



Allan McCollum

The Shapes Project & Natural Copies from the Coal Mines of Central Utah

17 May – 22 June 2013

Opening : Thursday 16 May



The JGM. Galerie is pleased to announce the second solo exhibition of American artist Allan McCollum featuring recent works from the series *The Shapes Project* as well as a selection of works from the *Natural Copies from the Coal Mines of Central Utah* series.

Allan McCollum's work is characterized by serial production. Whether it's a question of sculptures, drawings or photographs, each of his works form "collections", ensembles ranging from a few objects all the way to several thousand. The seriality present in McCollum's work reflects his desire to break with the traditional criterion of the rarity of artworks. However, behind the apparent massification of his work, McCollum preserves the uniqueness of each element via the differentiation of his ensemble through subtle variations.

In the continuity of the *Drawings* (1989-91) series, which the JGM. Galerie exhibited in 2011, *The Shapes Project* is the most recent and most ambitious of the artist's works to date. Allan McCollum has created a system which "allows him to fabricate enough unique shapes so that every person on the planet can have his own". Starting from the combination of 6 groups of standard models, each containing 144 different possible templates, and taking into account the fluctuations of world population estimates when it reaches its supposed peak, around the year 2050, this system will allow McCollum to generate as many as 31 billion different shapes. Allan McCollum recognizes "the system is currently in place, but the project to realize all of the *Shapes* is much too ambitious for me to carry out alone, or even for me to finish in my lifetime. This is why I've chosen to proceed in such a way that others can pick up where I leave off after I'm gone".

In contrast to his earlier works, *The Shapes Project* can be realized in a variety of different media and scales. After the release in March 2013 of *The Book of Shapes*, a 2-volume work containing a user manual for the production of the *Shapes*, edited by MFC-Michèle Didier, Allan McCollum will present in this exhibition several ensembles of *Monoprints* (small format *Shapes* printed in black and white, framed and arranged on shelves) as well as wooden cutouts of *Shapes*.

The JGM. Galerie will also present an ensemble of sculptures from the series *Natural Copies from the Coal Mines of Central Utah*. These works, in particular, are molds taken from fossilized dinosaur footprints found in the foundations of coal mines in the center of the state of Utah, in the United States. Results of a long fossilization process which has taken place over the course of millions of years, these footprints are now being transferred from Natural History to Art History. For this project, Allan McCollum realized 44 different molds in an array of 8 different colors which comes to a total of 352 unique works. Via *Natural Copies*, McCollum proposes a change of status of the object, a process characteristic of his work, and thus, an allegorical presentation of the story behind the art objects and the collection, including their diverse modes of productions, display, distribution and conservation.

The works of Allan McCollum feature in the collections of some of the most prominent museum such as the Museum of Modern Art (New York), the Whitney Museum of American Art (New York), the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), the Musée National d'Art Moderne, the Centre Georges Pompidou (Paris), the Musée d'art modern et contemporain de Genève (Switzerland) and the Castello di Rivoli (Italy).