

ONE YEAR IN

Tim Parsley - Assistant Director

During the summer of 2005 I visited Manifest Creative Research Gallery for the first time. Magnitude Seven was making its debut exhibition and the walls were lined with a variety of well-crafted, visually rewarding, small works of art. Within moments of entering Manifest, I could tell this gallery was in a league of its own – not only in the artwork it was exhibiting to the public, but in the high caliber of its presentation. I remember feeling inspired to work harder on my own art so that someday, perhaps, I would have work on display in such a professional setting.

Three years later, I have just finished packing up and shipping out the fourth annual Magnitude Seven exhibit. I am now Manifest's Assistant Director and prior to assuming this post, have had the honor of exhibiting in two of the gallery's shows and one issue of the National Drawing Annual. As a working studio artist, I have found it helpful to develop a broader understanding of the role of art in a community through a place like Manifest. I believe I have the unique benefit of experiencing the entire process of art-making, from creation to presentation. For me, Manifest represents a standard-setting level of excellence, both in the Cincinnati arts community and beyond, and I am proud to be involved.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my role at Manifest has been learning about the curatorial side of running a gallery. With each new batch of submissions I have greatly enjoyed serving on our juries as well as helping decide final layout and installation choices. I feel my understanding of what constitutes an excellent show has grown and I'm looking forward to more curatorial opportunities in the future.

In the coming year my plan is to further develop our internship program by creating a more intentional educational experience. My goal is for every intern that works with Manifest to receive a solid, well-rounded gallery education. This will involve not only on-the-job training, but a closer relationship with academic institutions, with me serving as a liaison with local schools. After having spent the last year learning for myself how a quality gallery is operated, I believe my role will shift from that of an internship "manager" to more of an internship teacher.

Each season our gallery exhibits work from an ever-widening range of artists from all over the globe. I am continually impressed with the diversity of artists from a variety of locations we attract to our gallery. With this expansion, the caliber of work shown at Manifest continues to increase and our reputation gets stronger and stronger.

At the same time, our Drawing Center Studio offers the region an unparalleled atmosphere for the cultivation of high-quality instruction and drawing experience. I love the fact that we are much more than a gallery. The Manifest Drawing Center establishes our commitment to drawing as a vital artistic practice. In my own art-making I am firmly committed to the importance of drawing and so it means a lot to me to be connected to such an intentional environment also committed to that practice.

I take great pride in all that Manifest puts forth and I am looking forward to being a part of the organization's continued growth in the future. About the time I joined the team, Jason created the catchphrase for Manifest: "A Neighborhood Gallery for the World." That's a great statement and an accurate description of Manifest. I feel very fortunate to be involved with an organization that is so locally-rooted, yet has established itself strongly in the global art world.



Self Portrait by Tim Parsley

*The quality of our perceptions determines the quality of our judgment.
Our judgment determines how we interact with the world.
How we interact with the world changes the world.*

So, the quality of our perceptions changes the world.

ROBERT FRIPP

MANIFEST CYCLES

We've been busier than ever at Manifest this year. And being a young organization with a highly efficient (tight) budget, we are constantly balancing the things we do, but with the goal to never compromise on quality. With Tim's hire we've set in motion the process to become fully staffed. And midway this year Tim's pay and hours were increased, and we have the expectation that our board of directors will approve a budget that will further advance his position to one that is closer to national averages for such a role. We are also working on a plan to add another part-time support staff position (administrative assistant/book keeper) in September.

Many people still do not realize that up until this year Manifest did everything with completely volunteer efforts for three solid years. I myself continue to serve as Executive Director on a voluntary basis. Thankfully, as of this season I was hired as a contractor by the board to fulfill the role of chief curator. But until our board develops a bit more, my involvement at that level remains critical - and to avoid conflict of interest I must not be a board member AND a full-time employee. So I remain a contractor and volunteer.

These early years of such a small and truly home-grown organization as Manifest are definitely tricky. In order to make ends meet, both Tim and I have to work other jobs (we both have families). It may be of interest to know that Tim is a lead artist for the ArtWorks MuralWorks projects in the City. He has completed a number of murals, and one most recently just a few doors down from Manifest on Woodburn Avenue. So his involvement with ArtWorks, another wonderful Cincinnati creative non-profit, has helped sustain Tim, and enabled his creative work as an artist, his role as a father and husband, and his role as number-two at Manifest.

For my part, I teach. For a number of years I have taught a graphic design drawing course at the University of Cincinnati. The course was originally Robert Probst's baby, before he became Director of the School of Design and now Dean of the College. I was honored that he personally picked me to take over teaching the course that he had spent so long developing.

This year I also returned to teaching Foundation Design Drawing at UC. So during Manifest's fourth season, I was teaching three classes per quarter (a full load) at U.C., AND running Manifest (which also amounts to a full time job) primarily as volunteer.

Leading up to this year I turned down three full time and numerous part-time job offers teaching at various colleges and one high school. I'm lucky my teaching at U.C., and my small contractual compensation at Manifest allow me to do this. But really, it's thanks to Manifest for being such a promising infant, and so deserving of all our passionate commitment that life is put into a different perspective on account of it.

The point of this is to give you, our members, some perspective on our own sacrifices for and commitments to this organization. Not only do we balance Manifest issues, but perhaps more than many, we juggle multiple lives at the same time. It's not easy, but it is worth it. Luckily, our extra-Manifest pursuits are related and compatible with our roles and projects at Manifest itself. I think this provides a richness of interchange of ideas and creativity that ultimately brings clarity and inspiration to what we do at 2727 Woodburn Avenue.

- Jason Franz, Executive Director

Detail of Storm Clouds by Christina Empedocles in Master Pieces 2008 (right)



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Jason Franz

assistant director

Tim Parsley

board of directors

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Jason Franz
Tamera Lenz Muentz
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CONTACT

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gallery hours

Tuesday to Friday 2-7pm
Saturday 12-5pm