

**House of Creative Soul Presents: *Metal Works*  
A Fundraiser for *Tempered By Memory***

By Patrick Clancy

From Thursday, June 9<sup>th</sup> to Sunday, June 12<sup>th</sup> is this year's Saratoga Arts Fest, a four-day festival celebrating music, dance, theater, film, literature, and visual art. For an extended weekend, amateur and experienced artists alike come to participate in artistic practice and symposium. What sets this year's Arts Fest apart from previous festivals is the reason to convene, the reason to gather tourists and residents to celebrate and support art. On Friday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, House of Creative Soul Art Gallery will curate a fundraiser for *Tempered By Memory*, a metal sculpture commissioned by Saratoga Arts that will include World Trade Center impact steel and is set to be unveiled in front of the new Saratoga City Center. The exhibition entitled *Metal Works* will feature metal sculptures by artists Noah Savett and John Van Alstine, the sculptors of *Tempered By Memory*, as well as regional artists David. M. Bender, Gyula Varosy, and Michelle Vara. Admission is free to the event with a suggested ten-dollar donation. Also, that night 15% of House of Creative Soul's sales will be donated to the *Tempered By Memory* project, an in-memoriam piece dedicated to 9/11 victims.

Saratoga Arts, the gallery that commissioned *Tempered By Memory*, researched and interviewed groups of local artists to gauge interest in the project, conceptual strength, and ingenuity of design. Joel Reed, executive director at Saratoga Arts, says John and Noah were chosen "due to their passionate enthusiasm, long years of experience with large scale projects, and aesthetic talent...[they] proposed a sculpture that was sensitive to the material, respectful of the past, yet forward-looking." Artist Van Alstine, who at one time owned a studio across the river from the Two Towers, says, "It has been nearly a decade since the event of September 11, 2001. As we gain some distance, it is clear that it has emerged as a pivotal date in American history, one that has shaped and tempered our collective memory." As listed on the Saratoga Arts website, the "aesthetic spirit" of *Tempered By Memory* reads, "Images of the twisted steel façade on 9/11 have forever been burned into our collective psyche and are now powerful visual icons...[John and Noah] will build on the power of the material and its history to create a commanding visual commemorative, contemporary work of art." Joel Reed hopes that the unveiling of *Tempered By Memory* will encourage visitors to "learn more about all of Saratoga's art offerings...[and] reflect on both the events of September 11, 2001, and on

the power of contemporary art.” Signage at the center will point visitors in the direction of Saratoga Arts, as well as other galleries around town.

As memorial, *Tempered By Memory* hopes to stand as a reminder of how Saratoga Springs was transformed by the 9/11 aftermath. Post 9/11, Saratoga became a harbor to many NYC residents looking to vacate indefinitely their chaotic and damaged city. Saratoga was also a respite town, a refuge where businesses and restaurants opened their doors to Ground Zero rescue workers taking time off from their excavation.

As modern sculpture, *Tempered By Memory* means to bring attention to contemporary art, artists, and galleries in Saratoga Springs. In a city primarily known for its traditional equine art and its folkie scenes of bovine mulling in meadows, the massive non-traditional metalwork of *Tempered By Memory* will stand in front of the city center, the hub of all tourist activity, and shift outdated perceptions of classical “Saratogian” imagery. The layout of *T.B.M.* does not cohere to the city’s traditional architecture, but instead introduces an avant-garde flare to the otherwise rural-Victorian landscape. The monolithic sculpture of impact steel is designed to look like a giant corkscrew of barbed metal with garlands of rust and firescales. The architectural scheme of the sculpture intends to be an eye-ful, a piece worthy of one’s full attention. To walk the length of Broadway people must cross *Tempered By Memory*’s path or see the metal figure in the distance. People will window shop along the main street, enjoy the town, and see the sculpture in their periphery, the memorial always there, never forgotten.

*House of Creative Soul presents: METAL WORKS, a contemporary metal sculpture exhibition and fundraising event for TEMPERED BY MEMORY. Opening reception and fundraiser Friday, June 10th 6:00-8:00pm, exhibition on view June 7th-July 2nd. For the opening reception, there will be a suggested donation of \$10.*

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