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the arts

'Advanced Young Artists: Teen Artist + Mentor Exhibition'

Advanced Young Artists mentorship program elevates and exposes Austin's budding artists

REVIEWED BY CAITLIN GREENWOOD, FRI., AUG. 8, 2014

Pump Project, 702 Shady
www.pumpproject.org
Through Aug. 9

For a free spirit, there may be no better environment in which to come of age than Austin, Texas. The city offers innumerable opportunities to experience world-class art and an overall cultural tone that encourages audiences to experience art without the sheen of pessimism or deprecation instead of inspiration. However, arts-based scholastic programs are no stranger to budget cuts, and outlets for community teens to nurture their creativity are often difficult to come by, if not unavailable entirely. In an effort to further the opportunities for artistically inclined teens, the Contemporary Austin's Advanced Young Artist program paired 10 high school students with locally based adult mentors (in this case, such notable artists as Michael Anthony García, Dave Culpepper, and Lauren Klotzman) to inspire, influence, and ultimately collaborate for the exhibition "Teen Artist + Mentor."



COURTESY OF THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN

Bouncing through an array of mediums, "Teen Artist + Mentor" is an overwhelming display of work. The pieces were conceived and built over a seven-month period, during which the young artists met weekly with their mentors. The exhibition is impressive in regards to breadth. Imagined mythological topographic installations sit alongside sculptural simple machines that speak to civilization's relationship with nature. Street art and political performance pieces sit side-by-side. "Teen Artist + Mentor" doesn't shy away from exploring the seminal questions that permeate adolescence, but, through the influence of the professional artist mentors, it brings those inquiries about life and growing up into a mature form. This is an enlightening look into the influences that drive today's teens while also showcasing work from some local favorites.

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