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Creature Features

Photographs by Jeanette May & Jocelyn Chase

April 26 – May 20, 2012

Reception for the artists: Thursday, April 26, 6 – 8 pm

NY Photo Festival Reception: Wednesday, May 16, 5 – 7 pm

In conjunction with the 2012 New York Photo Festival, A.I.R. Gallery presents *Creature Features*, an exhibition of photography by Jeanette May and Jocelyn Chase.



Responding to the recent popular fascination with depictions of crime scenes, forensics, and surgically altered bodies, Jeanette May and Jocelyn Chase create seductively creepy representations of the macabre. Their photographs of staged murders and dissected flesh call attention to our society's obsession with mortality. Both artists masterfully instill subtle humor into each image, producing photographs that are simultaneously disturbing and whimsical.

In her *Morbidity & Mortality* series, Jeanette May examines our culture's attraction to corpses, specifically the artfully composed images of dead bodies in contemporary films and forensic-themed television programs such as CSI. While death and *Memento Mori* are perennial motifs in art, contemporary US culture is awash in carefully arranged and creatively "off'd" stiffs. The artist examining this trend faces the challenge of depicting, yet not reproducing, this fetishized violence. In May's staged photographs of recently discovered victims, the body is that of a "dead" pet toy. One realizes that the small furry object lying on the floor is a dismembered bird's head. The cat toy is funny, but a bit twisted. There is a perverse quality to toys that resemble real animals—already deceased or clearly marked for death. May's photographs critique the contemporary tableaux of aestheticized violence prevalent in our culture.



Jocelyn Chase's photographic series, *Defunct*, evolved from the desire to bridge an obvious disconnect between the natural human form and its possible transformations, which are often glorified in the mainstream media. Chase works with materials that aid in superficial processes of rejuvenation: makeup, latex, plastics, and dye. Combining these with discarded utilitarian items and strands of human hair, she constructs fanciful bits of human creatures that develop without the living forms that seemingly engendered them. She then photographs these disturbing offspring in the manner of a specimen, medical anomaly, or collected curiosity. The resulting images reflect a warped drive for corporeal perfection.

Gallery hours: Wednesday – Sunday, 11 am to 6 pm

A.I.R. Gallery is located in the DUMBO neighborhood of Brooklyn.

For directions, please see www.airgallery.org

For information, please contact Gallery Director Julie Lohnes at 212-255-6651

or email jlohn@airgallery.org