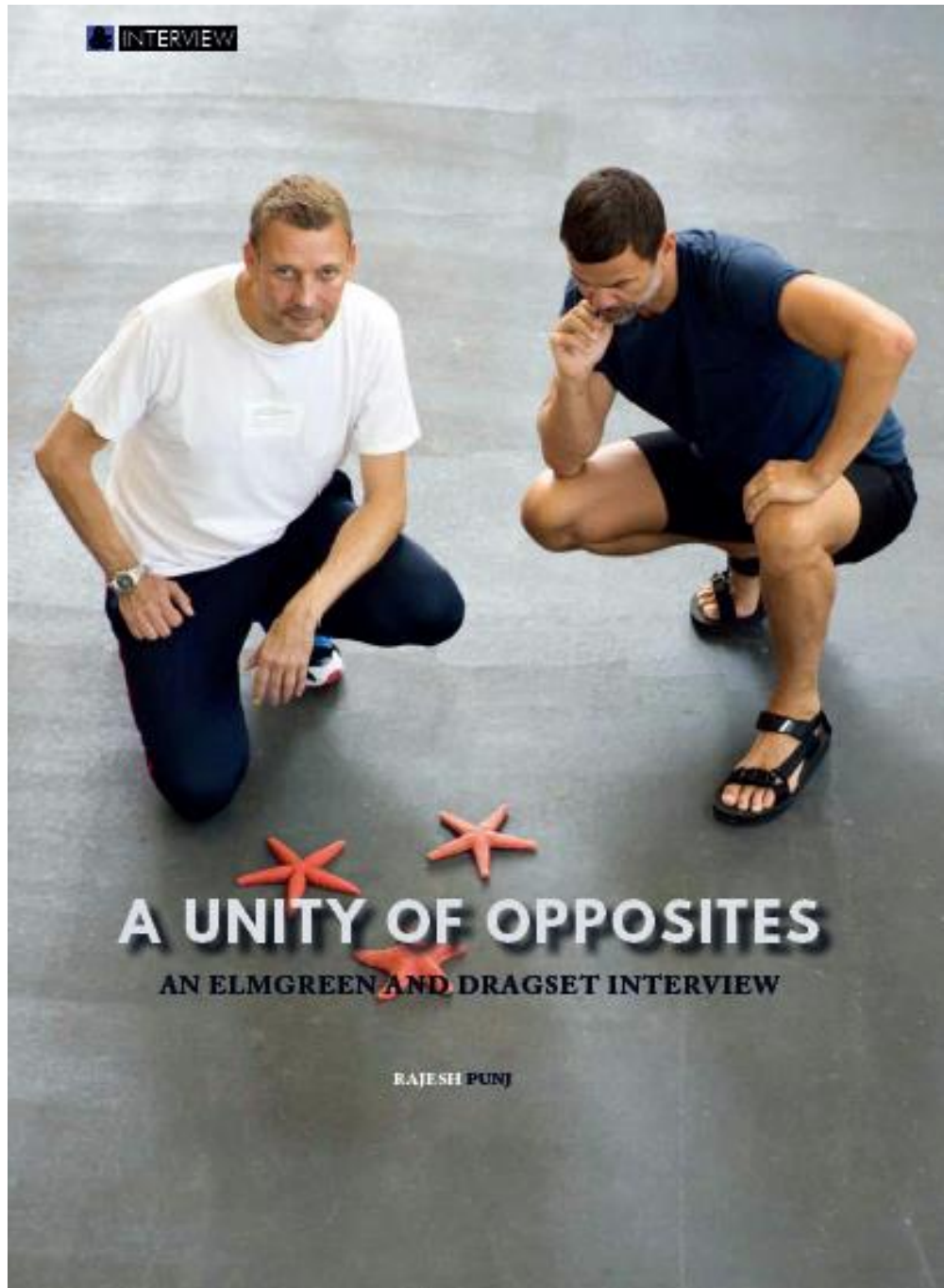


A Unity of Opposites An Elmgreen and Dragset Interview

December, 2018 | By Rajesh Punj

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Given the choice between success and failure, it is likely we would want to triumph every time. But the order of things, the inevitable sequence of mistakes and melodramas that shape our lives, are what motivate the Danish, Norwegian combination of Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset, to reconnoitre for the truth as they see it. Setting out to subvert our collective sensibilities, the artists have from the beginning profited from a multidisciplinary approach, of performance, installations, design, art and corrupted advertising, to critique our social infrastructures.

