

## Manifest is an art gallery -- and much more

By Jerry Stein  
Post staff reporter

The little gallery just south of DeSales Corner in East Walnut Hills has perhaps the longest name among local exhibition spaces. But its title - Manifest Creative Research Gallery and Drawing Center - is appropriate in describing its multiplicity of arts projects.

Manifest, 2727 Woodburn Ave., is a gallery. It is a drawing center and it is engaged in research and publishing art.

Manifest, through its ambitious endeavors, is fast becoming one of the more progressive galleries in town.

"Our openings have been really well-attended," said Jason Franz, one of three founders. "Our first opening was wall to wall. We probably had between 500 to 600 people coming and going."

Franz, who teaches painting and drawing but currently is on academic leave from Xavier University, added that, as far as day-to-day traffic is concerned, "We haven't had great attendance. I think that is par for the course for galleries."

Manifest Center, which has renovated space in what was a barbershop and later an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting hall, offers exhibition space for professional local, national and international artists. Such painters as the pop artist Kevin T. Kelly and painter Boris Zakic will have shows at Manifest in the 2005-06 season.

But just as important, Manifest has set aside a certain amount of exhibition slots for students to show their work, too. The students will be drawn from Greater Cincinnati art schools and colleges.

The center also is now offering a weekly figure-drawing studio for 10 weeks. It allows any artist to come in and draw a nude model for two hours, for a small fee.

A show will come out of these drawing classes, too.

Franz said he and co-founders Brigid O'Kane, associate professor of design at the University of Cincinnati, and Elizabeth Kauffman, who is graduating from XU this year, were attracted to East Walnut Hills as a potential gallery site.

Manifest is part of the development of the DeSales district. It's a cooperative venture between the neighborhoods of Walnut Hills and East Walnut Hills that will bring business, real estate and cultural development to the area.

From a personal aspect, Franz and O'Kane, who are married to each other, also live in the neighborhood.

"A lot of times, we would drive down the strip and we would think, 'We need something here.'"

"We wanted to do something for the neighborhood. We believe that people need to see more art," Franz said. "If they see more art in their lives, some of them will begin to appreciate it."

### MANIFEST SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Robert Spahr (digital art) and Kevin T. Kelly (drawings), Sept. 27-Oct. 29, 2005: Spahr, has a degree in sculpture from the Art Academy of Cincinnati. His current visual artwork involves collecting images from the Internet and from them creating a composite new image he calls "Crufts." Kelly, also a graduate of the Art Academy, endows his colorful, neo-pop art paintings with contemporary subject matter. Curated by Jason Franz.

"Automotive Design, Renderings, Scale Models, Sketches and Process," Nov. 11-Dec. 9, 2005: This show illustrates how the ubiquitous car becomes a fashion statement. Attention also will focus on the importance of drawing in the designing of new car models. Curated by Brigid O'Kane.

Calls for entries from artists, Dec. 16, 2005-Jan. 13, 2006. Theme to be announced. Curated by Elizabeth Kauffman.

"Paintings by Boris Zakic and Drawings by Sol Kajok," Jan. 27-Feb. 24, 2006: Working in a large format, Zakic's paintings reflect masterly realism. Subjects include the human figure and commentary on photography and painting's relationship to life. Kajok's drawings of the human figure recall the work from great past masters such as Michelangelo and Da Vinci. Yet, the swirling configurations and dream-like moods bring the art into the realm of contemporary art. Curated by Jason Franz.