



radio + free hamilton

A Local News Source As Smart As You Are ... Well, Almost

RFH 2010, [Featured Articles](#), [Arts](#)

Shapes: Art As Unique/Common as You Are

Thu, Feb 04, 2010



Residents of the Town of Hamilton will have an opportunity to be part of an art event that demonstrates the "commonness of being unique".

New York City artist Allan McCollum has created a process by which he can create more than enough one-of-a-kind shapes -- black silhouettes on a white background -- for every person on earth, and then some. He can create 31 billion unique shapes, and plans to use the Town of Hamilton to demonstrate his process.

During several days in April, Colgate faculty and students will distribute some 6,000 5" x 7" printed shapes to all residents of the Town of Hamilton. Each will be signed by the artist.

Before they are distributed, they will be shown at the Clifford Gallery on campus March 8-31.

Dewitt Godfrey, art and art history professor at Colgate and the person coordinating McCollum's project, said McCollum has been working with shapes for many years.

"It's about the commonness of being unique," he said. "This addresses the idea of community in interesting ways."

Godfrey said the McCollum Shapes project is not only about moving art off of campus and into the community, but also about moving art out of museums.

"We're interested in different ways that art can exist outside of traditional spaces," he said.

Godfrey said the distribution of the shapes will be performed on two weekends in April at locations in the town. He said it was important to not have the distribution not just on the Colgate campus, so that people felt it was truly a community-wide event.

He hopes that residents will be enthused about the project. Godfrey praised the Town of Hamilton for assisting in the project.

In 2005, the artist designed The Shapes project and has since used his process of creating unique items in many different kinds of projects. The items have been produced as prints but also as sculpture in Plexiglas, Corian, plywood, hardwoods, metals, rubber, and fabric, in a variety of sizes. And, he has collaborate with a community library, schoolchildren, home craftworkers, writers, architects and other artists.

Others at Colgate have helped McCollum, who is the Christian A. Johnson Distinguished Artist in Residence at Cogate, prepare for the event.

Visual Resources Curator Jesse Henderson developed the database that catalogs the shapes for Hamilton and has outlined the workflow required to produce each print.

Mark Williams, art studio technician, helped devise a methodology to get the shapes into a printable format, and Michael Holobosky from campus document services will be the prepress technician who manages the printing.