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**EXPERIENCE GRAND RAPIDS INVITES LOCAL ARTISTS TO SUBMIT ENTRIES FOR
ART OUTDOOR BILLBOARD CAMPAIGN**

The Urban Institute of Contemporary Art (UICA) will be a major partner in the campaign this year

Grand Rapids, Mich.—Experience Grand Rapids (EXGR), the area's official destination marketing organization, is inviting local artists to enter a Grand Rapids' inspired design for its annual Art Outdoor billboard campaign. The selected designs will be converted into billboards that will display throughout Michigan from August to September in order to help promote Grand Rapids as a travel destination.

"The Art Outdoor campaign is entering its second year as we continue to feature local talented artists," said Janet Korn, CTA, Senior Vice President, Experience Grand Rapids. "This year we are also partnering with a local arts organization, UICA, to help improve the submission process for the artists."

Five entries will be selected for display on billboards throughout Michigan from August through September. It is free to enter and submissions can be sent through www.ExperienceGR.com/ArtOutdoor. Entry qualifications include:

- Applicants must be over the age of 18 with ties to Grand Rapids.
- Entries must be original art that showcases the artists' own interpretation of Grand Rapids.
- Only finished works will be accepted.
- The deadline for entries is April 13th.

On May 6th, a selection committee comprised of art devotees and gallery owners in Grand Rapids will announce the five selected designs. The entries will be judged based on originality, variety of scenes entered, use of contrasting colors, simplicity and the overall views of Grand Rapids.

"Art enthusiasts continue to visit Grand Rapids because the community is strongly invested in arts and culture," said Korn. "The city is home to a variety of art focused events and cultural attractions such as ArtPrize, Frederik Meijer Gardens, UICA and the Grand Rapids Art Museum. Showcasing local artists is another interesting way to show that the community has a passion for art and their city."

The selected artists will not only see their art along highways in Michigan from August 1st- September 25th, but they will also receive a \$500 award.

"Following last year's Art Outdoor Project, I heard positive feedback from a couple of the selected artists," said Korn. "One felt that participating in the Project led to other great experiences for her and her work and the other felt further encouragement to keep pushing himself forward and believing in himself as an artist. Supporting local artists and their dreams is part of our mission with Art Outdoor."

Rules for application, competition guidelines, and award information is available at www.ExperienceGR.com/ArtOutdoor.

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