MANIFEST
CREATIVE RESEARCH GALLERY
AND DRAWING CENTER

volume 48

HEAD FIRST

FIRST CONTEXTS
Where Art Comes From

MANIFEST is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
THANK YOU!

Manifest’s 2010-2011 season is supported by operating support funding from:

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HEAD FIRST
September 24 - October 22, 2010

Ivan Albreht
Nikki Arnell
Thomas Butler
Valerie Escobedo
Carl Gombert
Elana Hagler
Anna Kipervaser
Steven Labadessa
Paul Loehle
Douglas Malone
Gwen Manfrin
Francoise McAree
Zina Mussmann
Eric Penington
Elena Peteva
Melissa Wilkinson
We consciously and unconsciously categorize identity based on the human head. It is, for most people, their social thumbprint, the ‘I’ in first person statements. Technology exacerbates people’s retreat into the upper limb of their body, encouraging portraiture on a mass scale in the form of social networks such as Facebook, facial recognition tools which help sort photos of friends and family based on images of their face, and video conference calling. Some say even the soul has migrated from the central chest cavity all the way up to the head, as if altitude were an aspect of divinity. While the body is still not expendable (yet), the center of humanity has nevertheless coalesced into the mind, behind the face. When we think of each other, we usually start with the head first.

To launch Manifest’s seventh season we offered this call to artists for works that address the human head in some way. While portraiture was certainly welcome, this was not intended to be a project exclusively about that genre, nor just the front of the head. All manner of interpretations, explorations, and machinations involving the human head were invited and considered, as you will see here.

For this exhibit 262 artists from 35 states and 21 countries submitted 523 works for consideration. Twenty-four works by the following 16 artists from twelve states were selected for presentation in the gallery and catalog.

I would wish my portraits to be of the people, not like them. Not having a look of the sitter, being them.

– Lucian Freud
Collapsed casts in a grid formation
porcelain, variable dimensions, 2009
Ivan Albreht
Palmetto Bay, Florida

White Cube
porcelain, 11” x 11” x 11”, 2008
Nikki Arnell
Jonesboro, Arkansas

**iDENTITY**

paper & wood, 22” x 34” x .75”, 2006
Thomas Butler
Long Beach, California

Melissa
oil on panel, 12” x 9”, 2009
Valerie Escobedo  
Findlay, Ohio

**Dave**  
oil on canvas, 28” x 23” x 2”, 2009
Carl Gombert
Maryville, Tennessee

Mom During Chemotherapy
oil on canvas, 48” x 60”, 2010
Carl Gombert
Maryville, Tennessee

*The Real Me*
pastel & acrylic, 28” x 22”, 2005-2007
Tilt
oil on board, 15” x 14”, 2006
Elana Hagler
Englewood, Colorado

Fayum Self
oil on linen, 12” x 9”, 2006
oscineascent (7)

oil on shaped panel, 38" x 36", 2010
Anna Kipervaser
Chicago, Illinois

oscineascent (8)
ioil on shaped panel, 45" x 33", 2010
Steven Labadessa
Joplin, Missouri

Alanna
Oil on copper, 8.75" x 9.25", 2008
Paul Loehle  
Cincinnati, Ohio

*Kasy*  
pastel on paper, 34” x 26”, 2010
Paul Loehle  
Cincinnati, Ohio  
*Untitled*  
pastel on paper, 40" x 30", 2010
Douglas Malone
Royal Oak, Michigan

*Reclining Skeleton*
white pencil on black paper, 19" x 25", 2008
(Not) Telling Lies
Gwen Manfrin
Orinda, California
colored pencil on paper, 22” x 27”, 2009
Bleu

collage, 8.5” x 11”, 2010
Francoise McAree
Providence, Rhode Island

Waif
collage, 8.5” x 11”, 2010
Her Day Will Soon Arrive
watercolor & gouache on paper, 4” x 3.5”, 2010
Hidden Things
watercolor & gouache on paper, 4.5” x 5”, 2010

Zina Mussmann
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Zina Mussmann
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Mr. Imagination
watercolor & gouache on paper, 4.5” x 5”, 2010
Eric Penington
West Lafayette, Indiana

*Head III*
oil on panel, 30” x 23” x 3”, 2005-2007
Elena Peteva
Oak Park, Illinois

A Man In Doubt
charcoal & acrylic on paper mounted on canvas, 24” x 19”, 2008
Melissa Wilkinson
Bono, Arkansas

Self Portrait (Closed Eyes)
oil on panel, 9” x 12” x 2”, 2009
First Contexts
September 24 - October 22, 2010
Curated by Tim Parsley

Brett Eberhardt
Robert Groh
Rupert Hartley
Alma Leiva
Lorrie McClanahan
Daniel O’Connor
Emil Robinson
Jim Shirey
Sean Stewart

where art comes from
Where does a work of art begin?

