

# ARTPRIZEedu

GRADES 6-12

AN ARTPRIZE EDUCATION MAGAZINE



**Pattern Power in Art**  
**Study of Nature**  
**Let's Learn About Public Art!**



# **We're never done making health care better.**



Next generation health care needs artists like you. At Corewell Health, we believe creativity is essential to a healthier, more vibrant future. That's why we're proud to sponsor ArtPrize—where imagination and community come together. Grab your favorite colors and let's create together.





Architects of Air, ArboREALis, 555 Monroe

## From the Executive Director

Oh, hi! I'm so glad you've picked up this magazine, or opened it on your screen, and that we get to share ArtPrize 2025 with you. My name is Catlin Whittington, and I'm the Executive Director of ArtPrize. Each fall, Grand Rapids becomes a meeting place for artists and audiences from around the world. This year, we continue that tradition of welcoming creativity into our city and sparking conversations about what art can mean.

Art isn't just found in museums or galleries, it's the mural on your block, the design of your shoes, the visuals in your favorite game. It's a way of seeing, expressing, and connecting. Creating art teaches patience and problem solving; experiencing art helps us process emotions, inspires us, and brings us together.

At ArtPrize, we believe everyone is an artist. No matter your background or experience, your perspective adds something meaningful to our shared world.

Thank you for being part of ArtPrize 2025. I can't wait to see the ideas and creativity you bring. Be excellent to each other.

**Catlin Whittington**

Executive Director, ArtPrize

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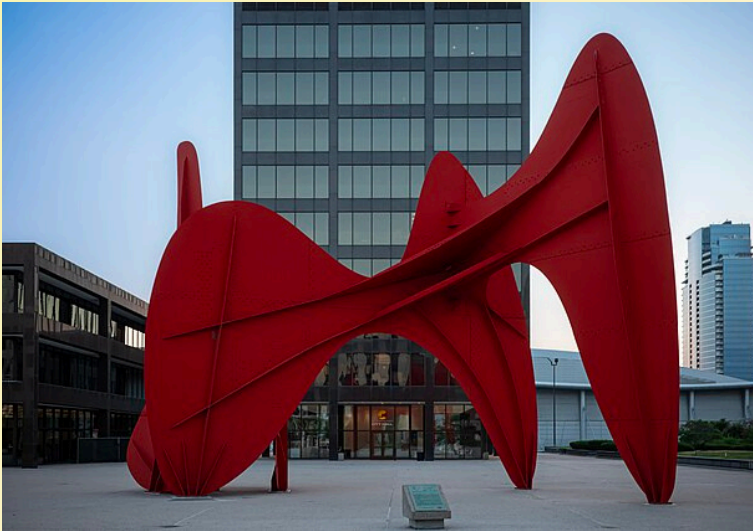
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### COVER IMAGE:

**Ashley Miller**, *No Such Thing as Flightless Birds*, Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum

# Happy 175th Birthday, Grand Rapids!

**Grand Rapids turned 175 years old on April 2, 2025. A 175th anniversary is known as a dodransbicentennial!**



Did you know that Grand Rapids has a long history of supporting the arts?

Grand Rapids had the first publicly funded art installation! La Grande Vitesse, a sculpture created in 1969 by Alexander Calder, was the first sculpture in the United States to be supported with public funds for the arts, from the National Endowment of the Arts.

In May 1969, the work arrived in Grand Rapids in 27 sections, and it took five days to put it together!

## GRAND RAPIDS FACTS

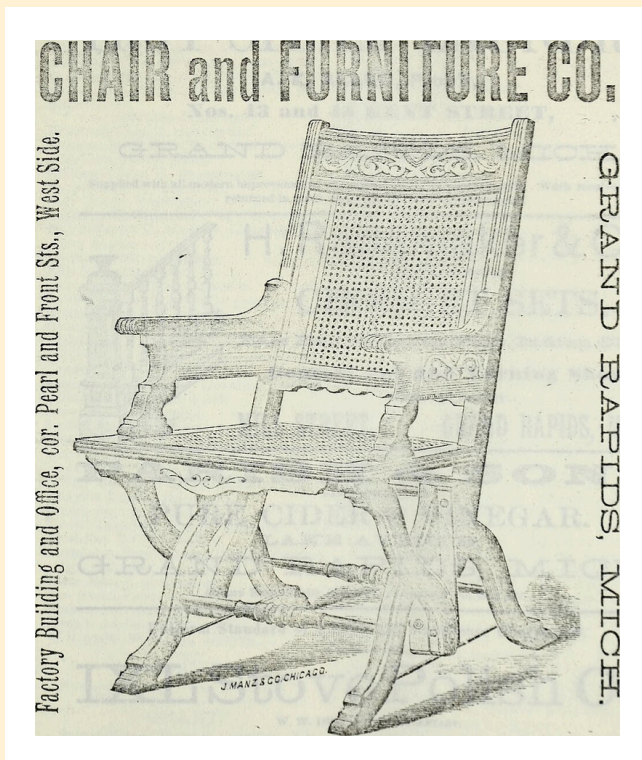
- *Grand Rapids is the second largest city in Michigan.*
- *The land where Grand Rapids is located today is the ancestral land of the Anishinaabe: the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Bodéwadmi people.*
- *Louis Campau, the official founder of Grand Rapids, settled in 1826, after the Treaty of Chicago was signed, ceding land to the U.S. government in 1821.*
- *Grand Rapids became a city in 1850.*
- *Grand Rapids was home to the nation's first hydro-electric plant, built in 1881.*

