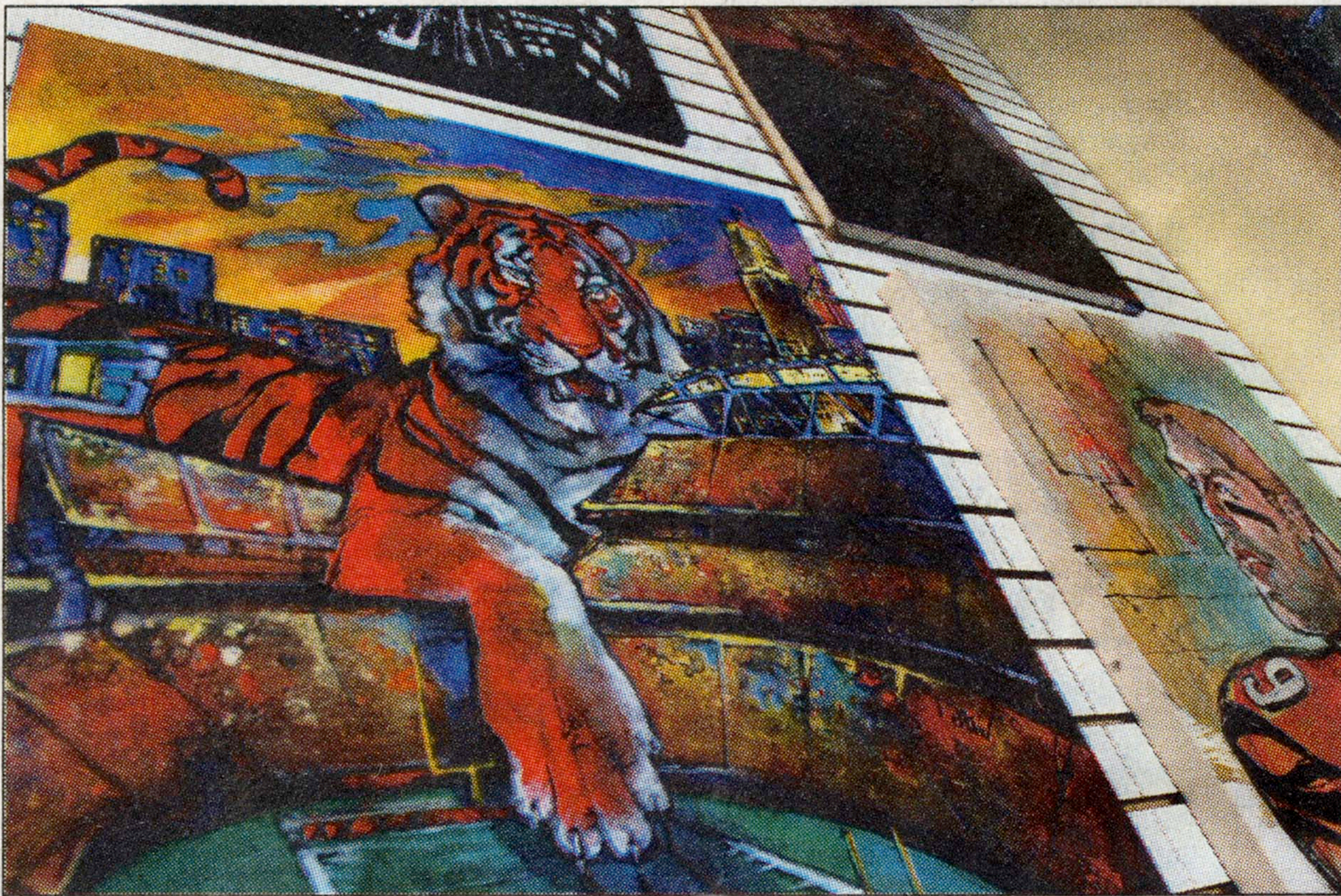


Upscale residents nearby offer potential market



Hilde's Gallery owned by Tyler Hildebrand, will open this weekend on Fairfield Avenue in Bellevue. The town is seeing an influx of art galleries as the neighborhood goes more upscale.

Photos by Meggan Booker/The Enquirer

Bellevue draws art galleries

By Scott Wartman
swartman@nky.com

Affordable historic property and an abundance of wealthy housing being built along the riverfront are among the reasons artists say they have been drawn to Bellevue in recent years.

At least three art galleries have opened in the past year along Fairfield Avenue, Bellevue's main shopping street, with the newest opening this weekend.

Tyler Hildebrand has spent the past two months painting and converting a former scooter store into his first art gallery, called Hilde's.

Murals and his caricatures of local celebrities adorn the window front and walls of the gallery in the 300 block of Fairfield Avenue.

Proud of his hometown, portraits of

Bengals and Reds players are mixed in with those of pop cultures, such as characters from movies such as "Pulp Fiction" and or "Scarface."

