporary large-scale site specific performance at The Smithsonian Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden that considered similar themes.



By Jason Thomson

ASBURY PARK - We couldn't be more stoked to announce *Turning the Tide*, the 2nd Annual 'Siren Arts' Summer Residency & Exhibition Program for Emerging Visual Artists which will feature performance art events every Thursday evening at sunset at the 2nd Ave. beach in Asbury Park. These are the types of arts programs the city should always embrace and we give kudos to city hall for making it a reality.

This arts initiative is being organized by one of our favorite recent additions to the city, Victoria Reis, Executive & Artistic Director of Transformer – a 16 year old non-profit visual arts organization based in Washington, DC. Reis moved to the area last year and has become a huge part of the arts community in Asbury Park. Her husband, Brian Baker is the guitarist for legendary punk band Bad Religion. Still blows our mind that this couple decided to make eastern Monmouth County their home. We are lucky Reis is here, bringing this level of art to the city. We'll celebrate her in these pages as much as possible and hope the powers that be embrace more of these arts programs.

Because the need for art of this caliber in Asbury Park, especially in the long term, cannot be overstated. As the luxury condos rise, and terms like "VIP" and "exclusive" become more and more commonplace, it's our job to seek balance as one of the most important outcomes of Asbury's redevelopment process. There are absolutely so many amazing things to love about Asbury right now but this feeling that things could go in a whole different direction, and quickly, isn't too far in the back of my brain.

It's why we will continue to push developers like iStar and Madison Marquette, who in large part hold the keys to our city's future, in their hands, to keep things edgy and interesting. Never forget that's why people wanted to come here in the first place. I understand the need for profits but if Asbury turns in to some luxury, upscale shopping mall for the rich, that will be the end of it for me and a lot of other people.

When the Gucci's and Starbucks start popping up on the boardwalk, or downtown, we'll know right then and there that Asbury Park has jumped the shark. But we remain optimistic that that won't be our ultimate fate.

In the meantime we'll continue to feature arts initiatives like this one, and

like the Wooden Walls project led by Parlor Gallery owner Jenn Hampton. Wooden Walls has seen countless murals painted by national and international artists along the waterfront, many of which have become icons of the city. They've literally turned into tourist attractions and make for such an interesting juxtaposition between the old and the new. Just see how many people are being photographed in front of them on a daily basis.

But back to *Turning the Tide*, a social practice oriented residency program that will consist of a series of consecutive micro-residencies for seven emerging visual artists and artist collectives. It all begins on July 12 and runs through August 23rd.

Informed and inspired by the work of the Plastic Pollution Coalition and their Asbury Park area partner Clean Water Action, each performance art event will focus on themes of ocean conservation.

Highlighting a diverse range of artists based within the northeast corridor of DC to NYC, *Turning the Tide* will provide urban-based artists an opportunity to get out of their respective cities, enjoy creative time at the beach, and advance work they are currently pursuing. Transformer's goal with *Turning the Tide* is to empower the participating artists and engage audiences in positive action around ocean conservation through contemporary art.

All events will take place at sunset, beginning at approximately 7:30/7:45, on the 2nd Avenue beach. Performances will last approximately 30-60 minutes and are open to all audiences free of charge.

In the event of rain, performances will take place in the lobby of The Asbury Hotel at 8pm. *Turning the Tide* is being presented in collaboration with Monmouth Arts, who are providing community outreach, promotional support, as well as locally based artist participation.

Turning the Tide is generously supported by The Andy Warhol Foundation, The National Endowment for the Arts' Creativity Connects program, and by The Asbury Hotel, Siren Arts exclusive Hotel Sponsor.

To see the full list of artists and performance details please visit www.transformerdc.org.