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ArtPrize Expands to Dallas

By RANDY KENNEDY NOVEMBER 20, 2014 12:40 PM 5 Comments

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ArtPrize, the contemporary-art contest in which the public can bestow as much as \$200,000 on an artist, is expanding from its base in Grand Rapids, Mich., where it was founded five years ago and has become an economic boon to the city.

The organization announced Thursday that it has entered into a three-year agreement to bring the prize to Dallas as well, where the event will be held for the first time in April 2016. Invited artists from around the world will show works over several days in galleries, stores, coffee shops, public plazas, parks and other unconventional locations. The prize money, as much as \$500,000 — including a \$200,000 public prize; another \$200,000 prize awarded by a jury of art professionals; and smaller prizes — will be generated through contributions by local businesses, foundations and other benefactors, said Christian Gaines, the executive director of ArtPrize, which was founded by the Web entrepreneur Rick DeVos.

Mr. Gaines said several cities had approached ArtPrize, a nonprofit organization, about hosting their own version of the event "and Dallas was the city that has really followed through."

"We want to make sure there's an appetite for this sort of thing, and we think there is and we'll go wherever the appetite is," Mr. Gaines added. Last month in Grand Rapids, almost 400,000 votes were cast for the \$200,000 public prize, which was awarded to Anila Quayyum Agha, an artist born in Pakistan and educated in Texas, whose laser-cut wood installation, "Intersections," explored Islamic design and the experience of both "wonder and exclusion" experienced by a woman growing up in Pakistan. Ms. Agha also won half of the juried grand prize, along with Sonya Clark, a Virginia-based artist whose work focuses on African-American hairdressing.

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