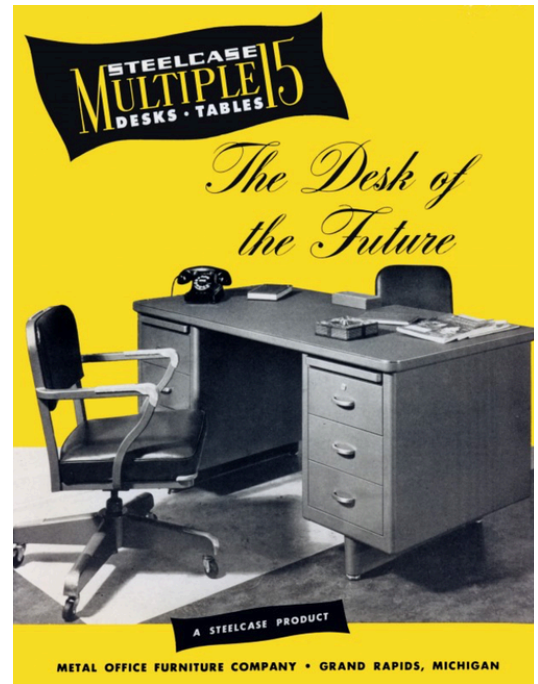
# Furniture City

Grand Rapids has been a prominent player in the furniture industry for almost two centuries. In the mid-1800s to mid-1900s, Grand Rapids was a central hub of furniture design, creation, and manufacturing. Having close access to water, timber, and skilled craftsmen allowed for ample material supply, hydroelectric power, and labor to propel the furniture landscape forward.

Manufacturing companies such as Berkey & Gay Furniture Co., Phoenix Furniture Co., Grand Rapids Chair Co., and dozens of others found homes in the city. Each business grew and changed over time as the American home evolved throughout major points in American history, such as the Victorian era and World War II, when schools and offices became more common and the furniture needed by Americans shifted out of the home.

While the type of furniture being crafted in the city has changed over the years, Grand Rapids still holds numerous furniture companies of varying sizes, including Herman Miller and Steelcase. The businesses standing today remind us of the furniture city's vast and rich history.





Real examples from chairs and furniture made in Grand Rapids and area through the centuries!

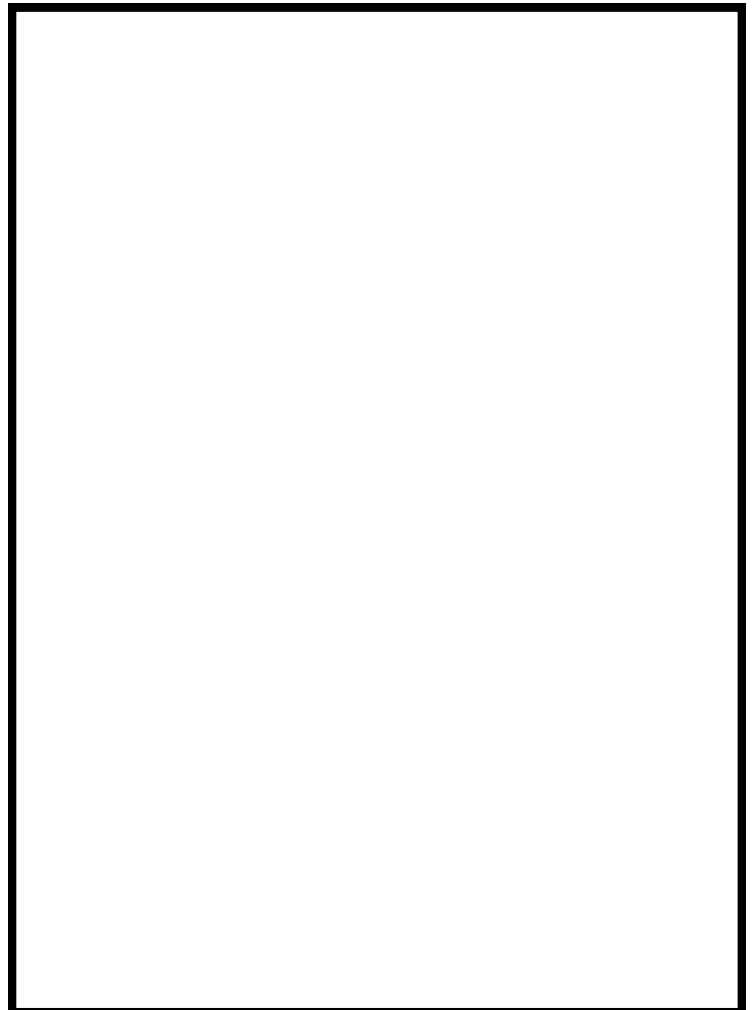
## LET'S DESIGN A CHAIR!

