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# THE NEW YORKER

GOINGS ON ABOUT  
TOWN

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ART GALLERIES—CHELSEA

## Simone Leigh

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Some of the artist’s austere figurative works lack eyes (the region above the nose is simply left blank), while others have no faces at all. One beautiful, jarring bronze sculpture, a hollow-fronted ovoid atop an elongated neck, calls to mind the work of the British modernist Barbara Hepworth. The towering “Cupboard VIII”—a stoneware bust of a nude woman, arms outstretched, set on an enormous raffia dome—has a smooth urn for a head. Her oversized “skirt” is a recurring motif of the artist’s, echoing the architecture of Mammy’s Cupboard, a roadside restaurant in Mississippi where customers dine beneath the antebellum archetype’s dress. References to racist Americana, ancient Roman and Egyptian artifacts, and “face jugs” made by enslaved African-American potters combine seamlessly and provocatively in Leigh’s début at the gallery—one of the most important shows of the season.

—*Johanna Fateman*

Through Oct. 20.