Is it time for a new aesthetic for the traditional genre of marine painting – one that reflects the contemporary realities of worldwide ocean degradation? In her recent series, *Atlantic Blues - Paintings from the Edge*, artist June Julian celebrates the ocean in all of its power and magnificence, but also sings the blues about our abuses of it. She suggests a new perspective for painting the sea, one that recognizes climate change data, pollution and ocean dumping.

Maybe you can hear the crashing waves, smell the tangy brine, and taste the salty air when you look at her paintings. But, environmental impacts and insults coexist along with its sublime beauty. In the canvasses on view, gorgeous, breathtaking clouds and waves contrast with disquieting scenarios: raging advancing tides, microplastics and data points, and an entire discarded New York City subway train, one of hundreds discarded offshore.

*Last Stop* shows one purposefully sinking off the coast of New Jersey. Huge deposits of these castoffs languish and decay in the deep, drowned by the endless blue, not too far from the edge. The composition presents the uncomfortable disparity of the two essences, the sea’s soft embrace violated by cold hard steel.
In Data Points, you see an atmospheric smear of blues, soft umber and charcoal overlain with a grid of small grey data points. As the basis for a scientific line chart, the face of the painted surface is now receptive to climate change projections sweeping off the chart.
The paintings, *Microplastics Tide*, and *Microplastics Beach* show small plastic beads effervescing on the ocean surface and clotting the shore. They are deceptively playful bright shiny things that are killing us softly in our water, in our food, in our bodies.

The horizon and shore are ambiguous in *Raging Tides*. Where one ends and the other begins is arbitrary and the demarcation between there and here is nearly obliterated. The intermittent merger of sea and land is bad business.
The installation of the paintings in the gallery boasted yards of blue tape. It stuck each of the four corners of the ten unstretched canvasses to the white walls, and a serendipity display of torn tape pieces splattered randomly on the walls like stretched out confetti. The rationale for the blue tape was a simple one and harkens back to an early filing system where important documents were marked with red tape. When confronting bureaucracy, we say we have to go through a lot of it.

Sticking the blue tape everywhere is a derivative of that story. It alerts us to the bureaucratic
politicizing of the global seas for abuse & profit. Spontaneously taping over her mouth in blue, a
gallery goer shows us she is gagged, like so many, about ocean abuse. Blue is the color of
sadness and the ocean is as salty as tears.

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