### STEP 1: Think about your chair like a designer!

Things to consider:

- Does it have legs? If so, how many?
- Is it soft, or hard?
- Does the chair have a back or armrests?
- What material is the chair made out of?
- What will people be doing while sitting in this chair?

### STEP 2: Draw your chair, from the front view or the side view!





Cheyenne Lee, *Environmental, NIDO-The Urban Nest*

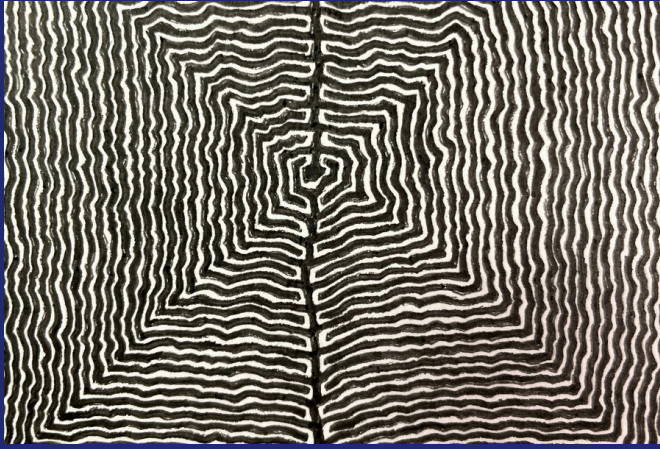
# Pattern Power: How Patterns Help Artists Create Meaningful Designs

Patterns surround us in our everyday lives. Artists create patterns using colors, shapes, images, lines, numbers, or letters in a repeating order. You’ve probably seen patterns today in your clothes, on wallpaper, or painted on the sidewalk.

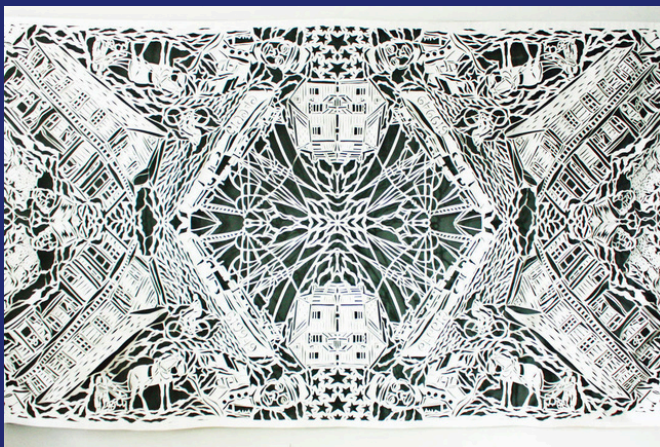
Artists use patterns to add to their artwork, sometimes showing movement, balance, or rhythm in an image. Patterns are a handy tool for artists to highlight certain areas of their artwork to make sure the people viewing the artwork can understand what it means and what it’s saying about the world around us.

## WHAT MAKES A PATTERN?

The main repeating part of a pattern is called a “motif.” In this photo, you can see the pattern is made of repeating colors and shapes, so in this pattern, the motif is colors and shapes.



**Victor Fitzsimmons**, *Detail of Labyrinth*  
Clear Sky Eyecare



**Jennifer York**, *Legare Run*  
Plaza Towers

While the possibilities of pattern are endless, patterns are most often used to decorate a surface, to add special effects like movement to artwork, and as an expressive tool to communicate emotions, show rhythm, or explore a theme.

A few examples of how patterns are made:

- Man-made (like your striped shirt)
- Naturally occurring (like a honeycomb)
- Symmetrical (like a butterfly or a square)
- Asymmetrical (like a pinecone)



**Tobin Sprout**, *Type 1 (Child's Life Vest)*  
GRCC Collins Art Gallery

**“PATTERN-FINDING IS  
THE PURPOSE OF THE  
MIND AND THE  
CONSTRUCT OF THE  
UNIVERSE. THERE ARE  
AN INFINITE NUMBER  
OF PATTERNS, SOME  
OF WHICH ARE  
KNOWN; THOSE STILL  
UNKNOWN HOLD THE  
KEY TO UNRESOLVED  
ENIGMAS AND  
PARADOXES.”**

**-Artist Agnes Denes**

# Minimal to Maximal: How Artists Use Less or More to Create

Minimalism and maximalism are opposite design styles. You can see examples of minimalism and maximalism every day in your home, in your locker, and even on the street!

