

*Diane Simpson*. The New Yorker. November 2016.



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**ART** GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

## **Diane Simpson**

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The auspicious first show in the gallery's new, larger space offers a rare encounter with the exacting early work of the tremendous Chicago artist. The free-standing sculptures in Simpson's "Samurai" series, made in the nineteen-eighties, feel at once ancient and futuristic, evoking sleek architectural elements, humble woodworking projects, robots, vessels, dresses, and, of course, the Japanese armor that inspired them. They impress from afar but reward close inspection, with precisely textured surfaces that have been subtly stained pinkish, flaxen, mossy, white, or gray. A print, from 1981, diagrams the shapely components of one of the sculptures, revealing that Simpson's mysterious geometric forms are ingeniously constructed from slotted pieces of M.D.F. Assembly instructions are provided in a tidy script, a generous gesture that implies you might want to make one of your own—and who wouldn't?