

EMMA transformed into a car park in a new exhibition by Elmgreen & Dragset

EMMA's new exhibition is an unprecedented takeover of the museum's clean-lined modernist, concrete exhibition space. With new works made especially for this exhibition and a selection of iconic sculptures from their 25 years of collaboration, the artist duo Elmgreen & Dragset has transformed the space into a surreal car park. The artists have also collaborated with Paperi T, the Finnish rap artist, who has created the lyrics for a video that mediates the exhibition's themes. Elmgreen & Dragset: 2020 will be on display at EMMA – Espoo Museum of Modern Art, Finland from 26 September 2020 to 17 January 2021.

Inspired by the museum's brutalist architecture, **Elmgreen & Dragset** have transformed EMMA's exhibition space into a car park. The exhibition, entitled *2020*, incorporates real cars, road markings and a selection of Elmgreen & Dragset's sculptures, both site-specific and familiar, that together create new sets of narratives.

"This year 2020 feels quite like the atmosphere one would experience in a car park – something you want to leave soon after you have entered" the artist duo states. The car park concept addresses some of the central questions in Elmgreen & Dragset's artistic practice, like the privatisation of public space, marginalisation and the loss of communities. *2020* not only raises questions about the role of the car in modern society and what it means culturally but also about that part of public architecture, which can be described as 'non-places' or transitional spaces, as the car park can't really be described as a destination in itself.

"Parking garages seem to correspond to a darker place in the human psyche. It is at this particular moment in time, as a general scepticism towards constant expansion and speed looms and a global pandemic further pushes debates on mobility, that we stand to turn EMMA into a car park", the artist duo says.

Elmgreen & Dragset have used cars and car parts frequently in their oeuvre, but this is the first time that an entire exhibition is dedicated to the topic of automobiles as cultural signifiers. Cars play a role in shaping our social relations, gender roles, cities and landscapes. "More than most other design objects, cars can reveal a lot about the power structures in our society."

One of the new sculptures in the show, *The Outsiders*, consists of an old Mercedes estate car with Russian number plates and two realistic male figures lying spooning in the back of the car – an intimate moment played out in public. The car is also filled with wrapped and crated art works and on the dashboard one can spot two installer ID passes apparently belonging to the figures for an Art Basel 2020 that never happened.

The exhibition – the melancholic, half abandoned car park – also begs the question: What will happen to intimacy after 2020, a year of social distancing and heightened fear of sharing physical space.

The Danish-Norwegian artist duo **Michael Elmgreen** (born 1961 in Denmark) and **Ingar Dragset** (born 1969 in Norway) are known for their works that comment on power structures embedded in our culture in a subversive, yet playful manner. The duo has worked together since 1995, and the exhibition at EMMA also marks the 25th anniversary of their collaboration.

In conjunction with the exhibition, Elmgreen & Dragset have collaborated with **Paperi T**, the Finnish rap artist, who has created the lyrics for a video shot in the exhibition. The video can be viewed on EMMA's website in the mobile exhibition guide at emmamuseum.fi/ed2020.