

Mar 26 – Jul 19, 2020

**Allan McCollum: Works since 1969**

Special Exhibition / 2nd Floor

Special Exhibition / 3rd Floor



Allan McCollum, *Over Ten Thousand Individual Works*, 1987/1991. Enamel on hydrocal, dimensions variable. Museum of Modern Art, New York, Committee on Painting and Sculpture Funds. Image courtesy the artist and Petzel, New York. Photo: Larry Lamay

## Allan McCollum's First U.S. Museum Retrospective Will Open at ICA Miami in March

The Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA Miami) presents the first U.S. museum retrospective for legendary American artist Allan McCollum (b. 1944), opening on March 26. *Allan McCollum: Works Since 1969* traces the artist's iconoclastic philosophy on the originality, value, and context of art. While McCollum's contributions have been the focus of six major museum exhibitions in Europe and his work is included in more than 90 museum collections worldwide, this is the first museum exhibition in the U.S. to survey his 50-year career across a range of media, including painting, sculpture, photography, rarely seen early works and large-scale installations. Curated by ICA Miami Artistic Director Alex Gartenfeld and Associate Curator Stephanie Seidel, *Works Since 1969* is on view at ICA Miami through July 19, 2020, and at the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum at Washington University in St. Louis from September 26 through January 4, 2021.

“For decades, Allan McCollum has explored how identity and community are created through collections of objects. In our fractious and digital age, his explorations of regional American culture have never been more timely,” said Alex Gartenfeld, ICA Miami's Artistic Director. “McCollum's work is profoundly influential on artists working on the role of the museum in society-yet has been underexplored to date. Our survey builds on ICA Miami's history of providing the first major U.S. museum platform for artists whose work merits renewed attention and reveals insights about contemporary society and culture.”

Organized chronologically, *Works Since 1969* brings together more than more than 20 series that blur the boundaries between mass-produced object and unique, exalted artifact. Some of the artist's earliest major series, “Bleach Paintings” and “Constructed Paintings”—both begun in 1969—reflect McCollum's interrogations of art history's longstanding preoccupation with medium specificity. Not painted in a traditional sense, but instead made from materials widely available in supermarkets and hardware stores, McCollum considers the cultural conventions surrounding painting, fabricated through its context and social significance.



Allan McCollum, *If Love Had Wings: A Perpetual Canon*, 1972. Canvas, lacquer stain. Varnish, silicone adhesive caulking. 110 x 331 inches. Courtesy the artist and Petzel, New York. Photo: Jason Mandella.

Critiques of originality and value carry through McCollum's five decades of practice, demonstrated through a range of major series on view in the exhibition. These include his iconic "Surrogate Paintings" (1978- ) and "Plaster Surrogates" (1982- ), wooden wall-mounted reliefs and plaster casts shaped like framed pictures in monochromatic colors, which emphasize the conventions of framed images as a universal sign for anything meaningful and valuable.

Demonstrating the role of scale and repetition in his work, the exhibition additionally presents two of McCollum's iconic sculptural series, "Perfect Vehicles" (1985- ) and "Over Ten Thousand Individual Works" (1987- ), which consider methods of collecting and the ways artworks accrue visibility, meaning, and value. McCollum also explores the notion of originality through photographic work, reflected in the "Perpetual Photos" (1982- ) series. For McCollum's ongoing series, "The Shapes Project" (2005- ), he devised a simple numerical system to designate a unique shape for each person on the planet in the year 2050 (a total of 30 billion different shapes) using a simple home computer and Adobe Illustrator. Through this series, McCollum undermines the notion that art, if it is to be of any value, must be rare.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is McCollum's rarely exhibited "regional projects," works from the last three decades that explore how artifacts become charged with cultural meaning and how collections of objects and artifacts become agents for self-assurance and self-representation in regional communities. Works on view include *The Dog from Pompei* (1991), a cast of the famous form preserved as a natural mold in the volcanic ashes of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79; *Lost Objects* (1991- ), casts of fossilized dinosaur bones; and *Natural Copies from the Coal Mines of Central Utah* (1994), dinosaur tracks preserved in stone that are, themselves, copies; and *THE EVENT: Petrified Lightning from Central Florida* (1997) developed together with the International Lightning Research Center in Camp Blanding, Florida.

Beginning with the artist's earliest major works, the exhibition includes a selection of "Bleach Paintings" and "Constructed Paintings" (both begun in 1969). In these rarely seen works, the artist uses common consumer goods (dye, bleach, sailing canvas, caulking) to create large canvases in rhythmic patterns constructed of hundreds of individual parts. With these mechanically repetitive works, McCollum seeks to demystify artistic production and reject the painterly conventions of passion, expressivity, and spontaneity.

