

Art

Reviews

“The Last Generation”

Apex Art, through Sat 7 (see Elsewhere).

In a brochure accompanying this small group show, curator (and *TONY* contributor) Max Henry announces his intention to investigate how an older, analog way of life is playing out in our fast-paced digital age. But what's on hand reads more like a muddled paean to life in the mechanized, military age of present-day America.

In her short video, Emily Halpern nonchalantly camouflages herself in a leafy outdoor setting using a sheet of reflective Mylar. A breeze animates the thin material, making it jump and rendering her disguise an anxious mirror of an otherwise lovely day. Malachi Farrell constructs a lineup of mechanized, bodiless “soldiers”—each figure formed by a camouflage-patterned hat perched on top of an army boot. Laurent Montaron makes

a phonograph recording of a woman sleeping. Listening to the soft breathing might prompt thoughts of things darkly poetic (see Goya's *Sleep of Reason*). But the feeling here is just that nothing much is happening.

Of the eight artists in the show, only Wayne Gonzales and Jan Mancuska make powerful aesthetic sense of confounding times. Gonzales prints a magnified image of Donald Rumsfeld onto a huge piece of brown paper, a simple yet chilling gesture. Mancuska contributes one of his beautifully obtuse text-based works, which reads, in part, I WILL FALL BACKWARDS INTO SPACE... I WILL TRY TO SEE... HOW MANY SECONDS I'LL HAVE BEFORE IMPACT. The piece forces viewers to crane their necks to take in the text, which is inverted, running from floor to ceiling. The effect is of reading in free fall and feeling more than a little anxious about what's coming next. —Sarah Schmerler



Wayne Gonzales in “The Last Generation”