

Architecture students win Detroit competition

Neil Griffin
TECHNEWS WRITER

With Detroit in the process of redefining itself and incentivizing people to move back into the urban core of the city, Bedrock Development reached out to a few schools in the Midwest area to come up with innovative strategies for development. The relationships between the community, municipalities, companies, and startups are dynamic and evolving to creating a greater Detroit. The winning project, “The Hive” is “a new mixed-use typology built to meet the needs of today and for generations to come.” Collaborators Zhehang Li, Tyler Baldwin, and Neil Griffin took home first place for Illinois Tech in the competition with other IIT teams placing second and receiving honorable mentions. They realized, after visiting Detroit, that the city was made of “disconnected, vast open spaces that separated the unique things happening” I recalled. Their project was founded on the Miesian philosophy of flexibility over time, and that by “providing a



Image courtesy of Neil Griffin

framework that is a combination of concrete and wood, our strategy can be modified and added onto over time in a sustainable, practical

way” Tyler Baldwin explained. Two of the winning projects had a DIY theme, with all of the projects incorporating smaller living

spaces with a live-work component. The Brush Park Competition Jury said the proposals were “brave and brilliant” and “risky—helps change the conversation”, while including that “participants thought big and bold when it came to the new opportunities for residential and mixed use architecture in Detroit.”

Even though the final proposals won’t be built, the ideas presented will inform the other five local architecture firms that are working on the larger site of possible directions to pursue. With \$70 million being invested into this neighborhood, there will be some interesting projects in the near future to exemplify Detroit being named the City of Design. Back on campus, eight of the students from this Detroit Studio will be working with administration, community organizations, and the Illinois Tech community to redesign the campus master plan. Be on the lookout for surveys and events to get student feedback towards what the future of Illinois Tech could be. If you would like to see all the competition submissions in full, please visit <http://www.brushparkdetroit.com/student-competition/>.

WIIT brings nerdcore to The Bog

Reno Waswil
TECHNEWS WRITER

To the untrained ear, the genre popularly referred to as nerdcore may sound indistinguishable from typical hip-hop music. There is oftentimes not very much tonally different between the two. Sometimes nerdcore is tracked with characteristically 8-bit and chiptune music, or using samples or sounds reminiscent of nerd culture, but more frequently the sources for the musicality of hip-hop are the same as the vast majority of non-nerdcore hip-hop artists. The definitional distinction can be found in the lyrics and often the lifestyles of the performers, which is that of a nerdy quality.

Though there are no hard and fast rules about what themes are focused on in the genre as the characteristics defining nerd culture are often up for debate, nerdcore rappers’ lyrics tend to focus heavily on topics of video games, technology, science, science fiction, fantasy, and being awkward or uncool. Many rappers throughout the history of hip-hop have incorporated these ideas, MF Doom being a notable example, but only nerdcore

rappers such as MC Frontalot, YTCracker, and the ones that will be discussed further in this article define themselves by it.

Due to the uniqueness of the genre, as well as the cult following that it held at Illinois Tech and the interest it would incur at what is considered an exceptionally nerdy school, Illinois Tech’s student run radio station, WIIT 88.9 FM decided to bring a couple of nerdcore artists to The Bog the night of January 23, in an event called Nerdcore @ The Bog.

The acts brought in were South Bend, Indiana-based duo Soup or Villianz, consisting of Remi-son and Viet Vu, and Dallas, Texas-based 1-UP Creative Mind Frame who, despite being a solo performer, brought with him a dedicated posse that played, a great deal into his show.

The event that evening was preceded by the first installment of Union Board’s weekly dance performance and class “All The Riite Moves,” that week featuring an epic and belly dancing performance given by three dancers. In the course of the show, the dancers invited some of the audience members up to the stage, one of them being none other than Remison, who—being a showman himself—

was a natural.

Another novelty of the night was the group of people who arrived about a half an hour or so before the actual beginning of the show, 20 to 30 minutes after 9 p.m., with their own set of sound and recording equipment for, what we later found out, was for a sort of reality show or documentary about Soup or Villianz. The duo also left the venue several times throughout the night when they were not on stage, seemingly to shoot more and with the crew, including what seemed to be a false exit.

Nerdcore @ The Bog saw a large crowd turnout and some great performances, and was deemed by WIIT and those in attendance as success and a fun night all-around. After some trouble finding the first act when it was time for them to go up, Soup or Villianz went up first with a wild and fantastic show. Some memorable songs of their set included “Why You Akin’ So Cray Cray” and “Keyz,” the later of which, may it be noted, became an instant favorite due to its repeated use of the phrase, “Where my keys at?” and the line “I promise when I get home I’ll give you orgasm.” Although there was a blatant and

unattractive semicircle at the front of the stage towards the beginning of the show, the less timid of the bunch succeeded in bringing the crowd closer as the night grew longer.

The crowd, having dispersed after the first act had finished, was lighter for 1-UP’s show, but those who stuck in found an equality great, and evidently much nerdier show than the prior. Sadly, 1-UP’s relationship with the projector put him at a disadvantage because the videos and pictures were so tied into his set. Still, 1-UP was able to get the crowd on their feet and dancing with songs like “Corny Pickup Lines” and “8-Bit Hero.”

Let Nerdcore @ The Bog be the first of demonstration of 2016 of WIIT’s continual goal to host events in and out of The Bog to establish IIT as a hub of great, novel, and interesting music and art based shows, as well as of the station’s commitment to representing all genres and forms of expression. For those interested in hearing more nerdcore, WIIT’s weekly show “Nerdy Nonsense: Remixed,” broadcast every Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., gives you a weekly dose of both nerdcore and chiptune music, listen to it on radio.iit.edu.



Photos by Soren Spicknall