

# Garfield Gallery Drives Toward Art

By Carolyn Ristau *The Bulletin*

*Garfield*—Jason and Nina Sauer and their 7-month-old son, Rowdy, of Penn Avenue’s Most Wanted Fine Art (MWFA) took a national art car tour with their interactive conceptual art demolition derby car from Aug. 5 through 25. The family visited cities and art districts in Ohio, Missouri, Texas, Louisiana, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia.

The art car was themed “most wanted” and transformed with every stop on the tour. The couple took mug shots of people in each city they visited and wheat-pasted them directly onto the car. The images were also uploaded to social media, so that supporters could be part of the trip and follow the adventures. The trip served not only to create art but also to advertise and recruit car artists for the upcoming October Art Car event in the Penn Avenue arts district.

While in the DIY art districts and museums in each city, the Sauer family met with other gallery owners and community groups to learn how they have successfully engaged the neighborhoods around them while furthering their arts message.

Nina Sauer explained, “These visits created awareness of Penn Avenue arts and culture while encouraging a relationship between districts. The ultimate goal was to create an opportunity for gallery swaps.”

Jason Sauer kicked off these swaps earlier in the summer when MWFA took Pittsburgh artists to the Waterloo Art District in Cleveland. This exchange will be continued in October in conjunction with Unblurred:

First Fridays on Penn, as Cleveland vs. Pittsburgh comes to Garfield Artworks, 4931 Penn Ave. Nina Sauer said, “[This interaction] gives an introduction for artists into new markets while allowing an open discussion of what works and what doesn’t.”

After the trip, the MWFA team took the car to its next phase: destruction. On August 31, the car participated in an American folk art performance of Demolition Derby at the Great Stoneboro Fair in Stoneboro, Pa. Jason Sauer has participated in this event for 17 years, turning the resulting wreckage into art.

The artwork from this year’s car wreckage will be displayed at the Pittsburgh Art Car event, “Vehicular Abstraction.” The art car celebration starts the evening of Friday, Oct. 5, as part of Unblurred, and includes an exhibit at MWFA, 5015 Penn Ave. The art display will include Jason Sauer’s car-themed sculptures, as well as prints by Scott Frish, professor at West Texas A&M University, and John Lysak, professor at Edinboro University.

On Saturday, Oct. 6, “Vehicular Abstraction” changes speed and switches from art about cars to art on cars. Already-decorated cars will be part of a juried event, with the winner receiving a trophy and prizes. Celebrity judges will include Nicholas Chambers, the Milton Fine Curator of Art for the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh Councilman Bill Peduto (District 8) and George Patterson, two-time winner of the Pittsburgh Gran Prix. There will also be



ABOVE: Most Wanted Fine Art’s art car made a tour of the Midwest and South in August. Photo by Nina Sauer

children’s events, musical entertainment and more.

Visit MWFA’s website, [www.most-wantedfineart.com](http://www.most-wantedfineart.com), for more information about “Vehicular Abstraction” and the gallery’s events. ♦

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But the BGC doesn’t stop there. If you read the paper regularly, you know that, just since 2011, the BGC has also accomplished the following:

- Construction of 5 new single-family, for-sale homes in Garfield, bringing to 44 the number completed with our partner, Garfield Jubilee Association, since 2002;
- Start of construction of Garfield Glen, 45 single-family houses for rent to working-class households, beginning this summer;
- Operation of MainStreets Program for Penn Avenue that produced public artwork and beautification projects, and filled 4 vacant storefronts with new entrepreneurs;
- Hosting of planning sessions with community residents, city officials and their engineering consultants to move forward a \$5 million reconstruction of the public infra-structure along Penn Avenue, between N. Mathilda and N. Evaline Streets., beginning in 2013;
- Opening of Pittsburgh CONNECTS, a free community technology center on Penn Avenue;
- Placement of 45 teens and young adults in part-time jobs with area employers;
- Continuous interaction with law enforcement authorities through monthly meetings of the Public Safety Task Force;

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