

The Menil Drawing Institute presents a new monumental work by artist Marcia Kure as the third in a series of site-specific wall drawings. Through her multidisciplinary art practice, Kure explores a wide range of concepts, including colonial legacies and diasporic identities. She is known for compositions that feature the Uli line, a Nigerian design motif traditionally drawn on bodies and the walls of homes, as well as her use of plant-based pigments.

Kure's wall drawing *NETWORK* uses line as a metaphor for contemporary and historical trade routes. In her formulation, the line is not only a mark; it is activated in space through the movement of bodies in daily actions. The use of kola nut, indigo, tea, and charcoal as drawing mediums highlights not only their material properties, but also their status as commodities that trace and map the African diaspora. Incorporated into this artwork are two African sculptures, which were obtained by the artist from marketplaces that sell objects transported from Africa to consumers in the United States. One is in the style of a Mande headdress and the other of a Dogon female figure, both of which were modified by the artist with the addition of synthetic hair extensions. Taken together, the drawing and related sculptures trace these largely invisible networks across space and time, making connections that implicate the viewer in a complex history of migration, labor, and exploitation.

In speaking on the project, Kure said, "Drawing has been a life-long journey. It's been a language that I've been trying to understand for the longest time—from historical South African cave drawings, to collage, to sewing—trying to find my own way of drawing the line. Line is not a mere mark on paper, it's something that contains memory, purpose, and thought. Line is something that we all engage with daily, our entire body participates in making the mark, implicating us all in a vast interconnected and entangled network that continues beyond the wall."

Marcia Kure was born in Nigeria and trained under the founding members of the Nsukka School, a group of artists and faculty members associated with the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. She lives and works in Princeton, New Jersey, and Abuja and Kaduna, Nigeria.

This installation is generously supported by Clare Casademont and Michael Metz; Penelope and Lester Marks; Scott and Judy Nyquist; Leslie and Shannon Sasser; and Robin and Andrew Schirrmeister.

Public Programs

Sunday, February 13, 3 p.m. CT
Curator Talk: Kelly Montana
Menil Drawing Institute

All programs are free and open to everyone. For additional information and programs, visit menil.org.

Saturday, April 9, 4 p.m. CT
Artist Talk: Marcia Kure
Menil Drawing Institute

Menil members enjoy additional events. To join and learn more, please visit menil.org/support.

Back: Detail of Marcia Kure, *NETWORK*, 2021. Charcoal, indigo and kola nut pigment, tea, acrylic, ink, biochar, and gouged marks on wood and digital print, with hair extensions, stanchions, and sculptures in the style of a Mande headdress and Dogon female figure, 108 × 432 × 54 in. (274.3 × 1097.3 × 137.1 cm). Courtesy of the artist & Susan Inglett Gallery, New York. Artwork © Marcia Kure. Photo: Sarah Hobson

