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Art in Review

Josephine Meckseper

*Elizabeth Dee Gallery
545 West 20th Street, Chelsea
Through June 7*

Josephine Meckseper's amazing six-minute video, "0% Down," the highlight of her third New York solo, is as glamorous as it is incendiary. It is a fast-paced, black-and-white montage of passages from hyperactive television commercials for trucks, S.U.V.'s and high-end cars set to a powerfully percussive song called "Total War" by the industrial-noise musician Boyd Rice.

Sleek luxury cars smoke their tires on a desert test track; a speeding pickup narrowly misses great, swinging I-beams; a fighter jet transforms into a Saab. Amplified by a pounding soundtrack, these and other scenes exude stylish violence and macho eroticism while implicitly connecting feckless Western oil consumption and war in the Middle East.

In the gallery's main exhibition space Ms. Meckseper spells out her themes more discursively in an installation resembling a trendy department store display. Walls are painted with angled black-and-white stars and stripes. Silver, headless mannequins outfitted in garments bearing patriotic and Christian symbols stand on a shiny, oil-black stage. Representing a wounded veteran, one mannequin is missing an arm and stands before a hospital walker whose tray bears a bottle of whiskey, an ashtray full of cigarette butts and a Bible.

Hanging on the walls, posters of Ford Mustangs mounted on store-bought canvases sardonically remind us of what the artist believes our soldiers are fighting for. Here Ms. Meckseper delivers her message with a heavier hand, but still with theatrical flair and infectious rage.

KEN JOHNSON