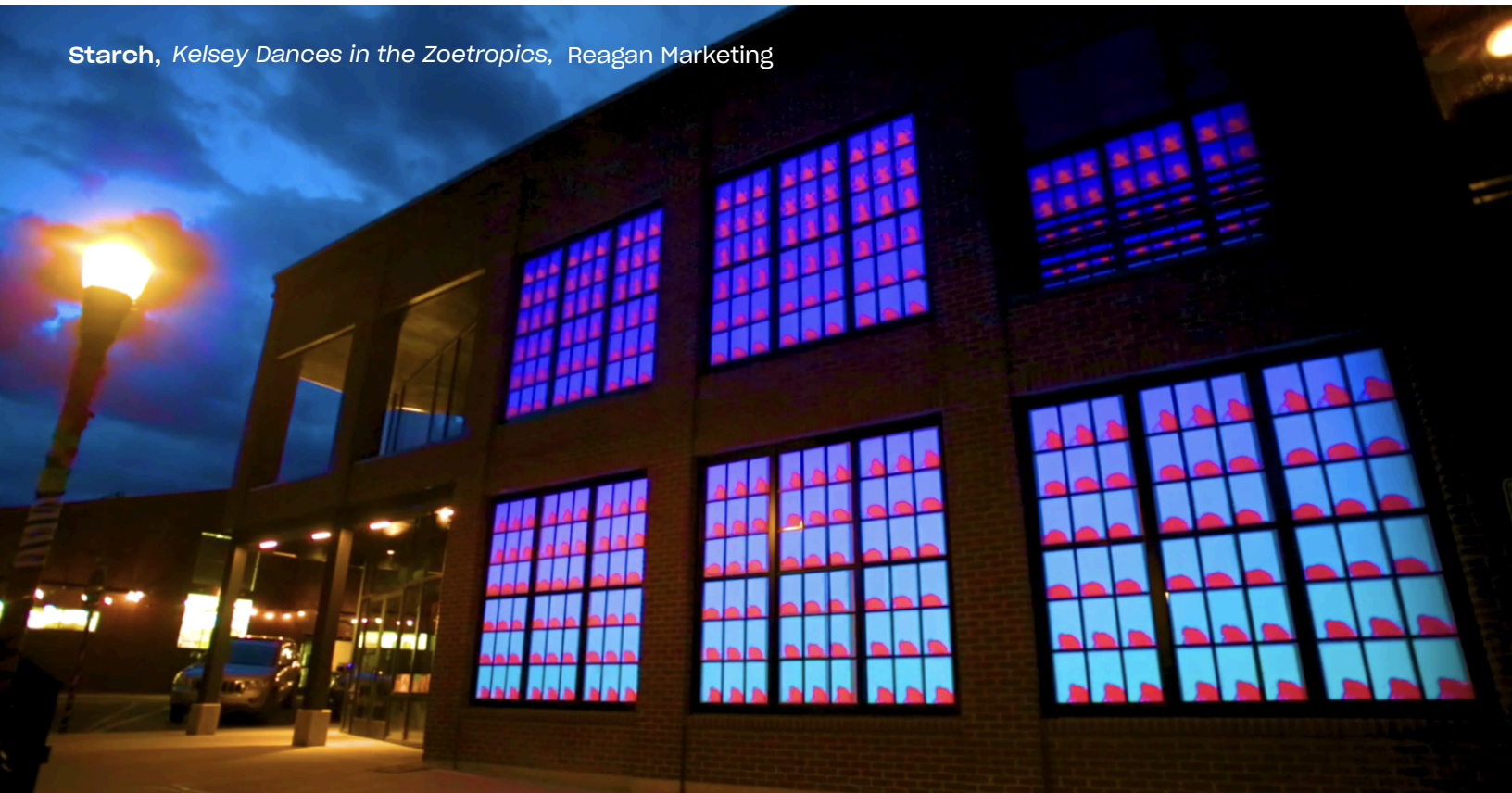
When you hear the word “minimalism,” you might notice it sounds close to “minimum.”

Minimalism is a clean, simple design style that reduces the amount of visual elements.

An artist practicing minimalism might use neutral tones, like brown or beige, and simple materials, like paper or wood.

Minimalism focuses on using the “minimum” needed to create the image or function the artist is aiming for. You can see examples of minimalism in Japanese and Scandinavian culture, where artists create a warm, simple, and clean atmosphere in artwork, interior design, and other aspects of everyday life.

Starch, *Kelsey Dances in the Zoetropics*, Reagan Marketing



On the other hand, when you hear “maximalism” you may notice it sounds close to “maximum.” Maximalism is a bold, detailed design style that increases the amount of visual elements. An artist practicing maximalism will choose bold colors, incorporate patterns, and use more vibrant textures. Maximalism brings in the “maximum” details and visuals to create. You can see examples of maximalism in the work of ArtPrize artists below!



