



## **YOUR FATE**

**Allan McCollum and Matt Mullican**

March 6 - April 24, 2004

The Christine Burgin Gallery is pleased to announce the premier exhibition of "Your Fate," a collaborative project by Allan McCollum and Matt Mullican.

"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 and a large-scale model for a future die that would incorporate all the symbols into one object.

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.

Both McCollum and Mullican have exhibited their work extensively since the early 70s. McCollum’s work is included in the current exhibition *Singular Forms (Sometimes Repeated)* at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. Mullican is completing a commission for the Museum Ludwig in Cologne and has recently performed utilizing hypnosis at The Museum of the Moving Image in Geneva and the Kunsthalle, Zurich.

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