



JULIAN MONTAGUE

THE STRAY SHOPPING CART IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM

SEP 7 → OCT 14

BLACK & WHITE GALLERY

OPENING RECEPTION & BOOK SIGNING\*  
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 5 – 8 PM

\*To celebrate the recent launch of Julian Montague's  
*The Stray Shopping Carts of Eastern North America:  
A Guide to Field Identification* (ABRAMS IMAGE)

CHELSEA TERMINAL WAREHOUSE  
636 WEST 28<sup>TH</sup> STREET  
GROUND FLOOR

WWW.BLACKANDWHITEARTGALLERY.COM

**Black & White Gallery** is very excited to present *The Stray Shopping Cart Identification System* by Julian Montague as the first show of the fall 2006 season at its new location on the ground floor of the Chelsea Terminal Warehouse at 636 West 28th Street.

Julian Montague's second solo show at Black & White Gallery includes over 40 photographs from his ongoing series of works that document and classify stray shopping carts.

Montague's work has always functioned in multiple ways. Like a Weegee of retail detritus, he has become adept at documenting his subjects as though they were the splattered remains of some lurid crime scene. They are solid and often beautiful documents that hum with a dramatic realism, whether crushed, half-buried in snow, or submerged beneath murky waters. And while not quite anthropomorphized, they contain a certain residue of the human—they encourage speculation about their origins, their original usage, their unexpected journeys, and their often untimely ends.

But Montague's shopping carts have also always been a springboard for the artist's interest in forms of taxonomy and the implications of such systems. The carts, once documented, are segued into a prodigious system of categorization that aspires to include all potential designations. Carts are split into genus and subspecies and organized according to categories that are elegant in their specificity: Plow Crush, On/As Personal Property, Structurally Modified, Snow

Immobilization, Train Damaged, As Refuse Receptacle, Bulldozed... Montague's methodology reveals the care-bordering-on-reverence of all good scientists and cultural anthropologists.

What has remained intriguing about the series over the past few years is its elasticity. While Montague has remained true to his system, he has also remained free to play with the external manifestations of this system. He has alternately given the photographs and their categories varying degrees of emphasis and has rarely installed the work the same way twice. In its current version, the categories are minimized in favor of the images, but the images remain intimately—and accurately—connected through a graphic web of lines, a spider's web of logic, inevitability, and absurdity.

Montague's series has always recognized the problems of taxonomy by highlighting its inherent shortcomings—you can continue creating new species and genus forever—but his tone has never been mocking. There is a poetic momentum to Montague's project, whereby even the most desultory subject can be described in earnest, affectionate terms and attain its own peculiar state of grace.

Since his graduation from Hampshire College in 1996 with a BA in Media Studies, Julian Montague's photographs and other works have been exhibited in solo and group shows at Hallwalls Contemporary Arts Center in Buffalo, NY, Real Art Ways in Hartford, CT, Spaces Gallery in Cleveland, OH and at Art in General in NYC. In 2005 Montague's work was included in the Albright Knox Art Gallery's Beyond/In Western New York biennial at the Castellani Art Museum in Niagara Falls, NY. In 2006 the book version of the Stray Shopping Cart Identification System project, *The Stray Shopping Carts Of Eastern North America: A Guide to Field Identification* was published by Harry Abrams and is now widely available in bookstores and on most online book sellers. Julian Montague lives and works in Buffalo, NY.