

*A Neighborhood Gallery for the World*

*"One problem with saying there's no such thing as good taste is that it also means there's no such thing as good art. If there were good art, then people who liked it would have better taste than people who didn't. So if you discard taste, you also have to discard the idea of art being good, and artists being good at making it... Yet that doesn't seem quite right, does it?"*

- from essay entitled "How Art Can Be Good" (December 2006) by Paul Graham, essayist, programmer, and programming language designer with a PhD in Computer Science from Harvard, and former student of painting at RISD and the Accademia di Belle Arti in Florence.

September 25, 2009

Dear Friend of Manifest,

A few months ago Manifest's board of directors revised the organization's mission statement. The new mission reads as follows:

*Manifest stands for the quality presentation, experience, and documentation of the visual arts, engaging students, professionals, and the public from around the world through accessible world-class exhibits, studio programs, and publications.*

A good organization takes stock of its mission, the core motivator for all its endeavors, every few years. So I am proud to share this refined statement with you, and to explain it briefly. The majority of the mission is clearly what we do, how we do it, and for whom. However, the *key* to the statement is the notion that *Manifest takes a stand for quality*. We realize, looking back, that this was the first principle that catalyzed the formation of the organization (gallery and studio) in 2004 – our notion that something needed to stand for quality in the visual arts, in as many ways as possible, and to serve artists and the public by holding visual arts in trust at the street level, through an authentic, uncomplicated, and open series of processes (gallery exhibits, books, and studio courses), without getting involved in the pitfalls faced by larger organizations, curatorial egotism, or board-heavy compromises.

In just over five years Manifest has become a nationally (and internationally) recognized bastion of quality in the visual arts. We often hear from folks around the country how they've heard about Manifest from friends, colleagues, and strangers, and that word of our quality is alive and well in far places, driving creative interest towards our small spot here in Cincinnati.

The fact is, even during the downturn in the economy responses to Manifest's calls for entries continue to increase over previous years. The response rate has increased to such a critical mass that it caused us to make the decision to expand the gallery by 40% by adding the new *Parallel Space*, our third dedicated gallery. This will allow us to accept more work by more artists.

In the past four years Manifest has received a total of \$22,000 of support from 260 new and renewing members. In order to continue solidifying Manifest's place in the community we will rely on more membership support. Not only does this provide a financial boost, it also symbolizes the public approval of Manifest. In 2009 the City Council of Cincinnati voted to eliminate completely all small arts organization competitive grant funding. Manifest had been a year after year recipient of the award for operating support. For the coming season, and beyond, we now must continue on course without the \$7500 support from the City (our rent!). So we must redouble our outreach to you and others to regain this much needed public support to keep our doors open, and lights on.

I hope you will agree that our mission and track record merit your support. In a world where arts and culture (especially visual arts) are among the first budget items to be cut, we still 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. Please let us know you want Manifest to continue offering the kind of exhibits, programs, and services seen in our first five seasons by becoming a member. 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.

We look forward to seeing you at the gallery!

Sincerely,



Jason Franz, Executive Director

# During the past year, Manifest

- hired its **second paid staff member**
- **doubled yet again the number of artworks submitted** for consideration to be exhibited at Manifest Gallery
- **attracted entries from artists in nearly all 50 states** and over 25 different countries in one year
- achieved a total of **428 different artists exhibited and 70 academic institutions represented** through 5 seasons of gallery exhibits
- **attracted 3500 people** to gallery exhibits, studio courses and events in Walnut Hills and East Walnut Hills
- **increased public attendance at the gallery by 36%**
- **increased studio participation by 34%**
- **produced 9 Manifest volumes** and the fourth edition of the *International Drawing Annual* publication featuring 100 works by 59 artists from 19 states and 8 countries including Australia, Canada, England, France, Italy, Sweden, Switzerland, and the U.S.
- **expanded studio offerings** at the Drawing Center Studio, offering a new instructed course in Advanced Life Drawing, as well as Drawing Marathon, Free High School sessions, and One-time Workshops
- **expanded gallery exhibit programming** to include a year-round schedule, adding NUDE to our roster of annual exhibits
- remained **free and open-to-the-public with regular hours five days a week**

## PLANNED FOR SEASON 6

### Planned Exhibits

- **Monochrome**
- **(in)animate: Paintings by Kirstine Reiner**
- **Interior: Photographs by Andrea Hoelscher**
- **Shaped: Outside the Rectangle**
- **Pause: Contemporary Still Life**
- **Paintings by Jennifer Meanley**
- **Local Color In Our Backyard (Regional Artists)**
- **BURB: Zones of Living**
- **Sculpture by Stephen Cartwright**
- **Painting Now**
- **Selections from the 5<sup>th</sup> International Drawing Annual**
- **6<sup>th</sup> Annual Rites of Passage**
- **TEMPO: Works About Time**
- **GuideBook: Contemporary Collage and Assemblage**
- **6<sup>th</sup> Annual Magnitude 7**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual NUDE**
- **Chris Sickels of Red Nose Studio**
- **4<sup>th</sup> Annual Master Pieces**

### New Programs-In-Planning and Other Offerings

- **Expanded exhibit facilities (by 40%), introduction of *Parallel Space***
- **Renovated public reception space**
- **Increase of free public exhibits by 40%, more art by more artists**
- **New Studio Resident program**
- **Up to Six Instructed Drawing Courses per term** (24 across the year)
- **Up to three Open Figure Sessions per term** (12 across the year)
- **Special student rates** for Open Sessions and Courses
- **Walk-in Option** (pay per visit) for Open Sessions
- **Special Free Nights** of figure drawing for high school students and teachers
- The ***International Drawing Annual 5*** publication