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ARMIN MERSMANN FINISHES IN TOP 25 AT GRAND RAPIDS ARTPRIZE

After the first round of voting, **Armin Mersmann**, Studio School Manager at the Alden B. Dow Museum of Science and Art at Midland Center for the Arts, has finished in the top 25 artists at ArtPrize 2011. His entry, ***Four Gates of Sanctuarium***, consists of four oil paintings – *Phantom*, *Right of Passage*, *In Red Flux*, and *Winter Red* – with surrounds of wood treated to create a trompe l'oeil effect of oxidation.

"I'm really proud to have finished in the top 25 at this year's ArtPrize," remarks Mersmann. "There are very few opportunities in which an artist can display their work for over 100,000 individuals during a one-week period. I had the chance to speak to people from all walks of life about my work. A great by-product of ArtPrize is that it makes a wide variety of art accessible to a significant portion of the public."

Valerie Allen, Retail Sales & Guest Services Manager at Midland Center for the Arts, was pleased with her experience exhibiting her mixed-media entry, ***Composer's Campaign: Taiko***, at St. Cecelia Music Center.

"I chose this particular venue due to the musical theme of my work this year," says Allen. "I am thrilled that I was be asked to return to St. Cecilia's for a one-person show in February. The networking opportunities presented by ArtPrize are invaluable. I'm now working with a corporate art dealer interested in installing my work in a cancer center in Muskegon."

The second round of voting includes only the top 10 finalists and continues through October 5. Final results will be announced on October 6.

Grand Rapids' **ArtPrize** is an open competition featuring the world's largest cash prize for art: \$449,000 total, with \$250,000 going to the first-place winner. Winners are determined by a vote from visitors. This year's competition runs from September 21 through October 9. The top winners will be announced October 6, 2011.

Artprize.org

Midland Center for the Arts, Inc. is a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation formed under the laws of the State of Michigan incorporating six groups: Alden B. Dow Museum of Science and Art, MATRIX:MIDLAND, Midland County Historical Society, Midland Symphony Orchestra, Music Society and Theatre Guild. Activities at Midland Center for the Arts are supported in part by the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs, a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. For the latest Center news, visit our web site at www.mcfta.org.

Contact:
Julie Dukes
Communications Manager
(989) 631-5930 x 1602
dukes@mcfta.org

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Midland Center for the Arts • 1801 W. St. Andrews Rd. • Midland, MI 48640 • (989) 631-5930 • (989) 631-7890 fax • www.mcfta.org