

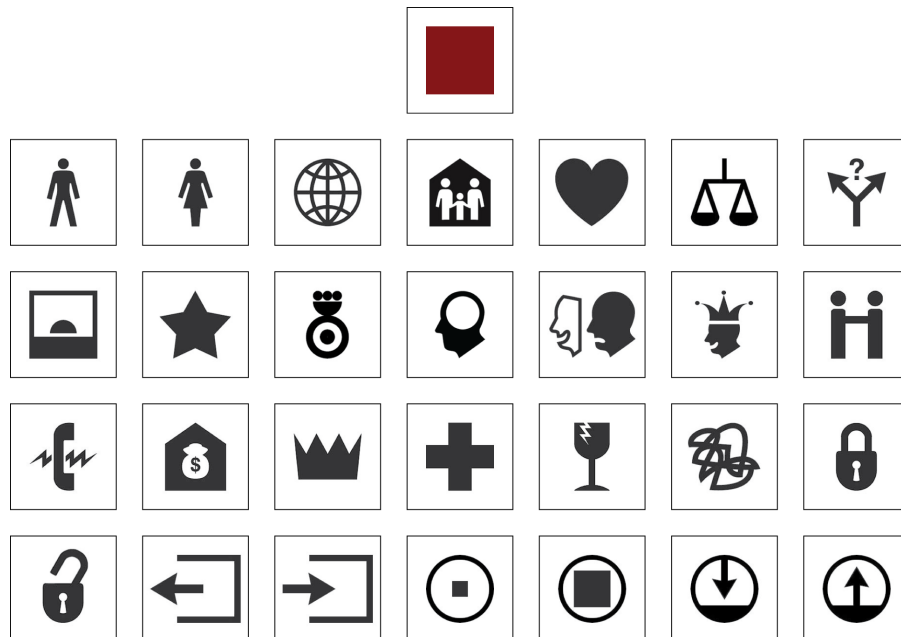
**Texas Gallery**  
2012 Peden Street  
Houston, TX 77019

**Press Release**

# YOUR FATE

A Collaborative Project by  
Allan McCollum and Matt Mullican  
As Well as Individual Works by Both Artists

November 5 - December 11, 2004



The Texas Gallery is pleased to announce the premier exhibition in Texas of “Your Fate”, a collaborative project by Allan McCollum and Matt Mullican. “Your Fate” was organized by the Christine Burgin Gallery in New York and first exhibited there in March -April of 2004.

Allan McCollum and Matt Mullican, artists who live and work in New York, have both exhibited their work extensively since the early 70’s. McCollum’s work was included in the recent exhibition “Singular Forms (Sometimes Repeated)” at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. A solo exhibition of his “Perpetual Photos” and “Recognizable Image Drawings” recently concluded at the Friedrich Petzel Gallery in New York and simultaneously the Public Art Fund installed three of his “Perfect Vehicles” from his iconic sculptural series, in the Doris C. Freedman Plaza in Central Park. Mullican is completing a commission for the Ludwig Museum in Cologne and had a recent solo exhibition at Tracy Williams, Ltd. Gallery in New York.

For this exhibition McCollum and Mullican collaborated on a project involving cleromancy, or divination using dice.

“Your Fate” is a system for answering unanswerable questions, or perhaps divining your future. In the exhibition, a unique collection of symbols is presented in a number of different forms, including a set of twenty-five specially imprinted dice. The dice are accompanied by a manual, which aids in the interpretation of the symbols, and game tables that may be used on site for casting individual readings. Also included in the exhibition is a catalogue of framed drawings of the symbols.

McCollum writes about this collaboration:

“Most of us have our interior pictures of the world mapped in a sketchy, slapdash way, and we allow the gaps in our understanding to be ignored, glossed over, or filled in by others whom we imagine to have greater expertise. As conditions can change, our worldviews can change, often from day to day: faith is broken, dreams are shattered, luck rewards, experience teaches. If this haphazard process could be made visible, what might it look like? One way to picture it would be to survey Matt’s work from the last three decades.

“For Matt, the process itself of constantly reordering the sense of one’s world is crucial -- even more important to him, I sometimes feel, than the production of art objects. When he suggested we collaborate on a project, it occurred to me that we might utilize my more materialist inclination to invent some sort of “finished product” that could help one repeatedly rework one’s worldview as a matter of course: an oracle, or a divination tool. After all, isn’t every good artwork an amalgamation of signs pointing to both the past and the future, and capable of reconfiguring its meaning with each successive engagement?”

Matt has always depicted his cosmology in diagrammatic schemes and pictograms, so the vocabulary was already there for us; all we needed to do was create a system that worked. First, we pooled our resources and assembled a temporary pastiche of existing divination techniques: rune stones, tarot cards, the I Ching: we considered everything from using computers to using a rock in a tin can with “yes” on one side and “no” on the other. Matt then reworked these bits and pieces using the generic signs and logos we see everywhere in contemporary life, in the way he always does in his work, and expanded their meanings into universal categories.”

Mullican adds to this:

“Allan thought it would be interesting if we invented a divination device, something to tell the future with. This is not something I would have done on my own due to the heebie-jeebies element of fortune-telling and its relationship to my own cosmology and my work with hypnosis. But since it came from Allan it gave me permission to make such a thing. Allan and I have been interested in psychic phenomena for as long as we have known each other, and considering how it plays into peoples’ knowledge of the world is important to us both. I also liked the game aspect. My work has referred to games for over twenty years but this is the first game that I have helped to invent.”