As artists interested in the objects and information that rationalize our lives, they come at it with an adolescent energy, as a protest against the moroseness of maturity; the idea that to surrender to the status-quo is for them the beginning of the end, or the moment when reality reveals itself as an immovable rock. A prime example of this was their bronze sculpture of a boy on a rocking horse, entitled *Powerless Structures, Fig 101*, 2012, for Trafalgar Square's forth plinth. That as Elmgreen saw it, was a playful attempt at challenging masculine stereotypes. "The boy, the frightened boy of the fireplace (at Whitechapel Gallery, London) is very much about masculinity. Which also links to the small boy we had on the rocking horse, on the plinth in Trafalgar Square. Which was in stark contrast to the war heroes, grubbier

^ Elmgreen & Dragset
Photo: Elmar Vestner

< Elmgreen & Dragset
Portrait of the artists
Courtesy of the artists

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on their black horses. It is very much about the problem with traditional masculine roles, which is still very present.”

Which emphasises an attractive contradiction about their work; that of their appetite for wit and ingenious wonder manifest as a clean calculated aesthetic. In-situ their Paris works resemble the body parts of a German engineered car, specifically the 2018 bar installation and diving board series, which is turned over by their installation at Whitechapel Gallery, London, of a moribund municipal swimming pool, lined with dirt and littered with debris. When invited to speak about their collaborative relationship, the art historian and artist Coosje van Bruggen said of working with Claes Oldenburg, that it is a ‘unity of opposites’, that as a proposition appears apt when in the company of the Scandinavian artists and their artworks, and it is as if their work’s duality seeks to explain them as two people, with two kinds of work; that of the machine aesthetic of one set of works, against the annihilation of another, which is for them a testament to the wilful complexities of modern life. The sensation that the most attractive of objects, an iPhone or Audi TT, can in and of themselves induce greater levels of isolation, as we become entirely absorbed by the newness of now.

When the discarding of something damaged or disused might warrant us to think beyond our own self-satisfaction, to consider how we sustain the constant replacing of one thing for another. For Elmgreen and Dragset it amounts to the fast-forward fossilisation of our material things, and also to the loss of our environment, as public spaces become capitalist havens. Which Elmgreen sees as the slow erosion of oneself, “we take (materials) much more for granted today, because we are so overloaded with objects in our everyday lives. There is too much on offer, to feel that the object can be precious anymore. That it can be a beautiful design. People just buy, buy, buy. When they are bored of one thing, they are onto the next thing. Our electronic gadgets are a good example of that.”

Artists cum activists, they are in no way inhibited by procedures or protocol, which for them comes with the liberty of not having gone to art school. Where the instinctiveness to do is replaced by the necessary need to think, until an idea is tightened by intellectualism. One of a performance background, the other a former writer, they see it as ample reward that they are not stultified by the education and egos of the art world. Less a desire to belong, theirs is a want and willingness to remind the outsiders looking in, voyeurs positively vandalising our social structures as a way to invite us to think of something better.

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Rajesh Punj: *I attended the Whitechapel exhibition for the opening, weeks before coming here to Paris. Actually coming from Antwerp today via Brussels.*

Michael Elmgreen: It is a short ride now.



