

Artspace

INSIDER ACCESS TO THE WORLD'S BEST ART

Picks

8 of the Best Artworks at EXPO Chicago 2014

By Andrew M. Goldstein

Sept. 20, 2014

DIANE SIMPSON

Robe (1986)

[Corbett vs. Dempsey](#)

\$30,000



Sharing a booth at the fair with New York's David Nolan Gallery, the Chicago-art-scene boosters Corbett vs. Dempsey brought as their centerpiece this revelation of a sculpture by Diane Simpson, a Windy City artist in her 70s who, as Jim Dempsey puts it, "is still totally kicking ass today." Made from MDF board worked over with oil stain and colored pencil, the piece is one of Simpson's trademark riffs on fashion, elevating a woman's robe to imperious stature, with a regal train. The artist, whose work is both in dialogue with and enigmatically outside of [the Pop tradition](#), always starts with drawings and then builds them into sculptures, which carries over into the final piece a satisfying 2-D quality—as if Simpson were drawing in space, like the disembodied cartoonist's hand in a Chuck Jones short. Long out of the limelight, the artist is currently undergoing a late-career ascent, which started with JTT's stellar solo show in 2013 and continued this summer with her inclusion in group shows at Anton Kern and Monique Meloche.