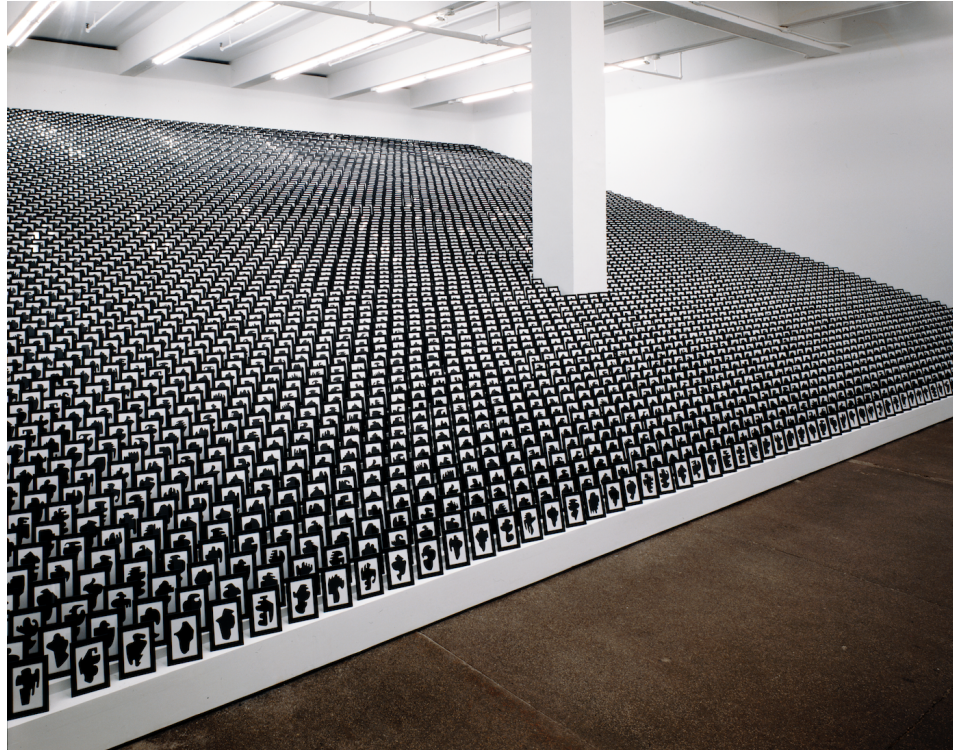
Among McCollum's most iconic works are the "Surrogate Paintings" (1978– ) and "Plaster Surrogates" (1982– ), wooden wall-mounted reliefs and plaster casts shaped like framed paintings in monochromatic colors. Grouped into "collections," these works are instantly recognizable as they appear like the ubiquitous framed pictures and memorabilia in domestic settings, yet their signifiers are devoid of any reference. McCollum would also explore the notion of originality through photography, notably in "Perpetual Photos" (1982– ), which reproduces artworks used as props on TV. Blurred into abstraction, the works represent neither image nor "content," only the mere idea of "art" or any framed picture hanging on a wall. Iconic series like "Perfect Vehicles" (1985– ) and "Over Ten Thousand Individual Works" (1987– ) look at methods of collecting and the ways artworks accrue visibility, meaning, and value.

Since the early 1990s, McCollum has explored the ideas of copy and original and how they come to be valued, using popular artifacts from archeological and natural history museums and collective modes of making. This exhibition focuses on a number of these "regional projects," including *The Dog from Pompei* (1991), a cast of the famous form preserved as a natural mold in the volcanic ashes of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79; *Lost Objects* (1991– ), casts of fossilized dinosaur bones; and *Natural Copies from the Coal Mines of Central Utah* (1994), dinosaur tracks preserved in stone that are, themselves, copies. The regional projects focus on how artifacts become charged with cultural meaning and how collections of objects become vehicles of self-assurance and self-representation.

"By rethinking modes of artistic production and distribution as parts of larger economies of value, McCollum is one of the most influential American artists working today," said Associate Curator Stephanie Seidel. "Over more than five decades his work has remained timely and effective at challenging aesthetic and material concerns, while critically reflecting on the museum context,"

Allan McCollum (b. 1944, Los Angeles) has been making art for more than five decades. Survey exhibitions of his works have been held at, among others, the Musée d'art Moderne et Contemporain, Geneva (2006); Sprengel Museum, Hannover, Germany (1995–96); Serpentine Gallery, London (1990); Rooseum Center for Contemporary Art, Malmö, Sweden (1990); Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, The Netherlands (1989), and Portikus, Frankfurt, Germany (1988). He has produced public art projects in both the United States and Europe, and his works are held in over ninety art museum collections around the world. McCollum's work has been included in numerous group exhibitions, including "This Will Have Been: Art, Love & Politics in the 1980s," Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2012–13); "The Pictures Generation: 1974–1984," Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2009); "The 1991 Carnegie International," Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (1991); Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (1975 and 1989); "A Forest of Signs: Art in the Crisis of Representation," Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (1989); and "Aperto," Venice Biennale (1988).

The exhibition is traveling to the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum at Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri, September 26, 2020–January 4, 2021.



Allan McCollum. *The SHAPES Project*, 2005/06. 7,056 SHAPES Monoprints, each unique. Framed digital prints, 4.25 x 5.5 inches each. Installation: Friedrich Petzel Gallery, New York, 2006.



*Natural Copies from the Coal Mines of Central Utah*, 1994/95. Enamel paint on cast polymer-enhanced Hydrocal, sizes variable, each unique. Natural dinosaur track cast replicas produced in collaboration with the College of Eastern Utah Prehistoric Museum, Price, Carbon County, Utah. Installation: John Weber Gallery, New York, 1995.

**Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum**  
**September 26, 2020 – \_January 4, 2021**  
**Exhibition Support**

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**Exhibition Catalogue**

A richly illustrated exhibition catalog will accompany *Works Since 1969*, and will feature essays by the exhibition curators, and scholars Alex Kitnick and Jennifer Jane Marshall.

**About Allan McCollum**

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**About the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami**

The Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami (ICA Miami) is dedicated to promoting continuous experimentation in contemporary art, advancing new scholarship, and fostering the exchange of art and ideas throughout the Miami region and internationally. Through an energetic calendar of exhibitions and programs, and its collection, the ICA Miami provides an important international platform for the work of local, emerging, and under-recognized artists, and advances the public appreciation and understanding of the most innovative art of our time.

Launched in 2014, ICA Miami opened its new permanent home in Miami's Design District on December 1, 2017. The museum's central location positions it as a cultural anchor within the community and enhances its role in developing cultural literacy throughout the Miami region. The museum offers free admission, providing audiences with open, public access to artistic excellence year-round.

The Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami is located at 61 41<sup>st</sup> Street, Miami, Florida 33137  
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