

New exhibit at Michelson Museum is strictly for the birds

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“Bee-eaters at roost” by Steven Henderson of England, latex on eastern white pine, crafted in 2009 and part of the “Birds in Art” exhibit at the Michelson Museum of Art, a traveling show out of the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in Wausau, Wis., a competitive and popular show among wildlife artists worldwide.

A stopover for a special kind of avian species on migration into the Southwest began this week as the “Birds in Art” exhibit was installed at the Michelson Museum of Art.

An opening reception for “Birds in Art” will be 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 3, as art lovers of a feather will flock together in celebration of this worldwide art competition.

“We are very fortunate to be able to present the show in this region,” said Susan Spears, executive director for the museum. “The Michelson will be the only location in the entire Southwest, where the show will be exhibited, and we are pleased to have been chosen for this honor.”



An ominous-looking raven perches among leaves of grass in a painting, part of the “Birds in Art” exhibit visiting the Michelson Museum of Art from Wausau, Wis.

“Birds in Art” became a reality in the mid-1970s at the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in Wausau, Wis., and continues to set the standard for avian art as the contest grows in popularity and prestige worldwide.

The Wausau museum annually invites contemporary two and three-dimensional artists in all mediums, other than crafts and photography, to submit their interpretations of birds for consideration, according to an introduction.

“We bring this show on its criteria. It’s one of the most prestigious in the world and because of a high local interest in birding,” Ms. Spears said.

Also champions of bird interpretation and education, the Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge and Caddo Lake State Park are partnering with the Michelson to present speakers during the show.



“Red Crown” by Debbie Stevens, oil on birch panel, uses a creative mix of realistic visage and colorful simplification of natural shapes.

The Friends of CLNWR and Caddo Lake Institute will also be providing displays and information on the more than 200 resident and migratory birds known to make appearances nearby.

“We support their efforts. There are a lot of bird watchers here or who visit,” Ms. Spears said.

Last year state ornithologists shared riveting information on backyard birding. Dates for similar lectures have yet to be announced.

While the larger sculptures were still being uncrated and installed, the exhibits peered out

from behind glass or lacquer and were indeed something to crow about.

The Michelson Museum of Art is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at no charge to the public Tuesday through Friday and 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday.

The museum will also be exploring these featured friends’ homes with “Nests” — a collection of constructed bird nests by Tucson, Ariz., artist Phil Lichtenhan in March.

To view birds in their natural home visit them in person at the Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge, open sunup to sundown daily with driving directions and maps at www.caddofriends.org.