

Upscale Art

What have Philadelphians Marcia Kocot and Tom Hatten to offer art-inquiring minds? Well, in some ways "Scale/Ratio," their show opening this month at Moore College's Levy Gallery and the Jessica Berwind Gallery, is incredibly tight-lipped. The central images are almost stoic: two sets of two freestanding canvases, each with one black and one white vertical stripe. The largest canvas and a mirror image exactly its half-self—right down to the weave of the canvas—face each other at the Levy; a cousin to the Levy half-pint is the larger Berwind image, which poses opposite a flipped image half its size.

But, as Levy curator Richard Torchia points out, beneath the austere surfaces lurk lots of loaded questions. To those who would buy art as an investment: which is the original? To the postmodern buff: which is the quote, which is the source?

And then there's size as a local issue: precious little large-scale work is done here, say Torchia and others. The trend among local art collectors—and, it follows, among art makers—is toward "apartment art." The larger Levy piece is 11 feet by four feet, on a five-foot-square base. Try coordinating that with your couch.

—Eileen Fisher

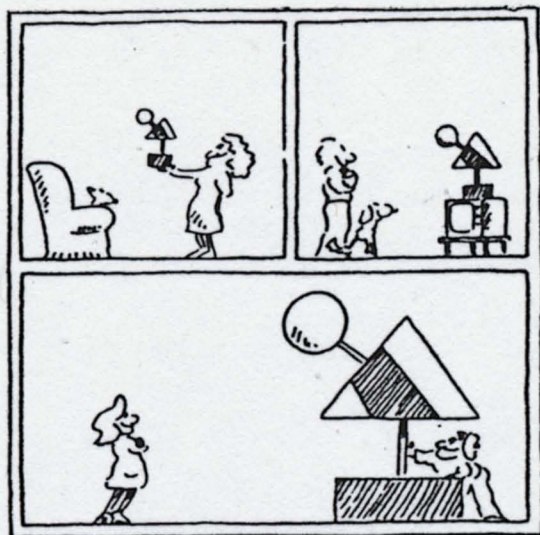


Illustration: Chris Demarest