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ArtPrize bows to voter pressure, adding more days to vote in first round for 2012 competition

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By Jeffrey Kaczmarczyk | The GR Press

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GRAND RAPIDS – **ArtPrize 2012**, after years of listening to voter complaints, will revise voting procedures for the fourth exhibition and competition coming in September 2012.

Voters will have three extra days, 11 in all, in the first round to cast as many votes as they want to select the Top 10 finalist, competing for a total of \$360,000 in prize money.

Voters in the second round will have just five days to cast one vote to determine the winner of the top \$200,000 prize as well as the rest of the Top 10.

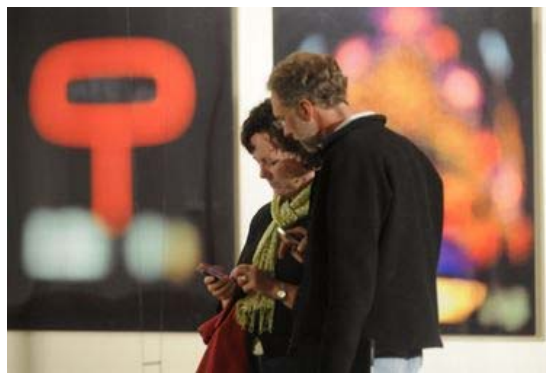
"I continually say this, but it's all about the process," said ArtPrize founder Rick DeVos.

Since 2009, for the first three events, both rounds of voting had the same number of days to participate, with the finalists and winner's announcements on successive Thursdays.

For ArtPrize 2011, the Top 10 finalists will be unveiled on a Sunday afternoon, and the winners announced the following Friday evening.

"We've placed people as a priority," said executive director Catherine Creamer. "We've asked them to vote early and vote often."

The adjustment still will give out-of-town visitors the opportunity to visit and vote during successive



File Photo

Carl Erickson and Mary O'Neill of Grand Rapids cast a vote by text message at Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts during the first round of ArtPrize 2010 last year.

ArtPrize 2011 Top Ten

ArtPrize announces Top Ten works of art by popular vote.

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weekends, first on Saturday and Sunday Sept. 22-23 to vote in the first round, and then on Sun. Sept. 30 to vote in the second round.

Among other changes for the exhibition opening Sept. 19 ending Oct. 7:

ArtPrize 2012 on its website will publish a list of the Top 25 entries in the first-round popular vote, but the list won't go live until Sept. 24, the fifth day of the competition and the Monday after the first weekend of the exhibition, close to half way through the first round of voting.

ArtPrize's jurors determining the five juried awards will unveil a short list of their top three semi-finalists, also on Sept. 24

Though the public has no role in determining some **\$200,000 in juried awards, including a new \$100,000 juried grand prize**, the announcement of the jurors' short list, coming with six days remaining in the first round of voting, will give viewers and participants food for thought.

"Everything we do is intended to engage the public," said ArtPrize founder Rick DeVos. "We've learned debate is good."

ArtPrize 2011 had more than 38,000 registered voters using various forms of social media, including smartphones and text messages, to vote as well as on ArtPrize's website.

Participating voters cast a total of 383,000 votes in two rounds to award the \$250,000 grand prize to Mia Tavonatti, a mosaic artist from Santa Ana, Calif., originally from Iron Mountain in the Upper Peninsula.

ArtPrize 2012 opens Sept. 19, and first round of voting ends the end of the day on Sept. 29 with the Top 10 announcement the next day.

Second round voting begins immediately afterward on Sept. 30 and ends at the end of the day on Oct. 4 with the winner's announcement following on Oct. 5.

Dates for venue or artist registration and for matching between the two will be announced at a later date.

E-mail Jeffrey Kaczmarczyk: jkaczmarczyk@grpress.com and follow him on Twitter at twitter.com/ArtsWriter

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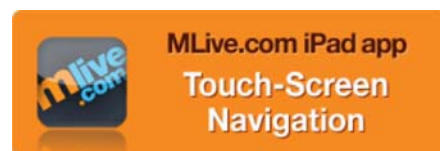
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