

The Arts

Exhibits photographically eulogize people, places



PHOTO / BURK UZZLE

Burk Uzzle's photograph, "Parked Car."

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CORRESPONDENT

SARASOTA — Photophiles have cause to celebrate this month with the opening of two photographic exhibitions, each featuring works by nationally recognized artists.

At Allyn Gallup Contemporary Art/Mira Mar Gallery, Burk Uzzle's black-and-white images glorify the "quirkiness and exaggerated eccentricities of American life."

At the Art Center Sarasota, John Dragan's striking photographs of male nudes parallel Uzzle's in the way quirks and imperfections are idealized, even mythologized.

"Small towns and ordinary places interest me most," says Uzzle, a North Carolina native and recent transplant from New York, who currently lives in St. Petersburg. "Driving on small roads reminds me of growing up in the South, where I imagine I see the music of the ghosts. It's wonderful to be a little lost on those roads, and to think feelings, not thoughts. The ordinary (becomes) particularly special."

In an essay for The Leica Gallery's inaugural exhibition, "Burk Uzzle: Three Decades of Photography," directors Rose and Jay Deutsch note that Uz-

TICKETS

**Burk Uzzle
and Leslie Fry**

On view through Feb. 1 at
Allyn Gallup
Contemporary Art/Mira
Mar Gallery, 1284 N. Palm
Ave., Sarasota. Gallery
hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m.
weekdays and 10 a.m.-3
p.m. Saturday. Call
366-2093

**One Man: Photographs by
John Dragan**

On view Wednesday-Feb.
8 at Art Center Sarasota,
707 N. Tamiami Trail,
Sarasota. Gallery hours
are 10 a.m.-4 p.m.
Tuesdays-Sundays.
Artist's reception 7-9 p.m.
Jan. 11. Call 365-2032.

zle's career includes 15 years of membership in Magnum, a photojournalistic co-operative (during which time he served twice as its president), and seven years as a photographer for Life magazine.

His works have been featured in solo exhibitions at the International Center of Photography, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Art Institute of Chicago.

As an added bonus, this show includes works by Uzzle's partner, Leslie Fry. Fry is in top form with her recent series of sculptures fusing fruit and vegetable forms with architectural constructs. These, coupled with her soft sculptures reminiscent of billowy, diaphanous dresses, deserve a show of their own.

However, unlike Uzzle and Fry, Dragan, a Philadelphia-based artist, focuses entirely on the human form under highly choreographed conditions.

His solo show, "One Man," pays tribute to Wade, a young African-American man with an incredible physique but with the scars of life already showing prominently on his strong body.

This is a contemporary urban youth transformed into a Greco-Roman *kouros* (an analogy heightened by the use of a Corinthian column as a prop).

On a formal level, Dragan's images offer starkly defined drama through directional lighting, the model's gestural tension and his unmitigated gaze.

On a conceptual level, this series of photographs speaks of our society's fascination, objectification and commodification of the physical form.

Note that both exhibitions include images depicting male frontal nudity.