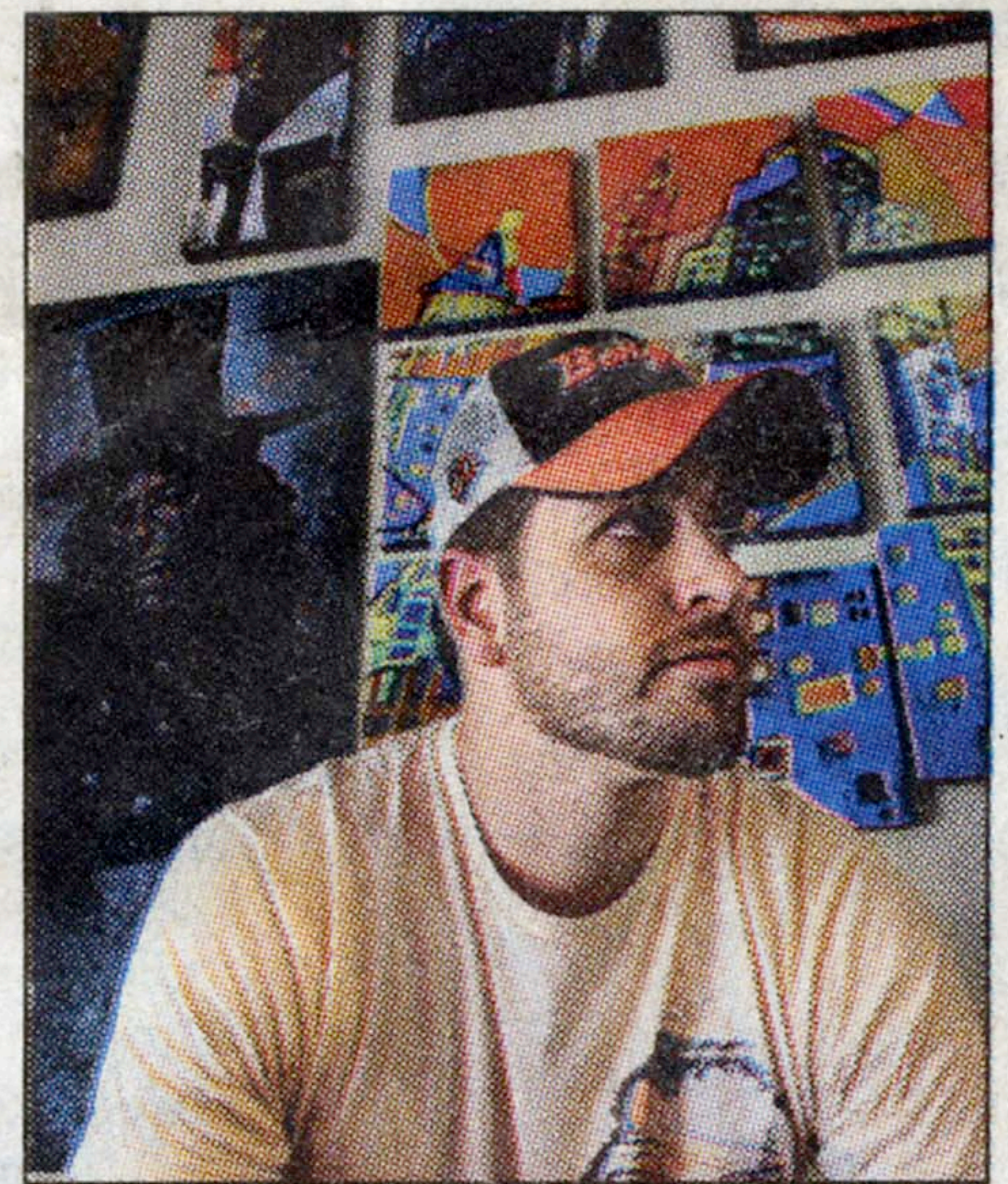
Hildebrand, 23, moved back to the area this year after graduating from Ringling College of Art and Design in Sarasota, Fla., and found Bellevue a good place to make a living in art.

He lives in Anderson Township and looked all around Cincinnati to open a gallery, including Mount Lookout and Hyde Park. He found the rent more affordable in Bellevue and the people there to be supportive.

"Everybody knows each other and we help each other out," Hildebrand said. "They all work together to build Bellevue up."

The galleries and shops along Fairfield Avenue have generated an auspicious amount of foot traffic, he said.

"I think in the next year or so, it will



Tyler Hildebrand will join a growing number of art galleries in Bellevue when his gallery, Hilde's Gallery, opens this weekend.

be a pretty hopping place," Hildebrand said.

Hilde's will open this evening and have a grand opening party from 4-7 p.m. Saturday.

Other artists welcome the sight of more galleries opening in Bellevue, a town of only one square mile just east of Newport.