

Matt Mullican, in *Mousse Magazine online*, 26 October 2013



Since the 1970's, Matt Mullican has been interested in the models of representation and organization of the world. He has developed a complex symbolic language consisting of symbols based on both international signage and invented signs with an associated color system. These symbolic systems allow him to examine the relationship between reality and perception, to model the real and consider all stages of the human condition. Singular vocabulary unfolds through different media (drawing, painting, sculpture and video) which often coexist in dense installations.

The act of collecting and inventory is omnipresent in Mullican's work. In the manner of the great encyclopedist Denis Diderot (1713-1784) he brings together and orders objects, images and symbols organized into categories, and creates new links and associations between them. From an early age, Mullican began collecting artifacts, first comic books, archaeological objects, and later tantric objects. Today this constitutes a large eclectic collection that inspires Mullican's practice, as the chosen objects reflect his own research: "I'm a big collector of objects that mirrors the way I think or that follow the geometry of the way I look at things."*

For his new exhibition at the gallery, Matt Mullican shows for the first time a set of objects from his collection (prehistoric stones, crystal lingams, comic books, 20th century industrial machines, Piranesi etching books (1720-1778)) against his own work. This exhibition also presents the opportunity for Mullican to show paintings based on comic books, and recent works on paper, including a large installation of drawings made from *An Illustrated History of Brain Function* by Edwin Clarke and Kenneth Dewhurst (1975).

"[...] it is very difficult for me to qualify which comes first, the art or the collection. Does the collection influence the art or does the art influence the collection? They are a combination of things. I cannot say, the objects come first and the art comes second or vice versa. I think they merge into one to the point where you cannot tell where one ends and the other begins. Maybe that is why I collect so many different things."

* Extract of Matt Mullican in conversation with Koen Brams and Dirk Pültau, in Wilmes U. (ed.), *Matt Mullican, Conversations*, Cologne: Dumont, 2011, p. 204-219.

at Peter Freeman Inc., Paris
until 9 November 2013