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PRESSBOOK

ELMGREEN & DRAGSET

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Elmgreen & Dragset reveal details of the Istanbul Biennial

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Ingar Dragset and Michael Elmgreen, Art Basel 2017

The high-profile Scandinavian artist duo Elmgreen & Dragset, who took part in Art Basel's Conversation programme earlier this week, revealed to us more details of the 15th Istanbul Biennial, which they are organising. The exhibition will feature 30 new commissions and works by ten Turkish artists out of a total of 57. A full list of artists participating is due to be announced next month. The biennial is due to open on 16 September (until 12 November), and takes place across the city in six venues.

The artists say that the biennial, entitled a good neighbour, will deal with multiple notions of home and neighbourhoods, "exploring how living modes in our private spheres have changed throughout the past decades".

"Istanbul needs the biennial because the dialogue with the international community has been severely damaged. With the biennial, we hope to show a sign of solidarity," Michael Elmgreen says. Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan won a narrow victory in the constitutional referendum in April; 51% of voters cast ballots in Erdoğan's favour, granting him sweeping new powers

"The biennial will also take a feminist position; part of the political process [in Turkey] means that women are under renewed pressure to take on traditional roles," Ingar Dragset says. "We aim to highlight positive alternatives to normative living modes, and propose a different understanding of what it means to be a 'good citizen'."

Photographs by Lee Miller, the US-born photojournalist who moved to the UK in the 1930s and reported the Second World War—famously taking a self-portrait in Hitler's bath after the defeat of Nazi Germany—will also feature. "A few historic positions will contextualise contemporary aesthetics in the exhibition," Elmgreen says.