

**"I don't think I would have ever known there were all these artists in my neighborhood."**

DAVID FRIEDMAN, PAINTER, PHOTOGRAPHER AND GRAPHIC DESIGNER WHO LIVES IN BEAUMONT-WILSHIRE



MICHAEL LLOYD/THE OREGONIAN

Artist Mario Caoile has put the work of Suzie Spaggairi and other artists from the Beaumont-Wilshire neighborhood in Northeast Portland on the Web. Caoile, at home amid his own art, designed Artspace on the Beaumont-Wilshire neighborhood Web site to get to know the work of his neighbors. "I thought that, being aware of other artists, it would help me get back into my art," he says.

## Local art for world to see

*An artist brings the work and artists of a neighborhood together in cyberspace*

By **TIM SULLIVAN**  
SPECIAL TO THE OREGONIAN

The art and artists of the Beaumont-Wilshire neighborhood are fused on a big computer monitor in Mario Caoile's home. Here, amid his abstract paintings and sculptures, Caoile hurls his neighbors' art into cyberspace. The result is Artspace, a corner of the Beaumont-Wilshire Neighborhood Association's Web site dedicated to displaying the work of artists living or working in the Northeast Portland neighborhood.

Although several Portland neighborhoods have monthly events that draw together its artists, and growing numbers of artists have Web sites, Caoile's creation fuses these ideas together.

"I just put it out there," he says. "As far as where it ends up, I don't worry too much about that."

The site has grown since 2002 to include 15 painters, sculptors, photographers, muralists, bookbinders and tile-layers who either live or work in Beaumont-Wilshire, located north of the Alameda ridge and east of 33rd Avenue. The artists range from hobbyists to full timers with studios and shows, and few of them knew each other before sharing the virtual gallery.

"For me, it's a great way to see other people's art, people who are

my neighbors and what they're doing," says David Friedman, a painter, photographer and graphic designer who has lived in Beaumont-Wilshire for 11 years.

### An artistic motive

As with much art, Caoile's first impulse to create Artspace was introspective.

"I thought that, being aware of other artists, it would help me get back into my art," he says.

Caoile is a mail collector for the U.S. Postal Service, who moved to Washington state from the Philippines and studied art at Central Washington University. He moved to Portland in the mid-1980s and made paintings, wood sculptures and towering metal compositions made from salvaged junk.

He had some success in showing his art, but Caoile found another passion: the Internet. He bought software and through trial-and-error learned how to design Web pages.

In 2000, he noticed an opening on the neighborhood association's board for a newsletter editor. He had been tinkering with desktop publishing — and had never explored neighborhood politics — so he and his wife volunteered for the spot. Working with the neighborhood caused Caoile to ask himself if there were other artists

in the area toiling away in basements and garages. He floated the idea of an online gallery for neighborhood artists in the newsletter and "that's when we started to get calls."

One of those interested was Adrienne Fritze, who creates a variety of art, including a public installation project in a women's prison. A veteran of marketing and online advertising before switching to art full-time, Fritze has several Web sites for her art. But she figured adding her work to one more wouldn't hurt.

"The Internet is absolutely a critical tool to not only get your message out, but to promote yourself," Fritze says.

The Artspace site helped watercolor painter Suzie Spaggairi get a show at Umpqua Bank in the Pearl District. Spaggairi says there's no substitute for seeing art in person, but the Web "does allow me to show people my style."

### Value of site

In fact, most of the artists have their own Web sites. But they see an extra value in showing their work together on the neighborhood site.

"I don't think I would have ever known there were all these artists in my neighborhood," Friedman says. Knowing the others has paid off: Friedman, who had been

interested in starting to do tile mosaics, found a neighbor on the Artspace site who was an ace in that department.

Plus, he says, the site has advertised his shows to his neighbors, some of whom have attended. And like much on the Web, from Craig's List to e-mail, the artists realize that Artspace is not an end in itself, but a catalyst for face-to-face interaction.

### Artists get together

After a year-and-a-half of e-mail communication, the artists are finally meeting one another. They now gather once a month for breakfast and are tossing around possibilities like a group show or an Alberta Street-style monthly event held in conjunction with businesses on Northeast Fremont Street.

That notion, of group solidarity, is as old and ingrained in art as the Internet is new.

"Sometimes artists feel separate and alone," Fritze says. "When you see someone in your group move forward, the group gains momentum."

The Beaumont-Wilshire Neighborhood Association Web site is [www.bwna.org](http://www.bwna.org).

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