^ Elmgreen & Dragset
Triple Diving Board 2018
MDF, PVC, aluminium, stainless steel 220 x 48 x 32
cm
© Elmgreen & Dragset / ADAGP, Paris, 2018
Courtesy: Galerie Perrotin
Photo by: Elmar Vestner

> Elmgreen & Dragset
Broken Square, 2018
Asphalt, styrofoam, stainless steel
© Elmgreen & Dragset / ADAGP, Paris, 2018
Courtesy: Galerie Perrotin
Photo by: Elmar Vestner



"For the first year we only performed, and then we thought to test out making sculptures as well, because we wanted to give our audience a surprise. If we were invited for shows, they would expect us to do some kind of live activity, and we were like 'no no, we are not giving up that easily, now we make objects.'"

RP: *Antwerp to Paris, without having to leave the train, is possibly two hours, maybe a little more. So it feels so connected, when you are on the mainland of Europe; and I say that as a writer based in a country, the UK, that wishes to divorce itself of all of that. Do you know Antwerp?*

Ingar Dragset: We have been once, as part of a performance festival in 1996 I think.

ME: It was raining the entire time we were there. So we didn't have the best impression because it was a theatre performance festival, and we were there doing more of an 'art' performance; and the audience were like 'what the hell is that?'

RP: *But you began collaborating with performance.*

ME: For the first year we only performed, and then we thought to test out making sculptures as well, because we wanted to give our audience a surprise. If we were invited for shows, they would expect us to do some kind of live activity, and we were like 'no no, we are not giving up that easily, now we make objects.'

RP: *So how would you go about incorporating the two disciplines in such a setting? Practically would you divide a space into performing and practice areas?*

ME: At the time we were doing a lot of bodily performances, for instance we painted a gallery white for twelve hours with three hundred litres of white paint, and then we washed down the paint, so it would fall as a thick layer from the walls to the floor. Like a weird,

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slightly crazy snow landscape, or something resembling that.

RP: And was that about endurance?

ME: Partly yes. (We were) questioning the white cube also, and about the idea of the space being neutral because it is painted white. Of course it isn't that, so we thought 'why don't we add some more of the white material to it and try make it start moving.'

RP: Of transforming the physical into the ephemeral. And did you record any of that?

ME: Actually we didn't care so much about documentation at the time. As a consequence we were very much of the 'here and now movement', and people came and looked at it, at us, and they could come for twelve hours if they wanted to. Many came, would leave and come back, to see if we had collapsed.

RP: You were continuously going for twelve hours?

ME: We did it without any break in the performance for twelve hours; but we were more fit then.

RP: Younger. So it was one of those performance you talk about, that you were there when Elmgreen and Dragset painted the walls whiter.

ME: And that was the start of our collaboration. Ingar came from performance and theatre, and I came from a writing background, and had done a bit of visual art.

RP: And neither of you had gone to art school.

< Elmgreen & Dragset
Adaptation, Fig. 1 2018
stainless steel, PVC
227 x 45 x 40 cm
© Elmgreen & Dragset / ADAGP, Paris, 2018
Courtesy: Galerie Perrotin
Photo by: Guillaume Ziccarelli

v Elmgreen & Dragset
View of the exhibition at Perrotin, Paris
© Elmgreen & Dragset / ADAGP, Paris, 2018
Photo: Claire Dorn



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ID: No, we accidentally landed in this world.

RP: *So how do you feel now, to be doing such scaled up works? I am sure everyone is talking about it, of your having reconstructed a public pool as an art-going installation.*

ME: Maybe it almost makes us have a 'little less' respect for the institution, and the making and framing of an exhibition. When we come into a room, even if it is an amazing institution, we are constantly asking ourselves of how we can change that for a while? Of how can we transform it into something where it changes its identity for a time? And I think that maybe that has to do with us not being bought up in a museum environment somehow. So we never take it for granted, we never take an art space for granted.