**Christina Shook**, *Fair County Fair*  
Brush Studio

**MINIMALIST ARTISTS BELIEVE “LESS IS MORE.” MINIMALISTS STRIVE TO REDUCE CLUTTER AND EMPHASIZE SIMPLICITY.**

**MAXIMALIST ARTISTS BELIEVE “MORE IS MORE.” THEY CREATE WORKS THAT CELEBRATE ABUNDANCE AND INDIVIDUALITY.**



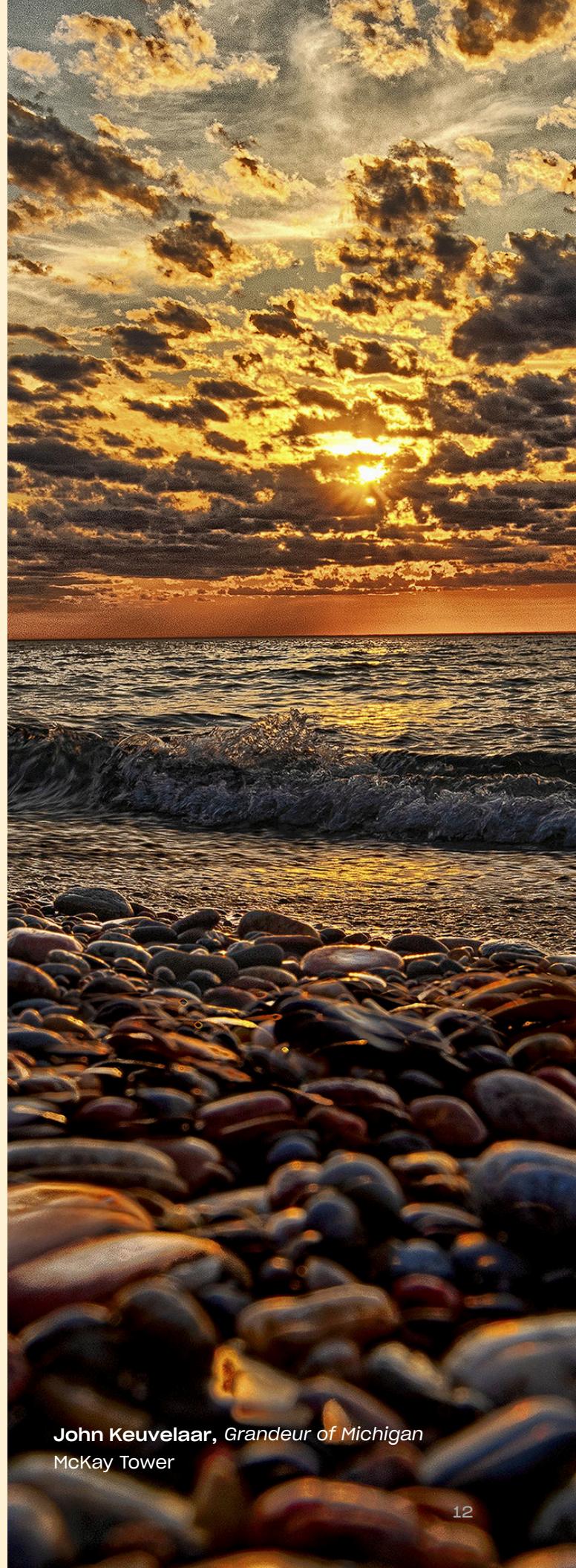
**Sarah Geels**, *Great Lakes Symbiofish*  
DeVos Place Convention Center

# Art Study of Nature:

## How the Great Lakes Shape Creative Work

If you've ever walked along Lake Michigan during sunset, you know it's more than just a pretty view – it's a full experience. The way the light hits the water, the way the waves move, the quiet that falls over the shore – it sticks with you.

That feeling is something artists have been trying to capture for decades. In fact, a lot of art made in Michigan, especially near Lake Michigan, is inspired by nature.



