

SELECT A CITY ▾

Arts Front: Artist's work to be exhibited at
Auschwitz >LIMITED TIME OFFER
Subscribe Now

YOUR ACCOUNT

INDUSTRIES & TOPICS



NEWS

LISTS & AWARDS

PEOPLE & COMPANIES

EVENTS

MORE...



From the Cincinnati Business Courier:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/cincinnati/news/2018/05/17/gallerys-mission-includes-art-as-economic.html>

Arts Front

Gallery's mission includes art as economic accelerant

May 17, 2018, 12:13pm EDT Updated: May 17, 2018, 1:09pm EDT

Anyone looking for evidence of how the arts can help jump-start the economy of a business district could find a good case study in Manifest Gallery and East Walnut Hills.

Established in the mid-1800s, the neighborhood is considered Cincinnati's first suburb. Its DeSales Corner business district is walkable and quaint, anchored on the northern end of Woodburn Avenue and Madison Road by St. Francis De Sales Catholic Church and the seven-story San Marco Apartment Building.

But by the early 2000s, the area was in economic decline, with many of its historical storefronts sitting vacant. At that same time, a group of local students, artists and professors were forming a nonprofit called Manifest, whose mission in part was to use the visual arts as a vehicle for community revitalization. In 2004, Manifest secured an affordable storefront at 2727 Woodburn Ave.

Co-founder and executive director Jason Franz said that from its inception, Manifest has been open until 7 p.m. Tuesday through Friday because the founders "always felt the gallery needed to have hours that would make the exhibits accessible to real-life working people."

Fast forward 13 years after Manifest presented its first exhibition to the public, and you'll see that DeSales Corner is a vibrant place with diverse businesses and new development in the works. Several



CORRIE SCHAFFELD

"Macrocosm" is an installation by Dana Lynn Harper occupying two rooms in Manifest Gallery.

business owners who've recently located in the neighborhood say they were attracted by the vitality that the gallery has helped to foster.

"The vibe of the neighborhood was a major factor, and a huge part of the vibe was Manifest," said Louis Ginocchio, general manager of the restaurant O Pie O, which opened in 2015 at 1527 Madison Road, two blocks from Manifest.

Diane Christian-Budd, owner of Indigenous, a shop dedicated to local fine craft, relocated her shop last summer to 1609 Madison Road after more than a decade in neighboring O'Bryonville.

"We were definitely drawn to the East Walnut Hills business district because of the eclectic mix of current businesses, including the well-established and highly regarded Manifest Gallery," Christian-Budd said.

A signature, recurring event for the East Walnut Hills Business District is Walk on Woodburn, which coincides with Manifest Gallery openings. The organization's website for the event lists 21 participating businesses that stay open late or offer discounts. Partner activities – such as free concerts by teen members of the nearby Music Resource Center – make the event truly a community effort.

As Franz explained, Walk on Woodburn was "established by community members and businesses for the purposes of using Manifest's considerable public attraction at its opening events to help catalyze districtwide involvement."

Business owners said the event brings customers to the neighborhood.

"Indigenous is fortunate enough to have four to six times the foot traffic on those nights as compared to a regular Friday night," said Christian-Budd. The shop hosts trunk shows or craft demonstrations, bolstering the amount of activity and the mix of visitors.

Likewise, Ginocchio said O Pie O sees "about 30 percent more visitors and 20 percent higher revenue during Walk on Woodburn."

The synergy of the Walk on Woodburn event works both ways, Franz said. This past January the gallery's attendance was 112 percent greater than the same time year, which he attributes in part to "coordination and collegiality among participating businesses" during Walk on Woodburn.

Seth Maney, a local real estate agent and developer, sums it up: "A thriving street is more than an entertainment district. A thriving street has cultural capital. Manifest Gallery is a great example of a well-run and well-respected art space that contributes to the cultural and economic vitality of its neighborhood."

IF YOU GO

Manifest Gallery

When: Noon-7 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, noon-5 p.m. Saturday.

Where: 2727 Woodburn Ave., East Walnut Hills

Coming up: The next Walk on Woodburn takes place 6-9 p.m. June 1.

Information: www.manifestgallery.org 513-861-3638