

A Neighborhood Gallery for the World

"And as with scientists, artists' work is theory in practice, marked by repetition, experiment, the exploration and testing of materials and technology, and the imaginative as well as the actual configuration of time and space."

- Marjorie Garber
Chair of the Department of Visual and
Environmental Studies at Harvard University

October 15, 2008

Dear Friend of Manifest,

Our organization was founded in 2004 with just \$3,000. For season 5 which began in September, Manifest has a board-approved operating budget of just over \$100,000, attesting to our success over the past 4 years. Our balanced programming of studio courses and gallery exhibits is proving to fit perfectly into a niche we suspected needed filling. The concept of a museum-quality and experience-centered *small*/venue represents a paradigm shift regarding the way visual arts are experienced by the public. Manifest is on the leading edge of applying this concept and lighting the way for others. Many potential startup non-profits are using Manifest as an inspirational model around the country for their own micro-arts endeavors.

Certainly our budget growth has been impressive. It indicates a healthy fiscal oversight by our staff and board of directors and it reveals the degree to which artists from around the world, and studio participants from the Cincinnati region, believe in and benefit from what we are doing. It is these folks, those who are often financially challenged, who contribute the most to Manifest's operations, and we are grateful for their continued support and collaboration.

Even with its growth, Manifest remains quite lean. We currently have only one part-time paid staff member. The executive director role (mine) remains primarily volunteer. It was just this past year that our board resolved to provide some compensation for my curatorial duties (exhibition programming) on a contractual basis, completely independent from organizational oversight. We pay our studio instructors on a contractual basis as well, only when a course meets acceptable enrollment.

In the past three years Manifest has received a total of \$11,141 of support from about 150 new and renewing members. These funds have gone a very long way towards getting us to where we are. And in order to continue our growth to a position of stability in the community we will rely on more membership support. Not only does this provide a financial boost to our momentum, but it also symbolizes the public approval of Manifest, and its desire for us to stay the course.

Manifest's mission is to enhance the role of art and design in society by cultivating and focusing the transformative power of creativity in the visual arts. I hope you will agree that our mission and track record more than merit strong public support. In a world where arts and culture (especially visual arts) are among the first budget items to be cut, we hold the line, believing that even in stressful financial times, our society cannot remain whole without creativity.

To make these plans a reality we need your continued support. Manifest exists only through the help of generous donations, conscientious volunteers, community assistance, and public grants—all support we cannot survive without. Please let us know you want Manifest to continue offering the kind of exhibits, programs, and services seen in our first four years by becoming a member. Your support will help make our fifth season even more successful than the last.

Enclosed you will find information on how to contribute as well as options for membership. Any amount of donation will be greatly appreciated and put to good use. Please help us reach or exceed our goal of 100 supporting members for season 5.

Thank you for supporting Manifest Creative Research Gallery and Drawing Center. We look forward to seeing you at the gallery!

Sincerely,



Jason Franz, Executive Director