

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Elizabeth Mangini, "Mario Merz: Igloos," *Artforum*, September 2018

ARTFORUM

"MARIO MERZ: IGLOOS"

Pirelli HangarBicocca

October 25, 2018–February 24, 2019

Curated by Vicente Todolí

Between 1968 and 2003, Italian artist Mario Merz built scores of igloos from materials such as glass, clay, sand, iron, sticks, stones, and fabric. That none were made of ice indicates that he wished to explore the construction as a model for anthropological space rather than as a cultural practice. Simultaneously domus and dome—home and archetype—the igloos perform the precarious relationship between individuals and society that informs the artist's oeuvre. While Merz was fabricating his first igloo, international interest in nonpedigreed architecture was emerging as a critique of industrial capitalism; his use of newspaper stacks or piles of produce as building blocks resonated with these postwar discourses. Bringing together more than thirty igloos in one cavernous space, this show invites us to wander through three decades of Merz's continuous development of the form and, with its accompanying catalogue, affords new occasions for reflection on the fragile structures of contemporary society.

—Elizabeth Mangini