

Time Out Chicago

APRIL 8-14, 2010

ISSUE NO. 267 TIMEOUTCHICAGO.COM \$2.99

Art & Design

Edited by Lauren Weinberg
art@timeoutchicago.com

“Around”

★★★★★

ebersmoore, through Apr 17 (see Galleries, West Loop).

If painting is dead, Chicago artists didn't get the memo. So we greet *New York Times* critic Roberta Smith's dramatic recent prognosis for painting's continuing health with a “duh”—but it's a pleasant surprise to see the medium's more peaked sibling, sculpture, up and about in “Around.”

Curated by William Staples (a painter—go figure), the show brings together five artists' recent sculptures that are meant to be viewed from all sides. Inviting close inspection, they enhance the intimacy of ebersmoore's compact exhibition space. Brian Taylor's *A Comedy About Life and Death and Freedom*, carved from purpleheart wood and mounted on a steel post, confronts viewers at eye level. Though its grooved form vaguely suggests a head, it's less expressive than the smaller *Bust* series presented by Anne Simon, a recent Columbia College grad whose alchemy transforms mere masking tape and newspaper into lifelike human figures.

Sculpture is uniquely capable of prompting viewers to think about materials, permanence and

Frid, *Untitled #6 (Last of Fog)* (detail) from *The Vertical Shadows*, 2008.



monumentality versus human scale. Scott Wolniak's *Peanuts* and *Doomsday Stick*—painted cement replicas of a pile of nuts and a twig—are so realistic they look absurd on their portentous white plinths. While Simon doesn't disguise the fragility of her humble media, Taylor actively thwarts distinctions between high and low in *Talisman (Erotic Object)*, a depiction of a crumpled napkin that—cast in tin—evokes a valuable tool.

Dianna Frid's and San Francisco-based Deva Graf's abstract works refer, respectively, to clouds and Hindu beliefs. While Graf's assemblage *The First Born Thing* deviates from the show's mission by adhering to the wall, it, too, reveals sculpture's totemic power.—LW

TIMEOUTCHICAGO.COM