RP: *When you say that I think of my time at art school, of reading art history and if you like of the burden of it. I was painting in the beginning, and there was a moment I stopped producing anything, because I was overwhelmed almost with what had gone before. It was as if art had decided itself, and that I couldn't contribute anything more. Which led to my reading and writing, as a substitute.*

ME: I don't want to sound anti-intellectual or anti-educational, but if you watch children, of their eagerness to question everything, and of their curiosity. They have the courage to ask 'why is it like that?' And you as an adult will say 'well I actually don't know', and I think somehow the educational system hasn't managed to

^ Elmgreen & Dragset
One Day
2015
Installation view
Courtesy of Whitechapel Gallery
Photo: Doug Peters

> Elmgreen & Dragset
Heritage
2014
Original judge's wig on a steel hanger
50 x 35 x 35 cm
Courtesy of Galerie Perrotin
Photo: Claire Dorn



"If you watch children, of their eagerness to question everything, and of their curiosity. They have the courage to ask 'why is it like that?' And you as an adult will say 'well I actually don't know', and I think somehow the educational system hasn't managed to completely cut it off."

completely cut it off. But it is so sad that many grown-ups stop to ask these kinds of question, because they are very important actually.


RP: *So what kind of reception do you receive from the figureheads of institutions and organisations you critique?*

ME: No, I mean we read books, and we read theory, and of course we are super-interested in the academic context of our work; but that can also be very standardising. I mean an academic perception in any field, in any science, can start to become routine. Saying that Dr. (Douglas) Chimp was a big inspiration for us because when he was writing 'On the Museum Ruins', he spoke for example about how you get it completely wrong that the American artist Richard Serra is a macho artist, because of the fact that he works with big steel plates. Macho is not defined by material. We would be so lucky if we were seen as macho for melting down steel. In the world it is all about your attitude, of using the material, and of your approach to whatever material you have. Which led us to do bigger scale installations such as the swimming pool. Being a gay couple back then, (not a couple today, but thirty years ago, we were for ten years), because there was something of a perception that gay artists had to be more poetic, and that they needed to work in very soft material. And we were hell no way. I mean I was not going to be boxed in like that, and try to buy into the stereotypes in that way. So we did Dock-Down gallery in Iceland, building bigger constructions. To show that you can have sexuality, and that you can actually feel something in the landscape.

RP: *I am really intrigued by this amateur or adolescent approach that you adhere to. Has it proved the essential impetus for your looking at everything 'anew'?*

ID: In spite of their accomplished finish, the diving broads and road signs, we still try to involve a level of amateurishness, as you say, to our work, and obviously we like trying new things, because we have always seen ourselves as new to the field of art. And that in a way keeps that freshness (about what we do) that I think is important somehow. That can be moving into new areas, like opera or theatre productions, but also not being afraid of architectural space, of becoming too urbanist and not moving into the public space. Which requires talking to all kinds of people in the process of realising the larger scale outdoor projects, because for those you have to use so many different sides of your self.

It is kind of crazy to think about. We made a list between us of all the jobs that are involved in making a public art project. Where you have to be everything from a landscape architect, politician, and fundraiser. You really need to be a psychologist, to deal with people's crazy reactions sometimes, and you have to be incredibly practical, and have a technical solution, of engineering. Asking yourself 'is it possible, not possible'. It is kind of hilarious to see how many areas there are involved in making an artwork. What keeps it very interesting to be an artist today, is that you need so many different kinds of people around you at any one time, who can provide you with so much information and advice.

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ME: The other side of being an artist is akin to a cat-and-mouse situation, that in order not to be cornered (by the cat) you need to move really fast, and if you are you need to get out with a good set of tricks. So the cat that is the system doesn't eat you. With Whitechapel (London), it was great to do a show that we feel had sufficient narrative the whole way through. That started with a complete staging, of our creating a complete environment. And then you have smaller works on the stairwell, leading into a room that is very art historically referential, but also acts as an interactive work, where you can sit and drink Scottish whisky.

RP: *Yes I managed to have a drop (as they say).*

ID: Ah, you were brave, was it okay?

RP: *I am not such a whisky person, but it was good for my insides.*

ME: That's good. It was cheap.

