

ArtPrize winner Ran Ortner will speak at Grand Rapids Art Museum

GRAND RAPIDS – Ran Ortner, first prize winner of the 2009 ArtPrize competition, will return to Grand Rapids in January to speak at the [Grand Rapids Art Museum](#).

Ran Ortner

Ortner will be guest speaker on Jan. 15 for the museum's "Friday Nights at GRAM" program.

Ortner's painting "Open Water no. 24," awarded the \$250,000 top prize on Oct. 8, was moved days later to the Grand Rapids Museum, where it will remain on display through Jan. 31.

Museum director Celeste Adams said it'll be a special treat to welcome Ortner as the museum begins the first month of its 100th anniversary celebration in 2010.

"It's fitting that the winner of ArtPrize, the fall event that created a phenomenal level of conversation in the region about art, should begin this year of art programming and activities that continues an art dialogue in the museum's new century," she said. "Ran's monumental painting is currently on view in the DeVos Van Andel East Atrium Court, where it inspires others to join in the conversation."

Ortner will speak at 7 p.m. in the museum's Cook Auditorium and then move to the galleries for a question-and-answer session in front of painting of a water scene. A reception will follow.

During the ArtPrize exhibition, which opened Sept. 23, Ortner's 6-foot tall, 19-foot wide painting was on display in the Old Federal Building, which had two of ArtPrize's top three winners and three of the Top 10 pieces in the competition, in which viewers voted for their favorite works of art using social media. Some 80,177 people came through the doors of that building, the former home of the Grand Rapids Art Museum, during the 18-day exhibition from Sept. 23 through Oct. 10.



**By Jeffery Kaczmarczyk, Grand Rapids Press
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