

# News Release

## MATT MULLICAN Creates Major New Installation at MIT List Visual Arts Center

Exhibition May 12-July 1, 1990

Informal Discussion with the artist May 11, 4-5 pm

Public Preview May 11, 5-7 pm

Press Information: Ron Platt 617/253-4400

New York artist Matt Mullican has spent fifteen years developing a system of stylized signs and images which configure a conceptual description of the world and our situation within it. In this new and ambitious installation, *The MIT Project*, the viewer will enter a quasi-architectural space systematically arranged with found and fabricated objects--including a generator, a skeleton, banners, bulletin boards, and an encyclopedia--all organized within Mullican's contextual model.

List Center Director Katy Kline has written in the exhibition catalogue "Matt Mullican thinks about thinking. From the very beginning his singleminded, though multifaceted, body of work has tried to understand the process by which we consider reality. Over the past 15 years Mullican has developed a lexicon of stylized signs and images, a rich vocabulary which is simultaneously personal and generic. He has devised a variety of structures for the signs to organize our world and describe its systems and relationships. An extraordinary range of media have comprised his program, including bulletin boards, fabric banners, posters, stained glass, carved stones, rubbings, tapestries and, most recently, the invisible world of the computer data bank."

In 1986 Mullican created his first monumentally-scaled encyclopedic collection of images and signs for the Dallas Museum of Art. In the 52 4x8 foot canvas rubbings that comprised *The Dallas Project*, Mullican created a pictorial catalogue of his cosmological signs and special referential images. *The MIT Project* is a significant step in Mullican's work; he has stated "If *The Dallas Project* represents a picture of the world, then this new piece will be a world itself." Found and fabricated objects will replace Mullican's signs in an architectural environment arranged within the artist's city model. Inside, the visitor will maneuver through the five zones of Mullican's universe: The World Framed (art), The

World Unframed (functional objects), The Elemental World (nature), Language and Signs (information), and The Subjective (the personal, the spiritual).

Born in 1951 and raised in Santa Monica, California, Mullican studied at the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), and is internationally recognized as one of the leading conceptual artists of his generation. He has exhibited at museums and galleries throughout the world, and has created major projects for the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The Dallas Museum; Münster Sculpture Project, Germany; the Bath International Festival, England; the Museum of Modern Art; and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.

On May 11 from 4-5 pm, the artist will present an informal discussion about the new work. A public preview will follow, from 5-7 pm. In conjunction with the exhibition, critic and philosopher Arthur Danto will present a lecture "Expressions and Manifestations, Symbols, and Signs" on Wednesday, May 16, at 7 pm in the Bartos Theatre, Wiesner Building, lower level.

This exhibition is made possible with support from the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. An forty-eight page, illustrated catalogue will be published, including a newly translated essay by German philosopher Johannes Meinhardt and an interview with the artist by Michael Tarantino, as well as a biography and bibliography on the artist.

Also on view May 12-July 1: *Bill Traylor: Drawings*; and *Nancy Burson: "The Age Machine" and Composite Portraits*.

The MIT List Visual Arts Center is located in the Wiesner Building at 20 Ames Street in Cambridge, five minutes from the Kendall Square T stop. Hours: Weekdays 12-6; Weekends 1-5. Admission Free. Gallery Information 253-4400.