

This High, No Higher . . .

Mark Stone

May 2018

www.henrimag.com

Adapter_Adapted &etc.

Mike Zahn

Greenspon Gallery

October 2017

It is easy to see the beginnings of things, and harder to see the ends.

Joan Didion

This far.

This high.

No higher.

This is the ladder. Every artist must climb this structure in order to have a part in our modernist economic culture. The truth is, the ladder doesn't really promise much — just a show or two, a sale, a magazine article, an art fair. It adds up to a life of professional calculation, climbing those same three steps, over and over again.



Adapter_Adapted &etc., 2017
Greenspon Gallery, New York
Installation view

Mike Zahn
The Faculty of Mimesis, 2017
Acrylic on canvas
84 x 276 inches

Mike Zahn's ladder is handmade from scraps. It's not something that he ordered, bought, or paid for. It hasn't the qualities of some collapsible, portable, machine-made tool. It doesn't come with a logo or an updated colorway. He saw exactly how the thing worked, and built it himself from scratch.

This ladder won't break down into pieces or parts. It won't fold away

nicely into the rows of the shelves of your collection. It won't look 'good' in a perfectly designed apartment. This ladder might suggest the way in and up, but for Mike this isn't real. In order for the life of an artist to be real, it must be experienced for its own reasons, from its own sources.

The real ladder must not be art. It must be unsalable, unwanted, and therefore without price. It has to be this thing, my thing, the only thing that's real in this gallery, in this studio, in this mind. Priceless.

My.

Fucking.

Ladder.

It's the most perfect thing I have seen in a long time.