

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

The
Economist

Full of Gilt Edmund de Waal at Waddesdon



Mr de Waal made over a thousand pieces of porcelain for the Waddesdon installation. Many of them are displayed in vitrines, marking a first for the artist. In a kind of homage, some of his small white pots, plates and dishes have a subtle smear of gilt on the rim or lip. Many of the objects here are obscured behind lightly frosted glass, a technique he calls “ghosting”. Some of this work is displayed so discreetly that it is nearly invisible to the casual visitor.

“That’s very deliberate,” says Mr de Waal. “I decided that nothing within the existing collection should be moved to accommodate my pieces. I want people to think about what collecting objects is about, to explore the idea of things lost and found, hidden and half-remembered.”

In the Red Drawing Room, which features a carpet made for Louis XIV, Mr de Wall has installed a black cabinet in the fireplace. It contains 48 porcelain vessels, jars and dishes inside eight black lacquer lead-lined boxes. The piece was inspired by the boxes Waddesdon uses to store the porcelain in its own collection, which are made of wood and lined with chamois leather. “I love the stillness of lead, the way it stills the light and absorbs sound. And its associations with protecting and preserving the transient,” says Mr de Waal.

Edmund de Waal's installation at Waddesdon is just one several at the estate this summer. Already on show is a unique assembly of four versions of a painting by Jean-Siméon Chardin, a 17th-century French artist once described as “the great magician” by Diderot. And at the end of this month the gardens will hold a big collection of outdoor sculpture. In collaboration with Christie's, works by Richard Long, Sarah Lucas and Michael Craig-Martin will be on show. Some

of the pieces already adorn the surroundings of the new Rothschild Foundation archive, in a stunning building overlooking the rolling landscape of Aylesbury Vale. It too is open to visitors.

“Collecting is a long-held habit”, says Lord Rothschild, “but it's something to be shared too.”

Edmund de Waal's ceramics will be on show at Waddesdon Manor until October 28th. The contemporary sculpture show runs from May 28th until October 28th. Mr de Waal made over a thousand pieces of porcelain for the Waddesdon installation. Many of them are displayed in vitrines, marking a first for the artist. In a kind of homage, some of his small white pots, plates and dishes have a subtle smear of gilt on the rim or lip. Many of the objects here are obscured behind lightly frosted glass, a technique he calls “ghosting”. Some of this work is displayed so discreetly that it is nearly invisible to the casual visitor.

“That's very deliberate,” says Mr de Waal. “I decided that nothing within the existing collection should be moved to accommodate my pieces. I want people to think about what collecting objects is about, to explore the idea of things lost and found, hidden and half-remembered.”

In the Red Drawing Room, which features a carpet made for Louis XIV, Mr de Waal has installed a black cabinet in the fireplace. It contains 48 porcelain vessels, jars and dishes inside eight black lacquer lead-lined boxes. The piece was inspired by the boxes Waddesdon uses to store the porcelain in its own collection, which are made of wood and lined with chamois leather. “I love the stillness of lead, the way it stills the light and absorbs sound. And its associations with protecting and preserving the transient,” says Mr de Waal.

Edmund de Waal's installation at Waddesdon is just one several at the estate this summer. Already on show is a unique assembly of four versions of a painting by Jean-Siméon Chardin, a 17th-century French artist once described as “the great magician” by Diderot. And at the end of this month the gardens will hold a big collection of outdoor sculpture. In collaboration with Christie's, works by Richard Long, Sarah Lucas and Michael Craig-Martin will be on show. Some of the pieces already adorn the surroundings of the new Rothschild Foundation archive, in a stunning building overlooking the rolling landscape of Aylesbury Vale. It too is open to visitors.

“Collecting is a long-held habit”, says Lord Rothschild, “but it's something to be shared too.”

Edmund de Waal's ceramics will be on show at Waddesdon Manor until October 28th. The contemporary sculpture show runs from May 28th until October 28th.