

PERFECT COUPLES & SHAPES SPINOFFS

ALLAN McCOLLUM

May 15 - July 30, 2016



Allan McCollum: *The Shapes Project: Perfect Couples*

The Galerie Mitterrand is pleased to present the third solo exhibition of American artist Allan McCollum in its two exhibition spaces. For the occasion, *Perfect Couples* (2012-2016) and *Shapes Spinoffs* (2015-2016), both connected to the immense *Shapes Project*, are exhibited for the first time in France.

Internationally renowned, Allan McCollum is today one of the most unique and influential post-conceptual artists of his time. His work is characterized by his systematic recourse to the production of a very large number of unique pieces. Sculptures, drawings or photographs, each of his works are part of a 'collection', whether they are one of just a few objects or several thousand. However, despite the apparent massification of his production, McCollum preserves the uniqueness of each element by differentiating it from the ensemble through a series of subtle variations.

The Shapes Project, which was already exhibited at the Galerie Mitterrand in 2013, is undoubtedly Allan McCollum's most ambitious project to date. In 2005, the artist created a system which 'allows [him] to make enough unique shapes for every person on the planet to have one of their own.' Using a combination of 4 components each made up of 144 different designs (left tops, right tops, left bottoms, right bottoms) and 2 other made up of 12 designs (left and right neck parts) this procedure can generate up to 31 billion unique shapes. The artist himself recognizes that 'the basic system for making the shapes is now complete, but the project of actually constructing all of them is much too large for [him] to finish by [him]self, or in [his] own lifetime. For this reason, [he is] organizing it in such a way that others may continue completing them in [his] absence.'



Allan McCollum: *The Shapes Project: Shapes Spinoffs*

In practice, *The Shapes Project* may be realized on different media and in various sizes. After a presentation of *Shapes Monoprints*, 'generic' works from the project, the Galerie Mitterrand has chosen two present two new iterations with *Perfect Couples* and *Shapes Spinoffs*. For the series *Perfect Couples*, Allan McCollum made shapes from wood, painted in different colours, and put them in pairs. This idea of the 'couple', present in the artist's previous works, anthropomorphizes the Shapes and puts the emphasis on the concept of the relationship between individuals. *Shapes Spinoffs*, executed in Germany, are hand-made sculptures in ash wood, done with the aid of a wood lathe. The use of a traditional cabinetmaking technique constitutes a veritable challenge to the realization of the hundreds of pieces that make up this series. In the more recent series that are part of *The Shapes Project*, the recourse to the use of what are essentially vernacular craft techniques adds an element of typicality and regionality to the works, suggesting, by extension, a reflection on identity and community.

Allan McCollum was born in 1944 in Los Angeles (California). He lives and works in New York. His work is featured in the collections of over 70 museums, including the Centre Pompidou; le FNAC-CNAP; MoMA, NY; The Guggenheim Museum, NY; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, NY; The Whitney Museum, NY, etc. His work has also been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions such as Portikus Frankfurt, Germany (1988), Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, The Netherlands (1989), Rooseum Center for Contemporary Art, Malmö, Sweden (1990); The Serpentine Gallery, London, United Kingdom (1990); Sprengel Museum, Hanover, Germany (1995–96); the Musée d'Art Moderne, Villeneuve d'Ascq, Lille, France (1998); MAMCO, Geneva (2006), etc. His work may also be seen at the galerie michèle didier until 18 June 2016 in an exhibition created in tandem with French artist, Claude Rutault.