RP: *I was slightly worried because I was asking the attendant, 'how many bottles are there?' and he replied 'a certain number', and I said, 'you are likely to run out'.*

ID: Yes, yes.

ME: I guess they didn't expect people would actually intervene in that way, to drink it - which is great.

RP: But I guess you don't know. It is interesting too because you are never certain of what level of interaction you can have with the works; and it appears you enjoy exploiting that conundrum with the audience.

ME: You shouldn't do too much to guide people. The action should be an open invitation, and then you get



*Elmgreen & Dragset
To Whom It May Concern, 2018
100 starfish in bronze, steel, patina
Dimensions variable
Copyright Elmgreen & Dragset / ADAGE Paris 2018
Courtesy Perrotin, Collection Dragonfly*



the surprise.

RP: Absolutely, but I guess we are so used to the notion of not touching.

ID: Exactly.

ME: Certainly of not drinking whisky in the gallery.

RP: It is quite a surprise.

ME: So for us it is important to not only be working in one formal language. I mean we are pretty confident in our staging, but we want to test out other kinds of exhibitions and environments, as with the swimming pool, that was a brilliant idea.

RP: But as we alluded to earlier, is it not all about confidence? Because you successfully appear to move between materials, and on such a scale, always pulling it off.

ME: For us it is about 'no fear', not confidence. I have always liked uncertainty, because it reminds me of our beginning as artists. Too much certainty is not positive or productive at all. It is about not fearing too much to fail. For us the art world has become so so professionalised. So if you fail it is regarded as an incredibly bad thing.

RP: Which makes me think of American artists (Robert Rauschenberg, and currently Dan Colen. I had written recently, as part of an interview with Colen, about Rauschenberg's appetite for and understanding of failure, as he explained so eloquently and affirmatively of it being an opportunity for his greatest advances. Which applies to Colen's own creative collapses that he too professed to profit from. Personally I think it is fundamental that we are open to failure, and that we allow it.

EM: The whole world shouldn't be oppressed by perfection.

RP: I think you are right, we even fear to say that word, that of 'losing control' and subsequently of letting go.

EM: No artist whoever it was, was a genius twenty-four hours a day throughout their whole life.

RP: But you must meet artists who are not open to

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discussing their unrealised ideas.

ID: I think artists between themselves are not so (particular).

ME: We do have a laugh about it though.

ID: Because I think they all know what it is like. I think it is worst when you have shown a failure. When you arrive at a point where you have to make a decision, of something you are not too proud of. But then (as with Rauschenberg) you can actually learn from it. I can recall when there have been works that we have been embarrassed about for years after, but then ten/fifteen years from when they were originally shown, you look back and totally see why you did that.

RP: So do you have works that you come back to, ideas that you continue to work with?

ID: Oh definitely, this exhibition is very much about us looking back to early works from the late 90's. Like the diving boards for instance, the pools, the bar, Queer Bar/Powerless Structure, Fig. 221, 2018, are all versions of existing works.

ME: We made a square version of the bar in 1998, exactly twenty years ago. Which was very much about change in social encounters, exactly when chat websites and social media started, and people didn't go out to bars as much as they did before. And

> Elmgreen & Dragset
Gay Marriage
2010
Porcelain urinals, taps, stainless steel tubing
110 x 43 x 123 cm
Courtesy of Galerie Gerhardsen Gerner
Photo: Matthias Kolb

v Elmgreen & Dragset
The Whitechapel Pool
2018
Installation view
Courtesy of Whitechapel Gallery
Photo: Jack Hems





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it was also about exclusion, because you can't be a guest at that bar; the bar stools are literally trapped on the serving side. If there is one thing we don't appreciate about the art world it is the VIP culture surrounding it, because for us it is entirely obnoxious. I mean the fear of mingling with a bigger crowd, or the filtering of people (one from another). That is not something we, with our Scandinavian backgrounds, can easily get used to.

RP: But you must experience it all the time.

ID: The thing is with after parties for our own openings we were not always able to get into them.

RP: Really.

