

NEW YORK IN FOCUS



WEST 12ND STREET The shopping cart as personal property, in this case probably a street vendor's.



CONY ISLAND The cart isn't inside the Dumpster, as maybe it shouldn't officially be classified as refuse.



OUTSIDE THE TIME WARNER CENTER The cart belongs to this building and will probably end up there, too.



LAFAYETTE AND SPRING STREETS IN SOHO Three carts belong to someone; notice the sturdy locks.



BRIGHTON BEACH, BROOKLYN This cart was found in a Dumpster, but who knows where it started out?



WEST 15TH STREET AND SURF AVENUE, CONY ISLAND Were the bricks a sign of vandalism?

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New York in Focus

Abandoned: The Art of the Cart

By EVE M. KAHN
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JULIAN MONTAGUE has spent seven years spotting shopping carts buried in undergrowth or pond muck. An artist who lives in Buffalo, he has also taken thousands of photographs of carts that ended up far from their original homes.

Mr. Montague, utterly deadpan, classifies the artifacts by location type and likely cause of demise for a Web site (www.strayshoppingcart.com) and in his new book, "The Stray Shopping Carts of Eastern North America: A Guide to Field Identification" (Abrams Image). His categories can be self-explanatory ("bus stop discard," "plow crush") or cryptic: "open true" (abandoned on pavement or lawn), "gap marginalization" (between buildings). Happier subtypes, like "alternative usage" and "structurally modified," are for carts adapted as things like souvenir stands or driveway barriers.

"This language of scientific classification can be very powerful," Mr. Montague said. "It affects your perceptions; it brings this peripheral stuff into focus. And I like to speculate on what happened to the carts. How many people were involved, and is it in a permanent or ephemeral state?"

Through Oct. 14, 40 of Mr. Montague's photos, taken in five cities, will be shown at the Black and White Gallery, 636 West 28th Street, near 11th Avenue. The two New York examples, spotted in Dumpsters in Coney Island and Brighton Beach, fall into the "in/as refuse" category. EVE M. KAHN