

Edmund de Waal

a sort of speech

Berlin: Bleibtreustraße 45, 27 September – 2 November 2019



Galerie Max Hetzler is pleased to announce British artist **Edmund de Waal**'s second solo exhibition on view across both gallery locations in Berlin.

Recognised for his delicate porcelain vessels meticulously arranged in carefully composed groups displayed in vitrines or shelves, Edmund de Waal creates his own dialogue between tradition and modernity, blank spaces and opulence, minimalism and architecture. His unique ceramic objects, coloured in subtle nuances and irregularly shaped, form the base of his installations and combine ideas of repetition, rhythm and composition with

references to literature and music.

In his exhibition, de Waal presents a group of new free-standing glass vitrines, each forming a thoughtful composition of porcelain, steel, gold and marble elements, installed in the large gallery space of Goethestraße. In this new body of work, de Waal continues to explore the boundaries between text and sculpture. At its centre, the exhibition contains a major new text work in which de Waal has covered a vast freestanding wall with kaolin slip and gold leaf into which he has written a long text on the work of Robert Walser, whose literary oeuvre serves as an inspiration for the show.

Walser's adoption of an obsessive form of notation – his "pencil method" – has long had great significance for the artist. It was a way for Walser to explore the immersive qualities of writing. De Waal has adapted this idea and created a series of sculptures where text has been inscribed into thin porcelain fragments which are then leant, or stacked like pages of a notebook. De Waal writes in his accompanying essay: "*So here is my work. It is a series of detours. It is a detour through the work of Robert Walser. I love his writings. I love the way he wrote, the way he took apart his accomplishments and made texts. I love his understanding of making as a way of marking time. Text can be sculpture, sculpture a sort of speech.*"

De Waal's exceptional practice can be further explored in the gallery's second venue in Bleibtreustrasse which shows a selection of recent black and white shelves that especially highlights the artist's dealing with specific materials and their relation to each other. "*I work with things. (...) And then I arrange them, find places to put them down, on shelves or within vitrines, in houses and galleries and museums, move them around so that they are in light or in shadow. They are installations, or groupings, or a kind of poetry. They have titles, a phrase or a line that helps them on their way in the world.*" (Edmund de Waal)

Edmund de Waal (*1964, Nottingham) lives and works in London. De Waal's work was presented in several solo and group exhibitions at important institutions, such as the Frick Collection, New York; Ateneo Veneto and Jewish Museum, Venice to coincide with the 58th Venice Biennale (both 2019); Museu d'Art Contemporani d'Eivissa, Ibiza; Schindler House, Los Angeles (both 2018); Artipelag, Stockholm (2017); Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna (2016); Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht; Royal Academy, London; Barbican Art gallery, London (all 2015); Theseus Tempel, Vienna; Turner Contemporary, Margate (both 2014); National Gallery, London (2013); Alison Richard Building, Cambridge (2012); Tate Britain, London; Victoria and Albert Museum, London (both 2009); Tate Liverpool (2004) and LACMA, Los Angeles (2000), among others.

On November 29th, 2019 the presentation of Edmund de Waal's *library of exile* will be inaugurated at the Japanisches Palais in Dresden. The work is constructed as a library which holds 2000 books by exiled writers as well as a quartet of new vitrines by de Waal. *library of exile* is part of the exhibition psalm at the Ateneo Veneto in Venice and will further travel to the British Museum in London in 2020.

Also known for his writings, Edmund de Waal won several literary prizes with his bestseller *The Hare with Amber Eyes* (2010), such as the Book of the Decade Award (2016). Most recently, his book *The White Road*, a narrative story of porcelain, was published in June 2016.

Further exhibitions, fair participations and events:

12 September – 19 October 2019

Giulia Andreani

Art Must Hang

57, rue du Temple 75004 Paris

26 September – 16 November 2019

Albert Oehlen

Spiegelbilder

41 Dover Street W1S 4NS London

3 – 6 October 2019

FRIEZE London

17 – 20 October 2019

FIAC

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