The twenty key “Your Fate” dice are imprinted with symbols on one face only, making the odds of a symbol landing face up one in six; four “variable” dice have symbols on two sides. Included in the installation is a set of three dice tables created by Mullican and McCollum for this exhibition. Based on traditional tables for the throwing of dice, each of these three tables is configured with a different arrangement of panels covered with colored felt. In Mullican’s cosmology, colors represent specific interpretive spaces, and in the context of “Your Fate,” the colors allow an additional layer to a reading of the dice.

Mullican explains the interpretation of the colors as follows:

“The first table is yellow. Yellow represents the framed world, the context, the here and now, the immediate context, your consciousness.

“The second table is yellow in the center surrounded by blue. Blue is the world unframed, all that you are not aware of, the street.

“The third table is yellow in the center surrounded by red, green, blue and black. Red represents the subject or subjectivity, the sign in your mind. Black is language, it exists primarily only as a sign. Green is materiality, the elements.”

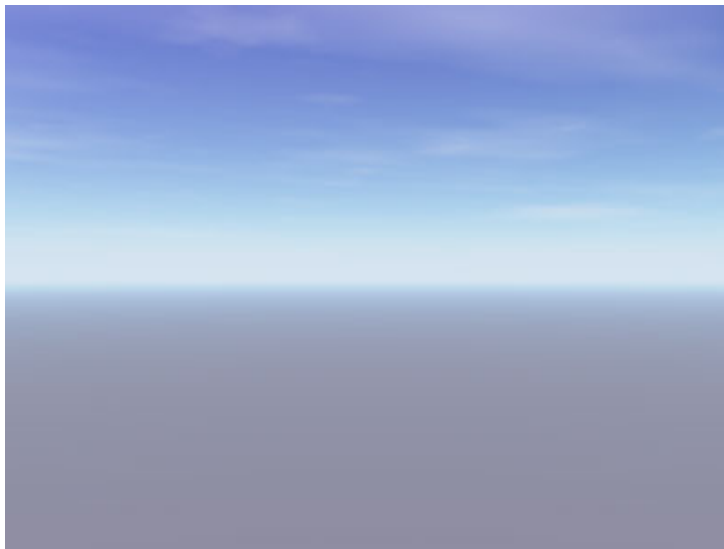


Allan McCollum,  
*The Dog From Pompeii*, 1991  
Polymer-modified hydrocal,  
20 x 21 x 21" each

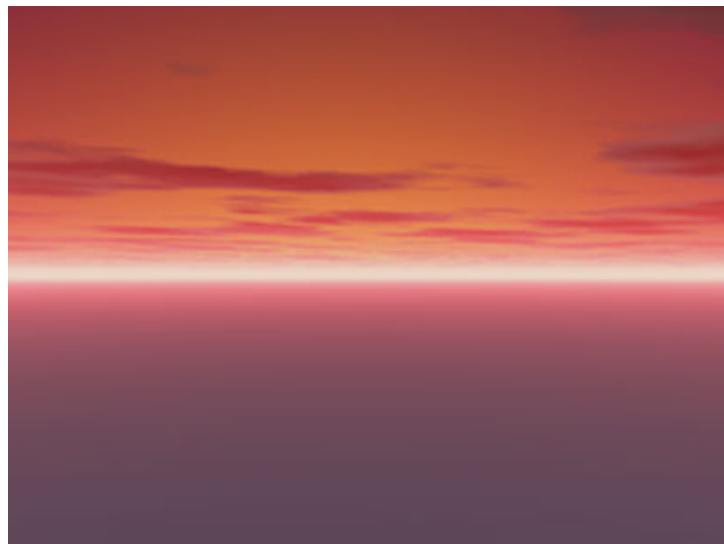


Allan McCollum,  
*Perpetual Photo*, 1982/90  
Sepia-toned silver gelatin print  
51.75 x 45 x 3 inches

In addition the exhibition will include selected individual works by both artists. McCollum will be represented by two of his recent “Perpetual Photos” as well as two of his 1991 “Dog from Pompeii”. McCollum began the “Perpetual Photo” series in 1982 as an exploration into the relationship between the “art object” and the “photograph of the art object”. His “Dog from Pompeii” is two plaster casts from a series produced from a mold made of the original “Chained Dog” displayed at the Museo Vesuviano in Pompeii. Both the photos and plaster casts are representative of McCollum’s continuing serial projects, including his “Surrogate Paintings”, “Plaster Surrogates”, “Natural Copies”, and “Perfect Vehicles”. Mullican will include four recent computer generated landscapes presented as photos in lightboxes which will continue his investigation into reorganizing and recording his world and cosmology, as well as a vitrine containing altered collected objects which, in this case, echo the fate of McCollum’s “Dog from Pompeii.”



Matt Mullican, *Untitled (Default Atmosphere No. 23)*, 2003  
Duratrans in lightbox, 16 x 20," unique



Matt Mullican, *Untitled (Default Atmosphere #24)*, 2003  
Duratrans in lightbox, 16 x 20," unique

Both McCollum and Mullican have previously exhibited at Texas Gallery. In 1985, McCollum, in collaboration with Laurie Simmons, presented his "Actual Photos", nearly unrecognizable portraits of tiny toy figures photographed through a microscope, while Mullican has had solo exhibitions of his work in both 1983 and 1992.

To learn more about "Your Fate" and view the accompanying book, please visit the web address: <http://allanmccollum.net/allanmcnyc/yourfate/fate.html>

For further information, please contact Nancy Douthey.

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