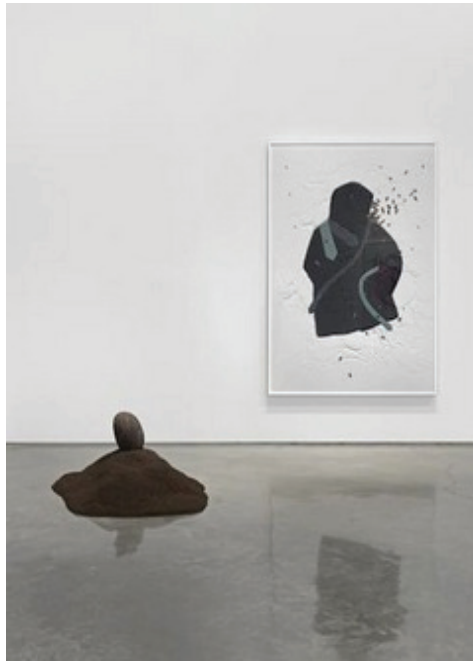


# METRO PICTURES

Lescaze, Zoë. "Critics' Picks: New York," *Artforum.com* (April 2015).

## ARTFORUM



View of "Nina Beier," 2015.

Squashed under glass like butterflies, a pink down jacket, five Hermès ties, and a human-hair wig lie inside a frame. *Peanuts & Turtles & Hunters & Chains & Potted Plants*, 2015—named for the items cheerfully printed on the ties—encapsulates the keen wit pervading Nina Beier's first solo show in New York. The materials are whimsical, but their humor is undercut with horror. The flattened jackets and sleeping bags in this series suggest crushed bodies; the sinuous ties swirling around them become viscera spilled on impact. Flattening the ties allows us to examine them as though they were drops of viral blood viewed through a microscope. The jaunty prints become bizarre and a little sickening. Beier's interest in exposing the perversity of everyday commodities recalls Mike Kelley's unnerving arrangements of soiled stuffed animals and yard-sale relics.

In a second series, Beier creates giant glasses that Goliath might use to sip a cosmo. Each one contains objects extracted from photographs—hand sanitizer, scissors, bone—encased in translucent, blue-tinted resin. By placing these items in stemware, Beier points to how we consume ready-made images and to their power to alter our minds, moods, and behavior. The still lifes themselves conjure a tension between preservation and decay. Hair spray and Band-Aids as well as the substrate in which they're embalmed contrast with fragile, transient tokens of the natural world: dismembered beetles, the shards of a shattered emu egg. These exquisitely cryptic sculptures play on the biblical conversion of water into wine. Metamorphosis lies at the heart of Beier's work, which so effectively transforms prosaic materials, exploding their contexts and stretching their meanings to startling proportions.