

3-15-1996

Multigallery benefit; AS220 has cool crows

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The Providence Journal

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Recommended Citation

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ART

Multigallery benefit; AS220 has cool crows

Also in Providence, the upstairs gallery at AS220 is hosting an installation by Umberto Crenca. Crenca, who is AS220's artistic director, is fascinated by crows. And why not? Biologically, culturally and visually, they're one of Mother Nature's coolest customers.

Crenca's installation, which includes paintings, drawings and sculptures, as well as tape recordings of crow calls, takes full advantage of this rich store of crow-related lore and legend. One of the show's largest sculptures, for example, is based on a talon attributed to *corvus colussus*, a giant crow-like bird that lived some 65 million years ago. Scientists estimate that *corvus* had a wingspan of up to 120 feet.

Other works feature the more familiar, but still mysterious, figure of the common crow. Especially good is a series of small assemblages that feature tiny crows perched on pieces of carved and painted wood. The combination of Crenca's ornithological obsessiveness and the fetish-like nature of the assemblages is a perfect match.

Through March 30 at AS220, 115 Empire St. Hours are weekdays 11 a.m.-4 p.m. and Saturdays 1-4 p.m.

Providence galleries will be busy this weekend.

On Saturday, the Wickenden Old Harbor Art and Antique Association is sponsoring a day-long open house and gift raffle as part of a fund-raising effort for the Washington, D.C.-based National Museum of Women in the Arts. Many of the participating stores and galleries will feature exhibits that focus on art made by and for women.

The Bert Gallery at 540 Water Street will show prints and paintings from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including works by Rhode Island artists Eliza Gardiner, Edna Lawrence and Mabel Woodward. The Alaimo Gallery at 301 Wickenden St., meanwhile, will feature a selection of turn-of-the-century ads and illustrations celebrating "the modern woman." Other galleries taking part in the open house are the Benefit Street Gallery at 140 Wickenden St. and JRS Fine Arts at 218 Wickenden St.

Hours for the open house are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information call 751-2628.

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ART WRAPUP

By Bill Van Siclen

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The upstairs gallery at East Greenwich Photo is showing photographs by Paul Edward Parker. Parker, who works as a reporter for the Providence Journal-Bulletin, is a competent technician who still seems to be looking for a personal style. His photographs, which range from soft-focus nudes to pensive portraits to crisp color shots of the R.I. State House and Beavertail Lighthouse, are just the sort of thing that aspiring "art photographers" everywhere turn out by the busload.

Parker has clearly mastered the technical side of taking pictures. What he needs to do now is work on "the vision thing."

Through March 30 at East Greenwich Photo, 631 Main St. Weekend hours are today 8 a.m.-9 p.m.; tomorrow 9 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sunday noon-5 p.m. It is also open weekdays at 8 a.m. til 6 p.m. Mondays and Tuesdays, til 9 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday.