

We have pleasure in presenting works by the multimedia artist Matt Mullican (born in Santa Monica, California, in 1951, lives in New York and Berlin) at our next exhibition.

Matt Mullican's work is displayed regularly in international museums and galleries, for example last year at the Whitney Biennial 2008, the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York. In 2010 an exhibition at the Haus der Kunst in Munich is planned. Mai 36 Galerie has presented work by Mullican at regular intervals since 1988.

"Everything I do has to do with the world and how it is interpreted", is how Matt Mullican explains his attempts at appropriating and organising the world and integrating characteristic model structures. His endeavours at creating order in a confused world and creating an ideal counter-image in the form of a personal model of a cosmology represent something of an impossible undertaking in our world so inundated by images and symbols. For decades, he has been collecting everything he can find, such as newspaper cuttings, flags and book matches, to mention only a few of his preferred finds, and integrating them in seemingly ordered systems. He makes inventories of the found objects, and archives and categorises them according to encyclopaedic systems, rather like the approach and passion of the great French encyclopaedist Denis Diderot (1713-1784). The basic fundamentals of his system of order consist of five areas that define the different forms of perception: the naturally evolved, the world of objects, symbolic values, signs and concepts, and emotional relationships.

Mullican invents systems of signs and tries to show how they work. For this he has developed pictograms - the best-known one is Glen the matchstick man -, symbols, colours and structures. He combines widely differing signs and forms of portrayal diagrammatically to form a highly complex personal language system, which he dovetails with a carefully coordinated colour system. All this is part of his personal model of a cosmology. Mullican has been developing this parallel universe since the 1970s - with an incredible range of media and forms of expression extending from fragile models to heavy iron and glass sculptures, from cycles of drawings and photographic works via collages and light boxes with computer-generated images of imaginary cityscapes to videos and films. He assembles them into installative works reminiscent of interpretive classifications, and he designs and presents virtual worlds, often in connection with hypnosis and performances.

It is with these elements that Mullican develops his cosmological designs and world with heaven, hell, angels, demons, life and death. The result is a hermetic world in which everything is connected to everything else, often in a very complex fashion. [Text: Dominique von Burg / translation: Maureen Oberli-Turner]

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