



ArtPrize Project 1 opening day events include music, Down syndrome drag show

By Brian McVicar



Alyssa Keown | MLive.com

Art seekers prepare for the announcement of the artists selected for Project 1 on Thursday, March 14, 2019 at the ArtPrize hub in Grand Rapids, MI. Project 1, presented by ArtPrize, is a curated outdoor exhibition featuring work by 5 artists that will be on view from Sept. 7 - Oct. 27, 2019.

GRAND RAPIDS, MI — ArtPrize will kick off its inaugural Project 1 exhibition on Sept. 7 with a host of events, including musical performances, a dance exhibit, artist panels and a drag show whose participants have Down syndrome.

Project 1 will run from Sept. 7 to Oct. 27, and is replacing ArtPrize this year as the annual art competition shifts to a biennial schedule. ArtPrize will return in fall 2020.

The event will feature art exhibits at three areas in Grand Rapids: Martin Luther King Jr. Park, 900 Fuller Ave. SE; the Tanglefoot building; 314 Straight Ave. SW; and multiple locations throughout downtown Grand Rapids.

Unlike ArtPrize, which goes big, with more than a thousand exhibits in multiple mediums, Project 1 will dive deep with several large installations by a handful of artists. And while ArtPrize is an open competition, Project 1 is more like a curated art exhibit. Gone are the big-ticket prizes and public voting that ArtPrize is known for.

Here's a look at the events planned for Project 1's opening day.

Downtown Opening Launch Event

The official launch party for Project 1 will be held from noon to 2 p.m. at Rosa Parks Circle. The event will feature a performance by BANDALOOP, an aerial dance troupe based in Oakland, California

whose members perform while suspended from buildings.

ArtPrize spokesperson Margaret Paxton said members of BANDALOOOP will perform while suspended from the PNC bank building at 171 Monroe Ave. NW.

Other performers include the Grand Rapids Ballet, the Grand Valley State University Music and Dance Ensemble. Following the performances, a conversation will be hosted featuring Project 1 artists Rafael Lozano-Hemmer and Alice Gray Stites.

Exhibits from Project 1 will be on display at several locations in downtown Grand Rapids. They include Rosa Parks Circle; outside the AC Hotel, near the corner of Louis Street NW and Monroe Avenue; on the exterior of a section of the downtown “skywalk,”; and on the lawn of the Grand Rapids Public Museum.

MLK Park Community Celebration

A community celebration at MLK Park will take place from 2-5 p.m. It will feature a performance by cellist Jordan Hamilton, a Western Michigan University graduate whose work “merges songwriting, loop pedals, sample machines, and vocals to create a sonic landscape of experimental hip-hop, folk, soul, and classical music.”

The event will also feature a performance by hip-hop artist Lady Ace Boogie, as well as conversations with Project 1 artists Heather Hart and Amanda Browder. The community group Artists Creating Together and John Ball Zoo will provide art making and family activities throughout the afternoon.

Tanglefoot Opening Night

The day’s events will conclude at the Tanglefoot building with a performance by Drag Syndrome, an “underground drag troop featuring drag queens” with Down syndrome.

The event, which runs from 6-10 p.m., will also feature a discussion with Project 1 artists Paul Amenta and Ted Lott, as well as collaborators Chris Smit and Jill Vyn of DisArt. DisArt aims to increase the participation of disabled people in communities through curated art exhibitions.