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ArtPrize, LaughFest, Beer City USA gear all available at Grand Rapids Store online



ArtPrize 2014's poster can be found on new merchandise available in area stores as well as from the online Grand Rapids Store. (Cory Morse | MLive.com)

Cory Morse | cmorse1@mlive.com (<http://connect.mlive.com/staff/GRPcmorse/photos.html>)

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Print (http://blog.mlive.com/gpress/news_impact/print.html?entry=/2014/09/artprize_laughfest_beer_city_u.html)



(<http://connect.mlive.com/staff/jkaczmarczyk/index.html>) By Jeffrey Kaczmarczyk | jkaczmarczyk@mlive.com (<http://connect.mlive.com/staff/jkaczmarczyk/posts.html>)

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on September 19, 2014 at 1:00 PM, updated September 19, 2014 at 1:05 PM

GRAND RAPIDS, MI – If you want to see **ArtPrize** (<http://www.mlive.com/artprize/>), you have to come to Grand Rapids.

But if you want a piece of ArtPrize – or LaughFest or Beer City USA – you can go online to the **Grand Rapids Store** (<https://grandrapidsstore.com/>).

You also can get Grand Rapids-themed "GR&" shirts, mugs and more at the online store hosted by Experience Grand Rapids.

1 of [GrandRapidsStore.com](http://www.grandrapidsstore.com), which launched in May

(<http://www.experiencegr.com/blog/announcing-grandrapidsstore->



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enthusiasts of Michigan's second-largest city a place to get branded gear from Grand Rapids' signature events.

The online store is a partnership between the brands and Markit Products in northwest Grand Rapids, a local apparel and promotional merchandise company, which produces, inventories and ships all items purchased in the store.

During ArtPrize, you can buy ArtPrize-related merchandise at ArtPrize's HUB headquarters as well as at several other locations during the festival opening Sept. 24 and continuing through Oct. 12.

Related: [ArtPrize 2014: Here's where to buy ArtPrize stuff now](http://www.mlive.com/artprize/index.ssf/2014/09/artprize_2014_heres_where_to_buy_artprize_stuff.html#incart_river_entertainment) (http://www.mlive.com/artprize/index.ssf/2014/09/artprize_2014_heres_where_to_buy_artprize_stuff.html#incart_river_entertainment)

Afterward, you can turn to the Grand Rapids Store anytime.

"We don't have a physical store beyond the 19 days, so it really gives us a place for people to buy ArtPrize merchandise after ArtPrize," said Dave Deboer, director of operations for ArtPrize.

ArtPrize's 2014 poster and shirts and other items inspired by its design are available from Markit Products, which has produced ArtPrize merchandise since the second event in April 2010.

You also can buy from the Grand Rapids Store ArtPrize's 5-year retrospective coffee table book, "**[ArtPrize: How a Radically Open Competition Transformed a City and Changed the Way We Think About Art, \(ArtPrize, the 'international phenomenon,' celebrates five years with retrospective book\)](#)**" which was published in April.

The "Beer City USA" brand recognizes that Grand Rapids, in an online poll, tied for the title in 2012 and won it outright in 2013. Afterward, the poll's organizer retired the 5-year-old poll, leaving Grand Rapids as its final holder.

Related: [RIP Beer City USA poll: Founder spikes online contest, says it 'served its purpose'](http://www.mlive.com/business/west-michigan/index.ssf/2014/03/beer_city_usa_poll_retired_fou.html) (http://www.mlive.com/business/west-michigan/index.ssf/2014/03/beer_city_usa_poll_retired_fou.html)

Items for sale range from a Beer City sticker for \$2 to a jersey hoodie for \$40.

The "GR&" brand, which is pronounced "grand," is the creation of Gregg Palazzolo of Palazzolo Design, who created a flexible brand that can mean several things at once. "GR& Art" can mean "Grand Art" but it also can mean "Grand Rapids & Art."

"GR&" items for sale include both men's and women's flannel boxer shorts for \$20.

The Grand Rapids Store launched two months after the close of **[LaughFest 2014](http://topics.mlive.com/tag/LaughFest/index.html)** (<http://topics.mlive.com/tag/LaughFest/index.html>), but organizers of the festival of laughter joined the effort in advance of the next community-wide showcase of seriously funny stuff in March 2015.

LaughFest-themed items include a LaughFest key ring for \$2 and LaughFest's slogan, "Seriously Funny," on a baby bib for \$10.

"We wanted to be involved to give shoppers access to all kinds of Grand Rapids brands in a one-stop location and as a way to be able to purchase LaughFest items year-round," said Joanne Roehm, festival director of **[LaughFest](http://laughfestgr.org/)** (<http://laughfestgr.org/>). "The

Grand Rapids Store helps to further showcase our city and facilitate collaboration between great events and organizations here in Grand Rapids."

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Andrew Krietz | akrietz@mlive.com (http://connect.mlive.com/user/akrietz/index.html) (http://connect.mlive.com/user/akrietz/index.html) I'm curious, given the growing popularity of ArtPrize, have any items in previous years sold out (that mug looks pretty neat)? 3 days ago

Like Reply



Jeffrey Kaczmarczyk | jkaczmarczyk@mlive.com (http://connect.mlive.com/user/jeffrey.kaczmarczyk/index.html) 3 days ago

@Andrew Krietz | akrietz@mlive.com (http://connect.mlive.com/user/akrietz/index.html) Most definitely, yes.

Each year's theme is different, and newly produced merch reflects the new theme. Anything inspired by each year's poster, for instance, isn't produced again in successive years.

I don't have an accounting of what's been retired. Possibly no one keeps track other than when an item is gone, it's gone.

Like Reply

j weebe (http://connect.mlive.com/user/j_weebe/index.html)

3 days ago

Never ceases to amaze me what people will pay for 'made in China' souvenirs of Grand Rapids, etc.

Made in America. Nowhere?????????

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Jeffrey Kaczmarczyk | jkaczmarczyk@mlive.com (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/jkaczmarczyk/index.html>)

3 days ago

@j weebe (http://connect.mlive.com/user/j_weebe/index.html) Markit Products silkscreens shirts here in Grand Rapids. Would that be sufficient as "Made in America"?

Or would you like to see the shirts manufactured here as well?

Like Reply



Jeffrey Kaczmarczyk | jkaczmarczyk@mlive.com (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/jkaczmarczyk/index.html>)

3 days ago

@j weebe (http://connect.mlive.com/user/j_weebe/index.html) Now that I think about it, it occurs to me that if you buy merch for, say, the Chicago Cubs or the Cleveland Browns, they aren't necessarily manufactured in Chicago or Cleveland.

Do you think that's something fans and customers should insist on?

1  (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/Sunlogic/index.html>) Like Reply



j weebe (http://connect.mlive.com/user/j_weebe/index.html)

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@Jeffrey Kaczmarczyk | jkaczmarczyk@mlive.com (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/jkaczmarczyk/index.html>) @j weebe (http://connect.mlive.com/user/j_weebe/index.html)

Absolutely!! Good point!

1  (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/Sunlogic/index.html>) Like Reply



j weebe (http://connect.mlive.com/user/j_weebe/index.html)

2 days ago

@Jeffrey Kaczmarczyk | jkaczmarczyk@mlive.com (<http://connect.mlive.com/user/jkaczmarczyk/index.html>) @j weebe (http://connect.mlive.com/user/j_weebe/index.html) Didn't know that. Hope they make good bucks...but, Yes, making the shirts here would be so great!

Like Reply

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