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LOCAL NEWS

GALLERY ON WHEELS



Matthew Chase-Daniel of Axle Contemporary parks his van Friday outside of Cowgirl BBQ. The truck is a remodeled 1970s delivery van that showcases traveling exhibitions. Axle Contemporary's latest exhibit, *Jarmark*, is an interactive show involving a camera, a spotlight, a computer and a flat-screen television. PHOTOS BY JANE PHILIPS/THE NEW MEXICAN

Redefining art

Santa Fe artists host interactive, traveling exhibitions inside van

By Tom Sharpe
The New Mexican

Two local artists are displaying art around Santa Fe in a traveling van — what they describe as an art project in itself.

Matthew Chase-Daniel and Jerry Wellman began parking their Axle Contemporary van around town last fall, but laid off for the winter and began again this spring.

"I think of the gallery as ... an expanded definition of art," Wellman said. "It's an art piece. It's got it all. It's got performance and sculpture. It has messages to bring to people."

"It wasn't so much that we wanted to start a gallery and this seemed like the best way to do it," added Chase-Daniel. "It was much more that we wanted to do this as an art project in itself and it has taken a form of being a commercial gallery. But it's as much of a way of showing diverse works of art and performance and the wonder and surprise (when) people see something unexpected in the environment."

Through May 3, Axle Contemporary — a 1970 Grumman Olson with a Chevrolet engine, previously used as a Twinkie-delivery van and by an Elvis impersonator — is featuring an interactive installation show involving a video camera, a spotlight, a computer and a flat-screen television.

As a subject sits in a chair behind a curtain in the back end of the van, the program is adjusted via a laptop to cause the image to morph from a sphere to jagged mountain range — creating a sort of distorted caricature.

Jarmark ("spring festival" in Czech) is the work of Woody Vasulka and Steina (a Czech and an Iclander who, after experimenting with video art in New York City in the 1960s, moved to Santa Fe in the 1980s) and Santa Fe mathematician and physicist Rob Shaw. A distorted image of the three appears on the side of the van and on a pamphlet about the project.

There's no admission to the exhibit. If you see an image you like, it can be printed on-



Rob Shaw, an artist who helped create *Jarmark* with Woody Vasulka and Steina, demonstrates how the interactive show works Friday in the Axle Contemporary van. The exhibit runs from April 15 to May 3 in various locations around town. The van will be parked at the Santa Fe Farmers Market from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. today and from 7:30 to 10 p.m. at Cowgirl BBQ.

site for \$25. Chase Daniel and Wellman also have other works by Vasulka and Steina for sale.

Shows generally change every three to four weeks. The van usually moves to a different spot every day.

The last show featured Kathleen McCloud's *Futurology 101: Welcome to the Third Wave*. But Axle Contemporary isn't just about high-tech art. The next exhibit (May 6 to 8) is distinctly low-tech — Tesuque artist Madelin Coit, sitting in a rocking chair, reading from the 1908 English children's book, *The Wind in the Willows*.

Neither of those shows had much commercial potential. But Chase-Daniel said they broke even last year — payments on the van, the conversion, gasoline, insurance and

quarters for parking meters — from sales of works on paper and other traditional art. On June 3, Axle Contemporary will begin a one-month show, *Borderlines: Non-Rational Narrative*, with artworks by Wellman, Zoe Blackwell and Thelma Mathias.

Jarmack premiered April 15 at a SITE Santa Fe party to celebrate a new website design for Ellen Berkovitch's regional online arts magazine, adobeairstream.com.

From 7:30 to 10 p.m. tonight, the van will be parked in front of the Cowgirl BBQ, 319 S. Guadalupe St. Chase-Daniel and Wellman usually post their whereabouts the day before on their website, axleart.com.

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