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BLACK & WHITE GALLERY

LISET CASTILLO: 'PAIN IS UNIVERSAL BUT SO IS HOPE' Making sand castles is child's play, unless you are Liset Castillo. In the yard behind her Brooklyn studio, this young, Cuban-born artist builds wild, intricate sand castles incorporating elements of different world civilizations and architectural monuments: the Taj Mahal, the Coliseum, the Colossus of Rhodes and the Great Wall of China. She then destroys them, recording the ruin in big, high-gloss photographs (left), half a dozen of which are now showing at Black & White Gallery in Chelsea. (More of her photographs are showing in the survey "Infinite Island: Contemporary Caribbean Art" at the Brooklyn Museum.)

Ideas of chaos and de-

struction come to mind when looking at these images, reminding us that the unrest in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere is nothing new. There is something sad about that, though Ms. Castillo has found a way of exploring it with an acerbic detachment. The sight of the Hollywood sign crumbling into the pyramids is playful yet poignant. All great civilizations eventually come to an end, even our own, just as sand castles on the shore will surely be erased with the rise of the ocean tide. It is only a matter of time. (Through Oct. 13, Black & White Gallery, 636 West 28th Street, Chelsea, 212-244-3007, blackandwhiteartgallery.com.)

BENJAMIN GENOCCHIO

NEW YORK IN FOCUS



WEST 72ND STREET The shopping cart as personal property, in this case probably a street vendor's.



CONY ISLAND The cart isn't inside the Dumpster, so 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 These carts belong to someone; notice the sturdy lock.



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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Sunday, September 10, 2006

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

The New York Times

Friday, July 7, 2006

Art Listings

Galleries: Chelsea

'THE SANCTUARY AND THE SCRUM' A diverting, pluralistic show inaugurates a new Northwest Chelsea exhibition space. It includes good abstract and semi-abstract paintings by Jessica Dickinson and Andrew Guenther; a stuffed swan shorn of its feathers from the head down by Jane Benson; a gleaming crutch covered by tiny mirror facets by Kristian Kozul; and a funny photo-conceptual project about grocery store shopping carts by Julian Montague. Black & White, 636 West 28th Street, (212) 244-3007, through July 29. (Johnson)