

The sculptural work of DeeDee Morrison has emerged as a thought-provoking conduit for the intersection of design and public art. Place, physics, deep inner questions, and aesthetic beauty permeate her work, combining to provide an applicable source of visual reflection for contemporary audiences of all ages.

In works such as *Landscape with Perspective*, a sculpture with a strong angular shape and intricately cutout overlays, it is easy to define the theme of Morrison's work – contrasts. Speaking to the dualities of mechanical and organic, masculine and feminine, light and dark, strength and weakness, this particular artwork gives a sensation of diverging ideas bound by dissimilarity – an idea rampant in many of Morrison's sculptures.

Working from her studio on-site at the Wade Sand and Gravel quarry in the industrial district of Birmingham, Alabama, Morrison is obviously inspired by her surroundings to create large objects fit for harsh environments. Yet, a desire to convey seemingly impossible contrasts gives a soft touch to the work as feminine lace-like patterns are ubiquitously repeated in much of her recent art. The luminary glow peeking out through these cutouts adds another layer of interest, purposefully inviting viewers to witness the sculpture both in day and night.

Visually, Morrison's work is striking, but it goes deeper than that. Morrison has grown increasingly capable in the past decade, as a return to art after a temporary hiatus has apparently strengthened her passion and afforded new aspiration. Starting out with a career in economics in the late 1980s left Morrison feeling dry, thus sparking her desire to take ceramic classes at night. Eventually the creative drive turned into a two-year degree in welding, giving her the technical know-how to skillfully erect large objects of steel and aluminum.

Though Morrison has spent years developing her technical abilities and aesthetic style, she also comes from a lineage of artistic excellence. Clyde Connell, a well-known sculptor of the South and Morrison's great aunt, imparted a deep curiosity and genuine love for the creative practice of art. What was once a childhood fascination has now turned into a fully-bloomed career, as Morrison continues to exhibit in solo and group shows nationwide. Even more notably, Morrison has been commissioned for several large public pieces, including a sculpture titled *Safe Harbor* in Shreveport, Louisiana and another titled *Borrowed Light* in Fairhope, Alabama.

Using odd contrasts to create tension, Morrison's sculptures capture the mind and the eye, awakening deep thoughts and brooding questions about self, the plight of man, and the strength of nature. Her identifiable style and significantly well-done craftsmanship, add to the attractiveness of the end result, achieving what I believe are the marked forecast of a strapping and lengthy sculpting career.

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