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ART IN REVIEW

Marcia Kure: 'Tease'

By [HOLLAND COTTER](#)

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*Susan Inglett Gallery
522 West 24th Street,
Chelsea
Through Saturday*



Susan Inglett Gallery, NYC

Marcia Kure's "Renate Series: You Know Who and the Chambermaid VI" (2013).

It's been a pleasure to watch Marcia Kure's career unfold since her New York debut in a group show at Skoto Gallery in 1995. There she appeared in the context of contemporary art from her homeland, Nigeria, specifically Uli art, a graphic-intensive style based on sinuous linear forms. Living in Europe and the United States since then, she has sustained traces of that core aesthetic into hybrid figures that combine colonial fashions, collage and visual elements pulled from hip-hop.

Her second solo at Susan Inglett both simplifies and complicates all this. Her painted figures, some in watercolor mixed with kolanut ink and wine, are by now almost abstract, fetus-shaped or exaggeratedly attenuated. In a book-page-size picture titled "The Renate Series: The Mistress," there is a single descending pod-shaped form, like a thin body or an elongated breast.

New is Ms. Kure's embrace of sculpture, with, again, abstraction and figuration merging. Small pieces suggesting weapons and sinister children's toys fill the compartments of two low cabinets; antelope horns spill beaded wires that look like scourges; doll-size pieces made with fake hair or jammed into upturned containers look cuddly and repellent.

Ms. Kure has never avoided topical subjects, and they continue to be present, understated as usual. A soft sculpture, "Unveiled," consists of a piece of gray fabric set on a shelf; part of the material is bundled as if it held something while the rest hangs down in a tapering swag. To my eyes, the overall shape reads as the cartographic form of Africa itself, shelved by the Western world, opaque to understanding, holding its realities under wraps, waiting to be revealed.