



**beauty
of winter**



a lasting legacy

MICHIGAN LEGACY ART PARK IS AN OUTDOOR GATEWAY
TO STATE'S NATURAL, CULTURAL ELEGANCE

BY SARAH WOLF

There are plenty of ways to enjoy northern Michigan's pristine winter beauty, but few are as culturally gratifying as a visit to Michigan Legacy Art Park. Now approaching its 25th anniversary, the 30-acre forest preserve in Benzie County and dream of the late-artist David Barr offers a way for people to experience Michigan state history more vibrantly. It is home to a permanent collection of nearly 50 thought-provoking works of art, as well as plenty of fun events and educational opportunities, from when the first flakes of snow fall through the end of the winter season. Here are a few suggestions:

DECEMBER

Winter Sounds

December 15, 5pm

Bundle up and hike a quarter-mile of winter wonderland to the park's outdoor amphitheater for Winter Sounds, a half-hour holiday celebration concert by the Benzie Central High School chamber choir. Get cozy with family and friends—dogs, too, as long as they're on a leash—as you sip on steamy hot cocoa and listen to their angelic voices loft into snowy skies. A bonfire will be burning, but make sure to dress for the weather and bring warm blankets and camp chairs for seating. The concert is free, but there is a \$10 suggested donation, with proceeds benefiting the park and the high school's choral programs.

JANUARY

Snowshoeing

"The sculptures in the Art Park take on an entirely new shape and life during the winter," says Joe Beyer, executive director for the park. "Snowshoeing is a great way to explore and get your heart pumping in the process." He suggests making the trek to Gary Kulak's Barn Chair, an homage to Michigan's long history of furniture-making and design, which is located near the far end of the trail. "It's totally worth the effort for a breathtaking view of the Betsie River Valley." Visitors can also join a guided snowshoe hike, adding "a depth to the experience," Beyer adds.

FEBRUARY

Celebrate Black History Month

Take a moment to meditate in front of park sculptures *Fallen Comrade* and *Diversity*. Inspired by the fighter planes flown by the Tuskegee Airmen—a group of African-American military pilots who fought in World War II—David Greenwood's *Fallen Comrade* gives visitors "the chance to consider the courage required for African-American men to fight for a nation that didn't accept them at the time," Beyer says. David Barr's sculpture *Diversity* is characterized by four columns, each etched with inspirational truths such as "Life is a tapestry of relationships" and "Diversity enables survival." Barr's aim was to leave viewers with a heightened sense of the importance of community and interconnectedness.

MARCH

Hiking

As more sculptures and trail begin to reveal themselves in late-March into April, grab your four-legged best friend and go for a hike to take advantage of the sunshine. A great destination? David Barr's *Stockade Labyrinth*, a looming structure that reflects on humanity's impact on nature. Etched on its walls you'll find wording in French—originally spoken in places such as Marquette and LaSalle—as well as imagery that evokes the state's history of trapping, mining and farming.

Michigan Legacy Art Park is complimentary to lodging guests with a day guest admission fee of \$5 for adults and free to all others 17 and younger. For more information, including event and snowshoe tour dates, be sure to visit michlegacyartpark.org and follow them on Facebook and Instagram. 📍

