



Everything Michigan

GVSU ArtPrize project: Review of UICA works

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By **Guest writer**

Editor's note: A GVSU journalism class taught by Prof. Brian J. Bowe is partnering with the Press to contribute reviews of ArtPrize.

By Jessica Smith

There are only a few days left of ArtPrize, and it's almost impossible to see every bit of art that the city has to offer, but if you haven't been to the Urban Institute of Contemporary Art, it's worth a look.

The newly constructed building has several levels along with random hallways, nooks, and crannies that make the tour more like a maze full of art, so make sure to take advantage of the maps handed out at the front desk.

Not every piece in the building is as impressive as the next, but there are a few pieces visitors should keep their eyes peeled for.

"Screwed Rapids," a 95-foot mural that is a collaboration of artwork put together by 9 different artists, takes viewers on a journey as they slowly travel down the ramp trying to take in the entire piece. The vivid colors and shapes demand the eye's attention, and the randomness of the characters and quotes leaves viewers pondering their meaning. It is a perfect example of indie-hipster art that is trending among our youth.

Upon entering the main level, walkers are stopped dead in their tracks as they stand facing 12 chrome helmets perfectly lined into 4 rows of 3. "Wappen Field" entails helmets hanging from the ceiling in a military fashion, but curiosity draws in onlookers until they've realized it's safe to touch and even place their head inside the helmet. The faint whisper of voices can be heard if the right helmet is chosen at the right time. The voices represent our ancestors or people who have passed within our lifetime, and the ghostly voices are enough to send shivers down the listener's spine.

"Remember:Replay:Repeat" goes as far as to capture the dead within the still images of 4 pictures, and turn it into one living moment that is played continuously on tiny frames. The ghost-like woman shown in the frames is a picture of the artist's mother sitting in a chair bringing her shawl across her body. The artist has been able to bring her mother back to life for a split second in time.

"Nature Preserved" has also been able to capture life, but this time it is shown in 27 tubes holding living plants. Not only are these plants living, they're still growing. The tubes represent the memories people try to preserve and keep alive among our everyday lives. It is a simple, yet encapsulating work of art that displays the beauty of nature and time.

These are just a few of the pieces that the UICA has to offer, and a quick walk through the building is really all it takes. Visitors may have to stop in awe of a dream house made of lottery tickets, or larger than human scale ceramic sculptures of two post-apocalyptic cities, but the UICA is well worth the experience.

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The Artprize piece "Remember:Replay:Repeat" by Caroline Young, of Chicago, Ill. at the UICA.