

ARTS

Taking in abstracts, fluff and studio tours

Gallery Night Providence, the movable artistic feast that takes place on the third Thursday of each month, isn't until next week. But that doesn't mean local galleries are taking it easy.

The Lenore Gray Gallery is showing paintings and works on paper by Providence artist Mary Hutchins. Hutchins works in a jittery abstract style that suggests a cross between Chinese calligraphy and the more spontaneous, freewheeling work of Abstract Expressionist artists such as Jackson Pollock and Mark Tobey.

Although some of her efforts are better than others — a group of three paintings on the gallery's south (left-hand) wall is especially good — all display the same combination of lush colors and quick, feathery brushstrokes. There's also an engaging freshness and immediacy to Hutchins's work, as though she couldn't imagine a better place to be than parked in front of a canvas with a brush full of paint in her hand.

ART WRAPUP

Bill Van Sieten
Through Oct. 10 at the Lenore Gray Gallery, 15 Meeting St. Hours are Mon.-Fri. 9-5 or by appointment at 274-3900.

Fun 'fluff' at Brown

Brown University's Sarah Doyle Gallery is hosting a room-sized installation by Providence artists Amy A Campagna and Christin M. Searles. Called *Parlour Tart*, it's one of those rare instances in the normally oh-so-serious art world where the word "fluff" can be used in a positive sense.

That's because Searles and Campagna have upholstered the entire space in alternating bands of hot pink fabric. The result, which takes its cue from the gallery's original use as a family parlor, is part whoopee cushion, part padded cell and part womb of one's own.

Through Sept. 26 at the Sarah Doyle Gallery, 185 Meeting St. Hours are Mon.-Fri. 9-5.

Art matters

Providence design guru Malcolm Grear is on a roll. Next week, an exhibit devoted to his work opens at the Art Institute of Boston. He's also slated

to give two talks in Beantown, one at 5:30 p.m. on Sept. 24 at Boston University and one at noon on Oct. 28 at the Art Institute.

On Oct. 25, Grear will also be honored by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design for "distinguished service in the visual arts." The ceremony will be held at Providence's Westin Hotel.

You've heard of Cannery Row? Well, welcome to Tiverton Four Corners, home of Rhode Island's new Gallery Row.

The latest addition to the area, which also includes the Donovan and Virginia Lynch galleries, is the Oannes Gallery. Started by a pair of transplanted Boston artists, Nilsa Garcia-Rey and Tom Kelly, the gallery specializes in artist-made arts and crafts.

Rey and Kelly also say they will mount regular exhibits during the spring and fall. Their first show — a display of Renaissance-inspired paintings by Massachusetts artist Diane Savino — opens tomorrow from 3 to 6 p.m.

The Oannes Gallery is at 3842 Main Rd. in Tiverton.

Providence's Bert Gallery is sponsoring a series of studio tours. The series starts tomorrow and Sunday with visits to the studio of Providence artist Frank Gasbarro. The tours, which run

between noon and 5 p.m., are free, although appointments are necessary. For more information call 751-2628.

Calling all artists: Citizens Bank and the Woonasquatucket River Greenway Project are looking for art works celebrating the Woonasquatucket River. Selected entries will be displayed at One Citizens Plaza, beginning Oct. 16. Submissions are due by next Friday. For more information call 455-8880.

The role of African-American sailors in the New England sea trade is the focus of a talk on Thursday at 8 p.m. at the New Bedford Whaling Museum. The speaker is W. Jeffrey Bolster, a history professor at the University of New Hampshire and the author of *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail*. The museum is at 18 Johnny Cake Hill in New Bedford.

Memo to art lovers: Don't make any lunch plans for Oct. 17, 24 and 31. That's because RISD faculty members will be talking about their work at 12:15 p.m. on Fridays at the RISD Museum. The series, which includes painter Bill Drew, printmaker Donna Bruton and furniture-makers Rosanne Somerson and John Dunningan, coincides with the RISD Faculty Biennial, which opens next week. *The RISD Museum is at 224 Benefit St. in Providence.*