**John Keuvelaar**, *Grandeur of Michigan*  
McKay Tower



**Cindy Webster**, *The Slow Fade of Stick Season*  
DeVos Place Convention Center



**Kathleen Ericson**, *My Favorite Place*  
Cornerstone Church – Heritage Hill Campus



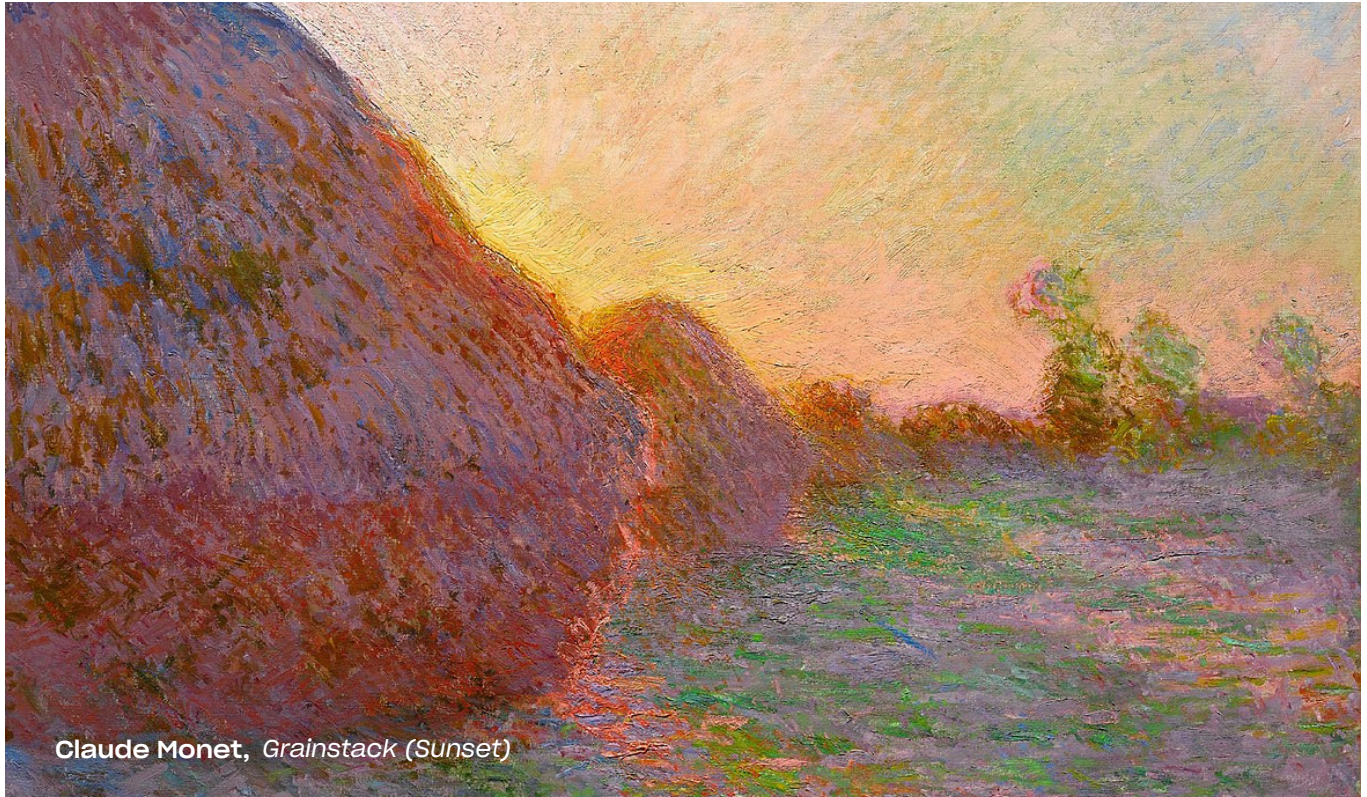
**Kathy Mohl**, *Cascading Dunes*  
Plaza Towers

Artists often turn to the lake, forests, and skies of Michigan to explore big ideas – like peace, memory, change, or time. You’ve probably seen paintings that show waves crashing or a glowing sunset. These aren’t just decorations. They’re ways artists try to make sense of the world around them and invite others to do the same.

So why do so many artists return to the same subjects – water, trees, sky? Part of the reason is because those places are familiar. But it’s also because nature never looks exactly the same twice. A sunset lasts just a few minutes, and the light is different every night. Trying to capture that is a challenge—but that’s what makes it exciting.

**NEXT TIME YOU’RE BY THE LAKE OR WALKING IN THE WOODS, TAKE A MOMENT TO REALLY LOOK. WHAT COLORS DO YOU SEE? WHAT SHAPES? WHAT FEELINGS COME UP? THAT’S WHERE ART STARTS.**

# Studying Change: Monet, Seasons, and Observational Practice



Claude Monet's series paintings, such as his haystacks, Rouen Cathedral, and the Japanese bridge in his garden, demonstrate how a single subject can shift dramatically depending on the time of day, weather, and season. These works are not about the objects themselves, but about how light, atmosphere, and time alter perception.

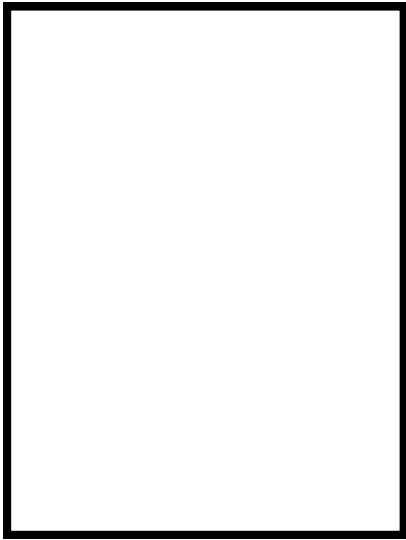
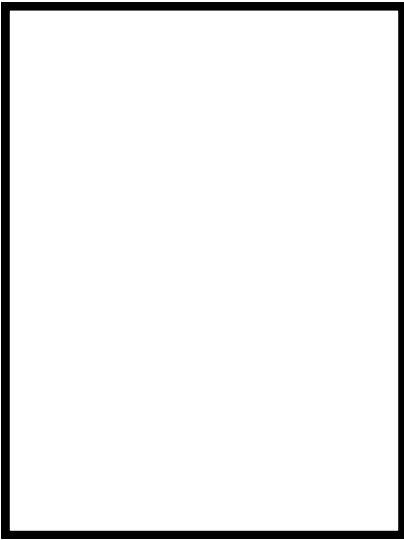
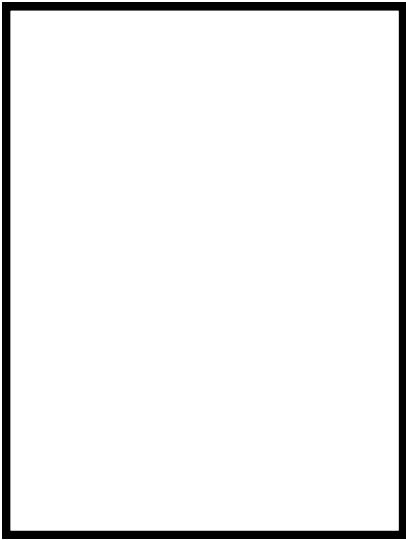
This approach to seeing can be found in much of the contemporary work created by artists along Lake Michigan. Like Monet, these artists often return to familiar subjects: the shoreline, tree lines, clouds, and seasonal changes. The repetition is intentional. It allows artists to notice subtle differences and to explore how external conditions influence mood, color, and form.

