

# METRO PICTURES

Canbaz, Melissa. "Review: Nina Beier," *Artforum.com* (August 2013).

## ARTFORUM



View of "Liquid Assets," 2013.

Nina Beier's solo debut exhibition in Scotland is undoubtedly diverse and lively, yet it is rooted in something very unlively: Despite amusing moments and a playful, light touch, the Danish artist is here largely concerned with issues of human mortality and death. She presents sculpture and performance alongside two new works—*Liquid Assets*, 2013 (the show's title piece), and *Greens*, 2013—which were produced on site. The latter is composed of plants and hand towels printed with various bank notes and pressed into a two-dimensional image between two panes of glass. Taken from their natural environment, the plants are preserved for the benefit of representation—death depicts the living. The viewer may have a similar reflection while participating in Beier's performance *The Pack*, 2012, which takes place outside of the gallery. Even though the chain-smoking performer mingles among the visitors near the entrance, he is perceived as a living sculpture.

Along with addressing classic sculptural questions concerning representation and reception, Beier often dedicates herself to exploring permanence and temporality in objects. *Liquid Assets*, a bronze statue of a knight disassembled into its individual parts, knows no mortality in terms of its materiality yet portrays this condition precisely. The title alludes, therefore, not only to the economic valorization of materials like bronze in melted form but also to the heightened symbolic value of bequeathed possessions.

Again and again in this show we find the motif of the lifeless that reproduces the living. Take, for instance, the performance *Tragedy*, 2011, in which a dog plays dead on command—without knowing that it is actually portraying a dead dog. The dog becomes a still life that in turn reveals the exhibition site as a constructed setting. The dog doesn't care: When it doesn't feel like doing tricks, it takes a break, leaving only a Persian rug covered with dog hair.