ID: Miami for instance, we had an opening, where we had a very fancy opening party at one of the first Miami Basels.

RP: *That happening has to be translated into an artwork.*

ME: Yes, it actually became a work. They had arranged it with some posh friend party organisers, who were running the event, and they had some really brutal bouncers. Emmanuel (Perrotin) was down in the basement at the time with no reception on his cell-phone, and we were hanging out with some friends in the gallery until quite late, and then we arrived to the party in our name, and they (the bouncers), were just like, 'no you can't come in'.

ID: They said 'it was full', and probably it had to do with the dress code as well.

RP: *Possibly everyone had already claimed they were you.*

ID: Ha. Ha, maybe that too.

ME: But obviously we remember that after-party more than any other. Which led to our actually doing something relating to that for a show with Victoria Miro. The first show we made with Victoria in London was a show we called 'Too Late', in which we recreated the interior of a club, that for the final audience looked like a club after hours, completely trashed. Which came about because we decided to initially invite a huge group of guys to come and have fun with us, and enjoy a 'real' party before the opening that evening. Which essentially meant the VIP guests would come too late, because they would see all the empty beer bottles and cigarette butts, and all the mess around the gallery, in and around the sculptures. So everyone who attended to come for the private view were the second round of guests, because we thought maybe its good that they have the same feeling of not being the priority for once; the idea of missing something entirely in spite of wanting to be there.

RP: *It is worth considering how we are classified in such situations, but also the idea of our presence affirming something's existence. There is at Whitechapel (London), and here at Galerie Perrotin, Paris, the sensation of the presence of someone throughout the*



^ Elmgreen & Dragset
Pregnant White Maid
2017
Aluminum, stainless steel, lacquer, clothes
168 x 45 x 66 cm
Courtesy of Galerie Perrotin
Photo: Elmar Vestner

> Elmgreen & Dragset
Capitalism will collapse from within
2003
Canvas, paint, stainless steel safe door, combination
lock Painting: 120 x 200 cm Safe: 90 x 90 cm
Courtesy of the artists Photo: Oren Slor



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show, and equally of their absence; the idea of being and not being present at the same time. That particular duality interested me about your work.

ID: There are a lot of absences, there is the absence of water (in the works upstairs), there is the absence of the possibility for interaction, and (at Whitechapel) of actual portraits in the self-portraits; all of which is very interesting for us.

ME: And of artists who are absent by virtue of their death, for which we have labels in that room (at Whitechapel). I think it comes from our time as performers that it is almost as if an activity has gone on, and that you arrive to see its traces. I think that kind of remains from that.

RP: But then you include figures that appear to represent all of human kind, such as the figure of the small boy looking up to the gun, at Whitechapel, and here of the lifeguard rooted to his seat at the top of the aluminium steps, in Watching 2016. Both of whom appear to be someone and no one at the same time. Are they representative of the human being, of human involvement?

ID: Definitely.

ME: The boy, the frightened boy of the fireplace is very much about masculinity. Which also links to the small boy we put on the plinth in Trafalgar Square, on the rocking horse. Which was in stark contrast to the war heroes, grubbier on their black horses. It is very much about the problem with traditional masculine roles, which is still very present, maybe more so now than before. Gun violence is a masculine problem - you have very few female shootists, of mass-murderers from gun-shootings. So it is linked. The sculptures are very much about learning to look.

ID: Voyeurism.

RP: Upstairs there is a wonderful, almost machine-like aesthetic to the diving boards, for their perfection. Which invites us to think about what we don't see of what is present all the time, of the design of a twisted door handle, or a tightly fitted tap. There is a great deal of design to what we see, which is clearly satisfying for you both - of how materials sit together side-by-side.

