

GUAVA: A Fusion of Creativity, Networking, and Expression

By Carter Hoskins

Published on October 8, 2023



On the evening of October 7, 2023, Tampa's historic 1920 Ybor Venue was host to GUAVA, an art show experience that explored the boundaries of a typical art exhibition. This curated night was a vibrant host of culture, live performances, immersive art, and dance. Bringing together emerging and established artists, GUAVA wasn't just a show; it was a vibrant networking event that emphasized the importance of live experiences in the art space.

An Evening of Artistic Resonance

As the sun set and the venue lit up with a variety of neon colors, GUAVA opened its doors to all of its artistic audience. The 1920 Ybor Venue provided the perfect backdrop for this eclectic showcase of creativity. Attendees were greeted with a mesmerizing display of art installations, each piece containing its own unique language and reflecting the artist's vision and passion.

From bold strokes to intricate details, and from abstract masterpieces to immersive sculptures, the artwork on display was a testament to the diverse artistic talent that Tampa has to offer. The walls of the venue transformed into a canvas of emotions, inviting the attendees to immerse themselves in the variety of artistic colors and concepts. There were art installations of staircases being transformed into hollow trees where attendees could sit inside and look at all the mesmerizing surrounding art. A rooftop turned into a Casino with games and prizes for the artists. A free tattoo pop up offering free tattoos to those craving an impulsive decision.

Bridging Generations: Networking for Artists

One of GUAVA's central objectives was to create a platform for both emerging and established artists to converge, connect, and collaborate. This event was a great opportunity for emerging talents to shake hands with established artists, to share ideas, learn from experiences, and form valuable connections.

Live events like GUAVA provide a tangible space for artists to interact, an experience that is irreplaceable in the digital age. The value of face-to-face connections cannot be overstated; they lay the foundation for future collaborations, foster mentorship, and provide a sense of community within the local art scene.

A Conversation with an Attendee: The Impact of Live Art

To delve deeper into the significance of events like GUAVA, we spoke with University of Tampa graduate Giana Ritanaro, a young aspiring artist and one of the enthusiastic attendees at the event. Giana shared her thoughts on the importance of such live art experiences.

We asked Gianna, how did attending GUAVA impact your perspective on the art world and the role of live events?

"GUAVA was an eye-opener for me. Being a recent graduate and aspiring artist, being able to witness the art, meet the artists, and feel the energy of the event was just amazing. The art world is truly about connections and conversations. Meeting established artists in a setting like this is ideal as it's not everyday you run into such talented and experienced artists" Gianna said.

"And which immersive event was your personal favorite and why?"

Gianna stated " There were so many cool installations but I would have to say my personal favorite would be the live painter. The presence of a live painter added a dynamic dimension to the entire experience. It was like witnessing art come to life, capturing the essence of the event in real-time on canvas. These sort of live exhibits help bring to life art and can bring out a level of interactive excitement back into the canvas."

The Variety of Creatives: Live Performances and Interactive Art

GUAVA wasn't limited to art pieces on the walls. The event contained a vast variety of art with live performances of all kinds. With over 40 artists with art submissions, over 20 musical performances and over 10 pop up shops based in the arts, there was something for everyone in the world of creativity and expression.

These kinds of interactive art installations allowed the audience to become part of the artwork, creating a greater relationship between creator and observer.

Fostering Connections and Collaboration:

In-person art events serve as a melting pot of creative minds. These occasions provide networking opportunities, allowing budding artists to connect with seasoned professionals, exchange ideas, seek mentorship and bond over shared experiences as artists. This amazing opportunity nurtures an environment of collaboration and growth.

For students, witnessing a diverse range of artistic styles and techniques ignites inspiration and provides great fuel for future projects or ideas for new endeavors.

For emerging artists, showcasing work at in-person events like GUAVA is a significant confidence booster. Publicly displaying art and receiving live feedback build confidence, aiding in the development of a firm artistic voice. In-person events capture the essence of the artist's intent, portraying not just the art but the passion and dedication that brought it to life. This firsthand experience infuses a deeper connection between the artist and the audience, resonating with aspiring students and new artists, further fueling their artistic pursuits.

In-person art events like GUAVA are so beneficial for emerging artists and students aspiring to step into the art world. They are a catalyst for creativity, offering a real-world perspective that nurtures talent, fosters relationships, and propels the art community into a future brimming with possibilities.

In Conclusion: The Value of Live Art Events

GUAVA culminated with an invitation to the attendees — The event wasn't just a one-time spectacle; it was a call to action, urging everyone to embrace their creativity and contribute to everyone's own personal relationship to their art and creative expression.

As attendees left the venue, they carried with them a new appreciation for live art experiences and the invaluable connections made. GUAVA was a memorable night, a night that showcased the transformative power of art and the significance of coming together to celebrate it.

GUAVA demonstrated that live art events are not just about showcasing finished pieces; they are about the journey, the connections, and the magic that happens when art is experienced in the moment. These events breathe necessary life into the art community.

For students and emerging artists, events like GUAVA provide a bridge into the professional art world. They offer a chance to showcase talent, gain exposure, and form connections that can lead the way for future opportunities.