

ARTFORUM

Diane Simpson

JTT

170A Suffolk St

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Though Diane Simpson's work has been frequently exhibited in her hometown of Chicago, her last solo exhibition in New York was more than thirty years ago. Her debut at this gallery—which presents an acute selection of sculptures made between 1992 and 2013—brings an urgency for a broader recognition of her oeuvre. Simpson begins with a specific clothing garment, like an Amish bonnet or Japanese armor, creating an isometric drawing to plot out the composition for the final structure. While this may sound like standard procedure for fabricating sculpture, she complicates our predictable relationship with perspective by applying the rules of two-dimensional rendering to three-dimensional forms.

Formal Wear, 1998, for example, is a refined standout with two sleeves of spunbonded polyester resting on a poplar bar, which hangs from two long cotton bands. In *Vest (Scalloped)*, 2010, patterned linoleum is backed with copper and draped over an ornamental mint-green support. The combination of materials is admirably raucous, at once industrial and domestic. Each require careful inspection from all sides; spaces that you expect to be open are solid, materials that typically flow are rigid. Similar to clothing's construction, Simpson makes the seams of her works visible and the display becomes equally significant as the "garment" itself.

The isometric drawings are intended to be integral to the comprehension of the work—ideally, they're to be sold together with her sculptures. Few artists seem enthusiastic to share such specifics of their process, but Simpson generously allows the drawings to act as inordinately complex clothing patterns, which can be replicated by an ambitious collector. Despite the possibility that these details would dispel the spatial illusions that Simpson is so adept at pulling off, they further prove that the sculptures must be experienced to be believed.



Diane Simpson, *Formal Wear*, 1998, spunbond polyester, poplar, cotton webbing, 47 x 50 x 7".

— Lumi Tam

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