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FASHION, ARCHITECTURE, FIGURATION AND ABSTRACTION

by [SooJin Lee](#) | **March 1st, 2013**

Chicago-based artist and SAIC alum (BFA 1971, MFA 1978) [Diane Simpson](#) is currently having her 19th solo show at [Corbett vs. Dempsey](#). Inspired by clothing's structural details, she has created sculptures that, like magic, evoke fashion, architecture, furniture, pottery and abstract painting simultaneously. Her drawings, also on view, reveal the secret of this magic: like an architect or a designer, she draws on graph paper, with precise indications of the angles and measurements, that she then uses as blueprints for sculptural constructions. They also give glimpses into how familiar mundane forms like a cuff, a vest, and a hanger are deconstructed on paper and then reconstructed into sculptures by Simpson's own hands and visions.

Already since the 1970s she has been creating with such an artistry of her own that hovers between the worlds of two-dimensionality and three-dimensionality. She is a serious craftswoman, a quality difficult to find in the current art world. After Minimalism and the rise of conceptualism in the 1960s, contemporary art does not seem to give much significance to handicraft, a method associated with tradition and domesticity. Simpson's sculptures, so intimately crafted as they are, never stop appearing fresh, vital, modern and radical as they subtly move across (and so address) diverse aesthetics and visual art

languages including fashion, architecture, figuration and abstraction.