

Heads and Tales Review



Hatry photo, Menard
Gallery Heads and
Tales

If Heide Hatry's provocative photographic show—Heads and Tales—at the [Peirre Menard Gallery](#), (10 Arrow St. in Cambridge) is meant to shock: it does. In fact, for a few moments, it made me fear for the mental health of the artist, who has (beautifully—even lovingly) photographed her sculptures portraying female victims of violent death.

Hatry, who grew up in Germany and moved to New York City in 2003, sculpted life-sized female mannequins from clay and covered them with untreated pigskin (a cold wet sample of which is available in the gallery with the notice: “please touch”). She added raw meat for the lips and fresh pig eyes—and in some cases, flies, safety pins, and other props—creating, according to the gallery writeup, “the illusion of life where there is none”.

Hatry then photographed the mannequins—some enlarged to 20”x 30”, others more life-size, at 12” x 18”.

Viewed from afar, the photographs appear lifelike, but close up, you realize the subjects are constructs—adding physical and intellectual layers to the artist's statements on the horrifying situations faced by many women—and on photography's role in bringing the inanimate to life.

Hatry's "views" are further emphasized by accompanying tales about the "women's" lives (and deaths) as imagined by 27 writers—some of them well known feminists.

The show is well-conceived and displayed, which makes its subject matter all the more disturbing.

The exhibit, which opened Feb 13, 2009, will run through March 15. It corresponds with the release of Hatry's book, *Heads and Tales*, and with readings, book signings and the premiere of a play.

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