



## Atelier South

*Atelier South is a Renaissance-based art center that uniquely combines classical training with creative enrichment programs to improve individual and community well-being.*

Creating Atelier South in Atlanta is at the core of George Anthony Morton's vision for affecting change in the world. We will establish a totally new benchmark for delivering classical art training in an inclusive and socially forward environment. We operate in the belief that art is a universal language that can transcend all barriers and transform lives. Our offerings will be multi-dimensional, drawing from classical approaches to drawing, painting and architecture, to cutting-edge digital disciplines.

We believe an artist draws on mind, body, and soul to create great works, and we will holistically address all three through helping artists find their rituals with mindfulness exercises that strengthen creativity.

It begins with teaching small groups and creating an apprentice program and grows to encompass bringing the finest teachers of art and philosophy to Atlanta to share their talent, their spirit, and their encouragement in motivational workshops. The organizing principle of Atelier South will always be excellence, and part of our mission is to bring opportunities to talented young people everywhere, with a focus on identifying and mentoring future artists from underserved communities.

Atelier South

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## GEORGE ANTHONY MORTON

George Anthony Morton was born Sept. 1983, in Kansas City, Missouri. He was the first of 11 children born to a 15-year-old mother. His mother was incarcerated many times during his childhood, so George and his siblings often endured chaos as they were left to struggle on their own through the grinding reality of systemic poverty, incarceration and drug addiction in their family and community. Despite it all, George had a gift that was recognized by many along the way: he could draw. Making images was his escape. He especially recalls the security guard in the juvenile facility where he did a short stint handing him a bag of paints and suggesting he do his time painting a mural. But the social machinery kept grinding, and eventually George got caught in the flow and by his teenage years, he had become a low-level drug dealer. His life changed at age 19 when he was caught and sentenced to 11 years as a non-violent offender in a federal penitentiary. He often describes his time in prison as his monastery - he dedicated his time to studying and making art. Even with no formal training, George Anthony Morton was recognized as a promising painter with exacting artistic standards. His art helped him survive living his entire 20's behind bars.

George chose Atlanta upon his release, and at the urging of prominent Atlanta artists and supportive friends, George applied and was offered a coveted place in the first class of seven students by the New York Metro branch of the prestigious Florence Academy of Art. Untutored but thirsting for knowledge, George immediately embraced the school's philosophy of rigorous training in the Classical-Realist tradition that emanated from immortal Renaissance painters and was best-exemplified in 19th century French Academies.

For three intense years George had the privilege of drawing and painting as well as expanding his hopes and dreams for the future under the tutelage of some of America's leading artists and instructors. An avid pupil, George completed a study-period abroad at the Academy's campus in Italy, then traveled to Europe's greatest art museums to study and deconstruct incomparable original works from the hands of Old Masters. One of the most gifted students ever to attend this premier fine arts institution, George achieved a milestone: he became the first African American to graduate from any campus of Florence Academy of Art, where he won the competitive awards for Best Figure Drawing, 2015, and Best Portrait Drawing, 2016. George swears that he was the proudest graduate on Planet Earth.

George Anthony Morton's unique spiritual and artistic journey has proved richly rewarding despite its often seemingly insurmountable challenges. George is now thriving as an accomplished artist with a signature style whose work is sought after by international galleries and prized by collectors. He is the founder of Atelier South, Atlanta's first art workshop/studio modeled upon six centuries of classical tradition. But he never stops learning: he has travelled throughout Egypt studying the true origins of the Renaissance principles of art and design. He is the subject of a new documentary, "Master of Light", making its world premiere at the 2022 SXSW film festival. George Anthony Morton is a brilliant artist and nascent film maker making his mark for change in this world.

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