

## Monika Wührer

Brooklyn, NY  
mwuhrer.net

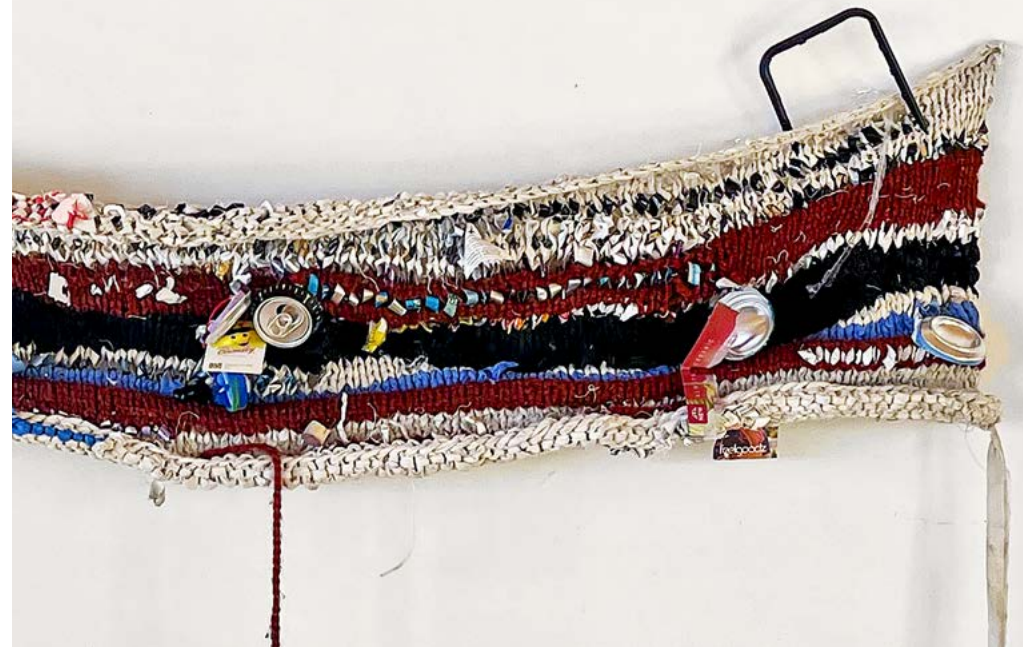


I was both excited and full of fear about being completely alone at the Montello Foundation. But as soon as I got there, the natural beauty and natural spectacles were excellent entertainment. Besides, I wasn't exactly alone, but surrounded by many companions: namely, the common house flies.

At first I was a bit bothered by the flies, but soon I was calm enough to watch their behavior and started seeing them as my acquaintances, a word I learned to use from Amor Towle's character, "Billy." For 8 year old Billy, his acquaintances only become his "friends" come day 3.

My acquaintances seemed so curious and restless. Maybe it is because their life is so short and so everything has to be sped up? I felt fortunate to follow them in their life long journey and feed their curiosity in their short life.

Once I arrived at the foundation I felt terrible about all the stuff I brought with me. Why did I bring so much? What was my fear? Maybe I was nervous to be alone. What if I get depressed and I eat all the food in the fridge in one day? What if I crave a beer or a glass of wine? What if I want chocolate? Why didn't I bring chocolate!



*The Fly, My Acquaintance*, detail,  
various plastics, aluminum, textiles (pants, T-shirt, Bedsheet) paper, wool, 57 x 48 in, 2022

I wasn't sure what art I would be making, so I brought a shitload of stuff that could be used as material. What if I want to knit? What if I want to sew? What if I want to use trash that I find on the New York streets? (I brought this concern up at work and Matt Oliviero is the one who mentioned that I will be making my own trash!) What if I want to make some papier-mâché sculpture? I bought some flour just in case!

Usually I travel light, but to Montello I even brought lots of clothes. I don't know what I was thinking. Not even on a month long trip would I bring that much stuff, but for a trip where it's only me? why?

To answer all my questions I started documenting all my stuff including clothes, art materials and groceries. I categorized it in a spreadsheet-kind-of-way. I photographed every item and organized them by trash, potential trash and no trash.

The flies enjoyed my curiosity in the trash. They explored the empty can of beer, the dirty sock and anything else that might have smell and texture and be potential food or play. The beer cans are especially fun, because they make this awesome sound when flies go in, like when you blow on the rim off a glass of wine.

At times a fly wanted to play with me. They sat on my head first and when I didn't react they sat on my nose. But most of the times they minded their own business and said, "Hi," here and there. It almost felt like they came by to tell me about a discovery they made. Would I be as bothered or excited by a human companion?

I think being alone is not at all what frightened me. What made me more fearful was not knowing what to do all day and how to engage with myself. I did not realize that in one day I could explore so many ordinary things. I certainly had no need for all this stuff I brought. Thanks to all my flying friends, I discovered that the world was full of things to explore.

