



- 1A. Rubbing of Matt Mullican's *Cosmology* 1973-82. [graphite on paper]
- 1B. Rubbing of Matt Mullican's *Cosmology* after 1982. [graphite on paper]
2. Chart of *The World* framed over empty space (the sleeping stick figures belong to the chart not the room). [Chartpak marker on laser print]
3. Tracing of a detail from the 19th century print, *St. Cado Giving the Devil a Cat in Exchange for the Construction of a Bridge* (ca. 1855, Rennes, France) found in *The Illustrated Anthology of Sorcery, Magic and Alchemy* by Emile Grillo de Givry. The title of the edition is adopted from this print. [graphite on tracing paper]
4. Collage representing the *Elements* on the chart for *The Elements*. [laser print with collage]
5. Photograph representing first person perspective. An early prototype of this edition is shown in-progress on the wall. [pigmented inkjet print]
6. Elbow pads and buttons represent *The World*. [commercially available elbow pads and buttons, with packaging]
7. "I love to work for truth and beauty" is one of *That Person's* favorite sentences. [offset lithograph]

8. Variable element in each edition. These selected vintage photographs are from a collection of prints purchased by Matt Mullican. They represent nature and *The World*. [vintage silver gelatin prints]
9. Photograph of the inside of a pair of pants. [pigmented inkjet print]
10. Tracing of Matt Mullican's house keys. [graphite on paper]
11. Rubber stamp impression of an anatomical illustration. [found stamp, ink on paper]
12. Photograph representing second person perspective taken above Matt Mullican's head. [pigmented inkjet print]
13. Typeface that Matt Mullican designed. It is intended to be simple and geometric, it also relates to the charts. [graphite on pigmented inkjet print]

ERIC GERO Editions is pleased to announce a new edition by Matt Mullican

The *bulletin board* works by Matt Mullican are an integral strategy used by the artist to present his vast cosmologies from the early 1970s through the present. Many of Mullican's works, created both under hypnosis and consciously, are an exploration into the first-person, second-person and third-person perspective, and like a miniature exhibition, his bulletin boards distill the multitude of his ideas into singular objects that imply larger narratives, creating a potentially infinite modular work.

In this mixed-media edition, *St. Cado Giving the Devil a Cat in Exchange for the Construction of a Bridge*, Mullican arranges various rubbings, stamps, prints, tracings, charts, and found items to create a complex yet enigmatic narrative.

As a partial overview of edition making techniques and a contradiction of what defines an edition, Mullican presents assorted processes used for duplication. However he subverts this *modus operandi* of editions by drawing, coloring or collaging on the copies, undoing the illusion of the perfect mechanical reproduction by rendering the copies *unique*. He also utilizes ancient techniques of multiplying designs or patterns such as tracings, rubbings and stamps, which yield irregular results when making copies. In contrast to these handmade editioned works on paper, are store-bought buttons and elbow pads that Mullican categorizes as *The World* (the world he lives in, his "reality"). These items are mass-produced items indistinguishable from their fellow copies, unlimited editions on a limited edition.

The title of this edition is adopted from Charles Pierret's 1863 print depicting a scene from the popular French legend of St. Cado tricking the Devil into accepting a cat (instead of a human soul), for the construction of a Medieval masonry arch bridge connecting an island of (what is now) St. Cado to the mainland of Brittany France. Considered beyond human capabilities and necessity, the construction of these bridges, or colloquially "Devil's Bridges", were most often attributed to the Devil in Medieval Europe. Like the St. Cado tale, pacts to construct these bridges were made with the Devil, who in the end was always deceived by the person who wanted the bridge built. This reversal of deception and the willing collaboration with the Devil is something very appealing to Mullican. In the edition, traced from Pierret's print, with his tail raised, the Devil gazes out at the viewer, ready and waiting. In Mullican's own words, "That Devil haunts the board".

Included with the 17 objects on the board are three color photographs representing point-of-view perspectives. In the second-person point-of-view, Mullican sits at the bottom-center of the edition, like a character in his own narrative, a surveyor, looking up into his artwork. Reminiscent of a videogame avatar, this character is positioned almost between doors, as if entering the artwork. To the photograph's left, Mullican's house keys, and to the photograph's right, Mullican's typeface which is presented like a cipher carefully drawn on top of the pattern of his charts. Above the typeface we see another photograph of Mullican (more specifically his pants and shoe) from a first-person perspective. In the image he sits in his studio viewing an early version of this edition in process on the wall, like a Droste Effect, an edition within an edition. In the third-person, Mullican internalizes the narrative further and quite literally by taking a photo inside the leg of his pants. It is not obvious however that this is a photo of the inside of a pant leg. Could this be a photo of a cave or an endoscopic procedure? With the pant leg empty, the photo is dreamlike and ghostly; one asks is Mullican also haunting the board?

"I love to work for truth and beauty", reads the offset print on the center left of the edition. Mullican claims the statement is one of *That Person's* favorite sentences. *That Person* being the hypnotized alter ego of Mullican himself, so the "I" is not straightforward in the traditional sense. By calling his alter ego "That Person", it implies the other, that he is not *himself* under hypnosis. The statement thus becomes a bridge in the edition, between consciousness and the subconscious, between the first person and another perspective. In the rubbing (Cosmology 1973-82 and Cosmology after 1982) on the top left, the name "Mullican" appears, this is in contrast to the "I" which *That Person* uses, or the possessive first-person "My" of "My House Keys". The "Mullican" in the rubbing is distinctly in the third-person, Mullican the artist is like a ghostwriter working within his cosmology.

This edition, like his other bulletin boards, is a small snapshot of Mullican's multi-tiered expanding cosmologies, but like the macrocosm it belongs to, it subverts a direct read; he is challenging the viewer to make their own associations. Individual works are pinned to the bulletin board to pronounce and confound, but ultimately like a bridge, to create connections within Mullican's cosmology and outward to *The World*.

This multiple marks the first time Matt Mullican has created an edition of his *bulletin boards*.