The connection between these artists and Monet is not just about style – it’s about attention. Artists attuned to nature study not only what is there, but what changes.



**Dragos Burghiu**, *The Wheat Field (A Tribute to Ivan Shishkin)*, Monroe Community Church

Use the three squares below to draw three versions of the same object in nature!  
What do you see? What do you notice in them?



# Public Art: Art That Belongs to Everyone

Public art refers to artworks installed or performed in spaces where people can experience them. You can see public art on city sidewalks, in parks, at bus stops, in libraries, on building walls, and at community centers.

Unlike art made for private collections or museums, public art is intended to be accessible, visible, and part of everyone's daily life.



**Adrienne Outlaw**, *Grand Dome*, Grand Valley State University - Eberhard Center

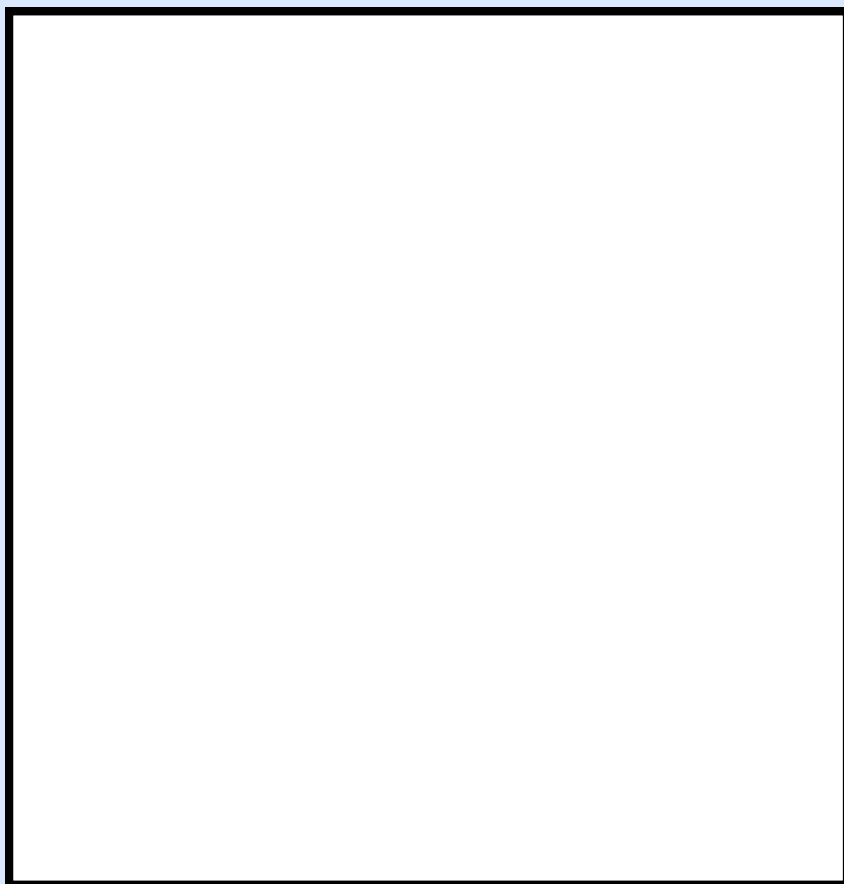


Public art takes many forms: large-scale sculptures, murals, temporary installations, performances, video projections, or even interactive pieces that respond to weather or movement. Some public art is permanent, like Alexander Calder's La Grande Vitesse in Grand Rapids. Other works are temporary, like installations during ArtPrize or site-specific performances.

Public art also invites a wider audience. Not everyone goes to art museums, but everyone walks through public spaces. This allows public artists to reach people who might not otherwise encounter art, and to challenge the idea that art only exists inside institutions.

Public art is both creative and civic. It's not just about making something to look at, it's about creating work that interacts with the people and the place around it.

## DESIGN PUBLIC ART FOR YOUR COMMUNITY!



### STEP 1:

#### **Choose a Public Space**

Think about a place in your community that many people pass by.

### STEP 2:

#### **Define Your Purpose**

What would you like your public art to do?

### STEP 3:

#### **Choose a Style**

What type of art will you create? With what materials?

### STEP 4:

#### **Sketch Your Idea**

Sketch your idea on this page or describe it!

# Social Impact Art: Where Creativity Meets Community Solutions

Social impact art is created to raise awareness, spark dialogue, or directly address social and community issues. When viewed through the lens of STEAM, this kind of work becomes a form of problem-solving!