Historically, the artist’s studio has served as the crucible of creation for works of art, a zone of creativity for the artist to test, fashion, produce, refine, and otherwise translate their visual ideas into concrete form. Ranging from spare rooms in the corner of a basement, to renovated barns and garages, to sun-bathed lofts with high-ceilings, the studio is the artist’s escape from the demands of life, a retreat from the fray, so that new artworks have a chance to be born. Artist Daniel Buren has called the studio “the first frame of the work,” and likened it to the filter artists put their work through before letting it loose into the world.

However, some artists have found the traditional studio, with its marginal position divorced from daily life, a disconnected and false context for creativity. Instead, they operate out-of-doors, literally, with their “studios” being fields upon which they plant their plein air easels, city streets where they walk and interact in dynamic give-and-take fashion, and site-specific spaces that serve as both context of origin and public display. As Robert Storr has noted, “The bottom line is that artists work where they can and how they can.”

Manifest invited artists and designers of any media to submit works that explore, depict, challenge and interpret this “first frame” of creativity: the context from which art is made. Whether that originating zone is a traditional studio, an open field, a social atmosphere, or a computer screen... we invited artists to show us where it all starts.

For this deliberately selective exhibit 40 artists from 16 states and 6 countries submitted 83 works for consideration. Eleven works by the following 9 artists from across the United States, Canada, and England were selected by our two-part jury/curatorial process for presentation in the gallery and catalog.
Brett Eberhardt
Macomb, Illinois

Sofia Studio
graphite on paper, 10.24" x 15", 2008
Robert Groh
Ontario, Canada

Bluepole
digital print, 8" x 10", 2010
Rupert Hartley
Surrey, England

Rainbow Network
photograph, 13.5” x 17.5”, 2010
Celda #5 (Prison Cell #5)
photography/installation, 25” x 25”, 2010

Alma Leiva
Richmond, Virginia
**Under Construction 1**
archival digital print, 16” x 11”, 2010
Lorrie McClanahan
Fort Worth, Texas

*Under Construction 3*
archival digital print, 16” x 10.5”, 2010
Lorrie McClanahan  
Fort Worth, Texas  
Under Construction 2  
archival digital print, 10.5” x 16”, 2010
Daniel O’Connor
Cincinnati, Ohio

Waste
oil on linen over panel, 24” x 31.75”, 2008
Emil Robinson
Cincinnati, Ohio

An Open Door
oil on panel, 32" x 28", 2009
Jim Shirey
Athens, Ohio

Edge of Our Marsh
photograph, 20” x 30”, 2009
Sean Stewart
Ontario, Canada

Radiographic Studio No. 1
digital print, 35” x 8”, 2010
About Manifest

Founded in 2004 by professors and students from area Universities, Manifest Creative Research Gallery and Drawing Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit arts organization headquartered in the historic urban neighborhood of East Walnut Hills in Cincinnati, Ohio. The 1000 square foot museum-quality street level gallery offers three distinct exhibition spaces, and is minutes away from downtown Cincinnati, and the numerous academic institutions of higher learning in the region. Its central location in the Woodburn Avenue district and DeSales Corner places it within an energetic, creative, and revitalizing community that includes other galleries, shops, restaurants and artists’ studios.

The gallery benefits from its location within easy walking distance of a historic neighborhood populated by residents from all walks of life. The galleries are free and open to the public five hours a day, five days a week, presenting works of all kinds by student and professional artists from around the world. The Manifest Drawing Center Studio is located in the nearby Walnut Hills Essex Studios Complex.

Manifest is supported by grants and public donations and has the goal to support student professionalism, integrate the arts into the urban residential community and raise the bar on artistic standards. The mission also includes the exploration of the relationship between art and design, as well as the ongoing support and display of drawing in all its various forms.

Mission

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.

Manifest Gallery
…a neighborhood gallery for the world.

Manifest Press
…take every exhibit home.

Manifest Drawing Center Studio
…because learning to draw is learning to see.
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