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Gagosian Rome Probes Artistic Process in “Prototypology”

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Edmund De Waal's 'Ten thousand things', opening today at Gagosian Beverly Hills, explores the artist's interests in black porcelain glazes. Pictured: to speak to you, 2015. Photography: Mike Bruce. Courtesy of the artist and Gagosian Gallery

“Prototypology” at Gagosian Gallery Rome is an ambitious project to say the least. Described as an “index of process and mutation,” the exhibition explores research and development in the work of 30 contemporary artists, revealing moments of triumph, process, trial, and error.

Taking as its point of departure the concept of the artist’s studio as a zone for sourcing, modifying, and testing, “Prototypology” traces the artistic process from conception to finished artwork through a range of works including preparatory drawings, archives, maquettes, proposals, and bricolage.

Commenting on the exhibition, Curator Aaron Moulton says that it “uncovers distinct incarnations of preliminary research, development, and progression within the individual artist’s practice,” and in doing so reveals “the nature of innovation.”

Highlights include new works and archival material from Robert Therrien, Takashi Murakami, Michael Heizer, and Albert Oehlen, among other artists, as well as studies for sculptures by the likes of Claes Oldenburg, Dan Graham, Tatiana Trouvé, and Rachel Whiteread.

In a contemporary art world that focuses attention squarely on the product of artistic expression – the art object, “Prototypology” offers visitors the rare opportunity to meditate on the origins of the art object and realign their senses to the wonders of human creativity.

“Prototypology” is at Gagosian Gallery Rome until March 5, 2016

Artists: Vladimir Arhipov, Richard Artschwager, Nina Beier, Will Boone, Mike Bouchet, Chris Burden, Jason Dodge, Aleksandra Domanović, Dan Graham, Loris Gréaud, Michael Heizer, Carsten Höller, Thomas Houseago, Allan McCollum, Takashi Murakami, Albert Oehlen, Claes Oldenburg, Steven Parrino, Giuseppe Penone, Kirsten Pieroth, Ry Rocklen, Nancy Rubins, Arcangelo Sassolino, David Smith, Rudolf Stingel, Robert Therrien, Mungo Thomson, Tatiana Trouvé, Cy Twombly, Rachel Whiteread