**Artists in this space are not only asking questions; they are also designing responses.**

Rather than creating art to exist only in galleries, social impact artists often work in public spaces or with community groups. Their projects may involve data visualization, architecture, wearable technology, urban planning, or sustainable materials. These works function both as creative expressions and design interventions – blending aesthetics with purpose.

In this way, social impact art is both expressive and functional. It demonstrates how art is not just a subject in school – it's a tool for imagining and building a better future.

Today, artists working at the intersection of STEAM and social justice might create:

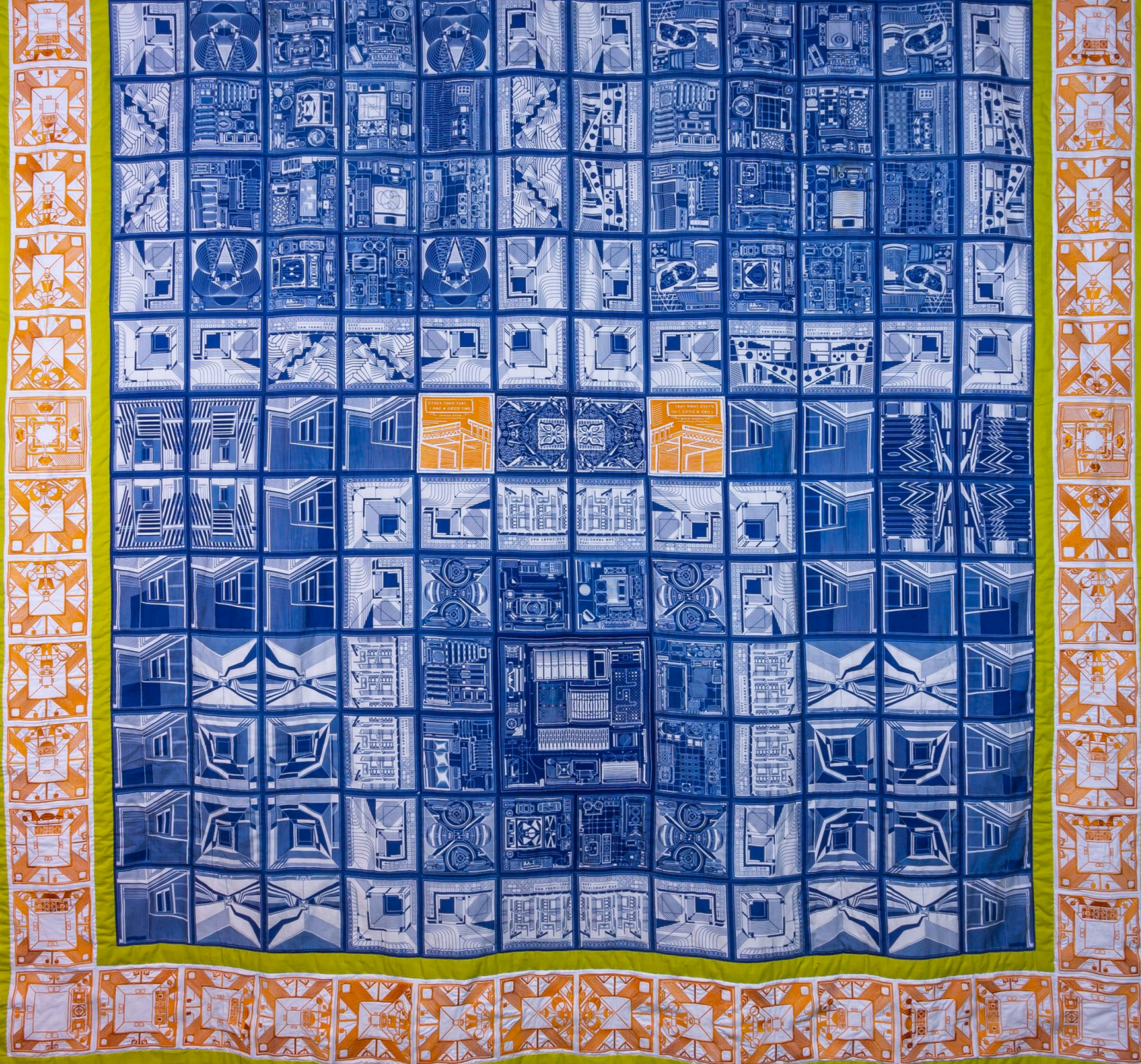
**Murals that visualize climate change data**

**Installations that collect community stories**

**Wearables that monitor air quality**

**Furniture designed for the unhoused**

**Apps or digital tools to improve civic access**



Jordan Won, *I Would've Been Happy*, Western Michigan University

ArtPrize, founded in Grand Rapids, Michigan in 2009, is one of the world's largest art competitions, transforming the city into an art gallery where thousands of artists exhibit across museums, public spaces, and businesses. Celebrated for democratizing access to contemporary art, it has engaged hundreds of thousands of visitors annually, awarding major prizes through both public vote and juried selection, and reshaping how communities interact with public art.

