

**The Blueproject Foundation presents the solo show  
"It's Not What You Think" by the artist duo  
Elmgreen & Dragset.**



IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK  
ELMGREEN & DRAGSET

07.06.2019 - 27.10.2019

- **The opening will take place on the 7<sup>th</sup> of June at 7.30 pm and the exhibition will be on view at Il Salotto from the 8<sup>th</sup> of June until the 27<sup>th</sup> of October, 2019.**
- The show transforms *Il Salotto* into an abandoned, underground boiler room, with a site-specific installation and other pieces by Elmgreen & Dragset that create an ambiguous narrative.
- The project brings together two seemingly divergent discourses, one centering on the lost role of the human body in a post-labor information age, and the other focusing on the body as a market battleground, as seen in relation to the treatment and prevention of HIV and AIDS.

## **Information about the exhibition**

The Blueproject Foundation presents the solo exhibition “It's Not What You Think”, by the artist duo Elmgreen & Dragset, which will be shown at // *Salotto* from June 7 to October 27, 2019.

“It's Not What You Think” transforms Il Salotto into a different setting: an abandoned, underground boiler room with tubes crisscrossing the space. The artist duo continues their practice of altering art spaces by turning the white cube gallery room into a location that contrasts the discreet format in which contemporary art is normally presented. Industrial metal tubes of various sizes dominate the space, re-directing visitors' movements as they must step over, bend under, or walk around the tubes in order to navigate the site.

While the tubes' pastel colors are colors that can be found in real-life industrial settings, they also correspond to the color tones of food pigments used to coat the pills in some of the latest generations of HIV medicines like Truvada, Atripla, Stribild and Isentress. These pastel colors might appear innocent, even inviting, like candy, camouflaging the toxicity of such medications. The various colors of the pills serve the purpose of indicating and distinguishing the different functions of each pill, not unlike the different colors of industrial tubes, whose color scheme signals if the tubes are used for drainage, steam, heating, or other purposes.

Aesthetically, the installation draws on early Minimalist works by artists such as Michael Asher and Charlotte Posenenske, creating a bodily reference with the means of simple architectural elements. The metal tubes appear to penetrate the floor, walls and support columns, seemingly extending beyond the gallery space itself, as if they were the veins of an organism. Everything in the exhibition “It's Not What You Think” is based on sets of uncertainties in which nothing is as it appears at first glance. The boiler room is of course just a fiction: the tubes are dysfunctional and the boiler room itself serves as a metaphor for the body as both a biological and cultural product. Within the installation, other works by Elmgreen & Dragset imply traces of human activities with ambiguous narratives. A car seat cast in bronze—titled *I must make amends* (2019), after the lyrics of Janis Joplin's song *Mercedes Benz*—sits abandoned in the space as a leftover, now used as a chair by whoever could be the caretaker of this boiler room. Next to it, *After Francis Bacon* (2014), combines two readymades: a used

tractor tire and a dirty boiler suit. In a nearby corner, one finds a burned-down candle—carved in marble—next to a mattress and some books, which comprise the set of the performance *Anywhere* (2019).

The melancholic atmosphere in this non-functional boiler room installation at once reflects on a postindustrial reality in which we feel bodily estranged from spaces that were previously based on manual labor, and acts as a reminder of how our bodies themselves have now been reduced from their original role as the core of production in our society to becoming just consumer targets for the pharmaceutical and entertainment industries.

## **Biography**

**Michael Elmgreen** (born in 1961 in Copenhagen, Denmark) & **Ingar Dragset** (born in 1969 in Trondheim, Norway) have worked as a duo since 1995. They have been working at the crossroads of art and architecture, performance and installation. Preoccupied with objects and their settings, and the discourse that can arise when those objects are radically recontextualized, Elmgreen & Dragset push against the normal modes for the display of art. Whether presenting sculptures or total environments, their work draws attention to the institutions that host them and their attendant politics. Performativity and participation are fraught in the work of Elmgreen & Dragset as their work invites and denies participation in equal measure (pools are emptied, diving boards are oriented vertically, bars are inaccessible, sinks dysfunctional). Quotidian objects are stripped of their utility and regarded as sculptural phenomena, taking on Minimalist aesthetics that challenge the sterilizing force of the white cube. In the same way, Elmgreen & Dragset's outdoor public sculpture recontextualize the surroundings in which they are located, such as well-known projects like *Van Gogh's Ear* at Rockefeller Plaza in New York or *Prada Marfa* along Highway 90 in the middle of the Texan desert. They have held numerous solo exhibitions at art institutions worldwide, including the Whitechapel Gallery, London (2018–19); Museum Haus Lange, Kunstmuseen Krefeld (2017); FLAG Art Foundation, New York (2016); Tel Aviv Museum of Art (2016); Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (2016); PLATEAU, Samsung Museum of Art, Seoul (2015); Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen (2014); Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo (2014); Victoria and Albert Museum, London (2013–14); Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2011); ZKM Museum of Modern Art, Karlsruhe (2010); Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León (2009); The Power Plant, Toronto (2006); Serpentine Gallery, London (2006); Tate Modern, London (2004); and Kunsthalle Zürich (2001).

## **PRESS Contact**

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### **Information and images available at:**

<http://www.blueprojectfoundation.org/en/press-releases>

### **Practical information:**

Blueproject Foundation  
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Opening hours:  
from Tuesday to Friday, from 10 am to 8 pm  
Saturdays and Sundays, from noon to 7 pm