

# Place of Memory

**T**om Hatton, one half of the artistic team of Marsha Kocot and Tom Hatton, strapped a sculpture called "Half an Airplane" on his back and carried it around the streets of Philadelphia for a day. Kocot and Hatton are conceptual artists. They've been collaborating for 30 years on their projects.

Like many conceptual artists, their work is a hard to pin down since they switch media to fit whatever the current project is. They've done photographic portraits and art survey research, they tried to work with NASA to send art to the moon and they proposed a full size photographic double of the Empire State Building (which they planned to frame and stand up near the real thing).

So why did they go out on the street with their "Half an airplane" piece? Well, their motives seem a little fuzzy around the edges since it was 30 years ago, but it's likely that politics brought them out. "The half an airplane was going to be gold-plated, representing money—lots of money—circulating during the Vietnam war," said Hatton. They walked from sun-up to sunset and documented their walk. "I suggest to anyone doing this type of work the total importance of documentation," he said.

The anonymous members of the Heretical Society write and distribute manifestos and stickers calling for, among other things the end of ugly murals, ugly sculptures and First Friday. The Heretical Society



Tom Hatton, detail of "Half an Airplane" (courtesy Temple Gallery)

has a bunch of gripes about galleries and the art hierarchy in Philadelphia. These dead-serious artists-turned-writers of witty tracts, such as "No more ugly sculpture" and its painting counterpart "No more ugly murals," are having a ball making their points and unapologetically asking for trouble.

"It's the most fun we've had as artists," they said about their work in answer to an e-mail request to know more about them. Their approach to the writing is democratic. "The group is non-hierarchical, so no one person exercises veto power," they explained. "It helps to have common goals (the dissolution of the gallery system and a good laugh)." Their designation last March by one of the city's alternative papers as "Worst Art Activism" tickled their funnybones...and brought them hordes of fans to boot, they said.

It's a different way of doing art and if you want more stories, Temple Gallery has 26 more stories.

—Roberta Fallon

**"Place of Memory: An Archaeology of Site-Specificity," Temple Gallery, until Jan. 15.**

**NOTE: the gallery will be closed Dec. 23-Jan. 4, 2000.**

**Roberta Fallon and Libby Rosof, who together make up the 0.1 Percent for Art Commission, are represented in this show by their "Clothespin/Big Thoughts Project."**

**Visit the website of the Heretical Society.**