

# JAMES COHAN GALLERY

Brinkley, Rob. "Sightings: Erick Swenson," *The Dallas Morning News*, March 29, 2012,  
<http://www.dallasnews.com/lifestyles/style/headlines/20120329-sightings-erick-swenson-opening-april-14.ece>

*The Dallas Morning News*

## "Sightings: Erick Swenson" opening April 14



Schwärmerei (in process), 2012. Acrylic and oil on urethane resin and silicone, dimensions variable.  
Courtesy of the artist, Talley Dunn Gallery, Dallas, and James Cohan Gallery, New York.

By Rob Brinkley

His work repels and compels — in the same instant. Like the proverbial train wreck, you can't stop looking. You are at once horrified and saddened. These visceral push-pulls will be happening all season long at "Sightings: Erick Swenson," opening April 14 at the Nasher Sculpture Center. Swenson is Dallas-based — he's been here since the 1990s and is a University of North Texas grad — but this marks his first museum show in the city. (It is also the Nasher's first exhibit of a Dallas artist.)

Swenson's road map to this moment has an eyebrow-raising milestone: He was selected for the 2004 Whitney Biennial Exhibition at the Whitney Museum of Art in New York, which ignited international attention for him. Subsequently, his outré work landed in the collections of the influential Saatchi Collection in London, the Dallas Museum of Art, the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth and the Whitney itself.

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Swenson's subjects are not humans but animals, some rendered so utterly real that your neurons fire "taxidermy" instead of processing that it's all resin, paint and silicone. His lifelike menagerie — deer, sheep, apes — finds itself in dangerous situations. Peril is nigh, or they've been trapped. Sometimes, the end has already come. (Skulls and open carcasses figure heavily.) The ones that are hanging by a shred of luck traverse snowy crags or are caught in wind-whipped capes. Others lie frozen, with ice formed to antlers. No matter the scenario, you *will* find yourself caught in an allegory — to your own life or to humankind.

For the Nasher exhibit, Swenson is showing two works: a decomposing deer, created in 2005, and a brand new installation, employing beer steins and dozens and lots and lots of snails. What symbolism will slither from beneath them? What conclusions will you draw? "*Sightings: Erick Swenson*," April 14 to July 8, 2001 Flora St., Dallas, 214-242-5100, [nashersculpturecenter.org](http://nashersculpturecenter.org). Erick Swenson is represented in Dallas by the Talley Dunn Gallery, 5020 Tracy St., 214-521-9898, [talleydunn.com](http://talleydunn.com).