ME: We take (materials) more for granted today, because we are so overloaded with objects in our everyday lives. There is too much on offer, to feel that the object can be precious anymore. That it can be beautiful. People just buy, buy, buy. When they are bored of one thing, they are onto the next thing. Our electronic gadgets are a good example of that. You just get hooked on having the latest version, but you are not amazed anymore, as we were when the first iPhone came out, and it really was something where you were like 'wow, I can do all that with a cell-phone'. So it is very much about making people relate to objects in a different way. To look at it, when you have a street sign like *Adaptation*, Fig 5, 2018. It is a work that is about how we don't even think about how we actually control our behaviour according to traffic regulations. The stripes on the street and the street-signs have actually become a global language,





*Elmgreen & Dragset
Modern Moses
2006
Carrycot, bedding, wax figure, baby clothes,
stainless steel cash machine
Carrycot: 16 x 71 x 37 cm Cash machine: 96.5 x
63.8 x 43.5 cm
Courtesy of the artists
Photo: Eric Gregory Powell*

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which is more-or-less the same all over the world. Which is a little crazy, and it was something that didn't apply two hundred years ago. It is a relatively new phenomenon that we control our behaviour according to such signs.

RP: *It triggers the idea that everything that you talk of is entirely about civilising the individual. Of controlling our behaviour in order we are more slave than savage.*

ID: Also I think the more rules we have the less people are allowed to think for themselves. So that is also what these works are about. We need to consider ourselves, our behaviour, and that way take more responsibility, and also when you have a large number of rules you create more 'rule-breakers'. Perversely that can create more criminality in a way, which a huge problem in a place like the United States for example.

ME: The same as in London, street crime in London (is a major problem).

ID: Also because petty crime becomes a bigger offense than it used to be, because we impose all (of these regulations), which generates so much confusion in society.

RP: *Ironic, for all the rules that are intended to clarify how we should behave.*

ID: People don't want to take care of each other, of

> *Elmgreen & Dragset*
12 Hours of White Paint/Powerless Structures, Fig. 15, 1997
White paint (160 liters), aluminum paint cans, painting equipment, water hose with high-pressure gun
Dimensions variable
Performance
Galleri Tommy Lund, Odense, Denmark
Photo by: Leif Hansen

v *Elmgreen & Dragset*
TRY, 1996
Rugs, stereo, walkman, headphones, white counter-height refrigerator, beer
Rugs: maximum 2.5 x 2.5 m; space variable
Performance
Overgaden, Copenhagen,
Photo by: Overgaden, Copenhagen





themselves even. It stopped meaning something.

ME: You go out, and if you have a cigarette outside there is a guy in a fluorescent vest pushing you behind the yellow stripe that is applied to the floor, because it appears you can't smoke beyond that particular line. This is a place of entertainment, we are supposed to go out and feel free, and have fun. It is crazy, not even when I had a birthday party when we were kids was it so controlled.

ID: In Denmark in the 1970's they (the authorities) were even stricter.

RP: *If you are invited to think about it, we are likely under the greatest (invisible) control that we have ever been, considering this is supposed to be a time for our greatest freedoms.*

ID: This is why we are so interested in public space, and the decline of shared space. Which takes us back to the installation at Whitechapel of the swimming pool, and of the decline of public realms as popular environments for social exchange. The degeneration is also about how people appear to except any takeover by private companies, by advertisement and entertainment, and I don't know why people don't seem to want to fight against it. Which is why it is very interesting to put up an artwork in a public space, because it actually makes people more aware of this being a shared space, a civic space.

RP: *You make a very interesting point.*

ID: The shared space becomes the collective place to vent your frustrations, irritations, and admiration (for others); which brings with it levels of disobedience, much more so than when you add another café, or put up a billboard.

RP: *You almost have to surrender to those things.*

ID: Which in a way makes us optimistic that people actually do care.

ME: And the good thing is we have seen how easily it can change for the better, and also for the worse. How do these structures come about? They are there because we agree upon them. We vote for politicians and political systems that create them. They function because we follow for these rules. I mean the minute we discuss them, and begin questioning them, and apply our common sense they could work to our advantage.

RP: *My immediate feeling is we can't really do anything, but then I think of the Middle East, and of how individuals applied themselves in recent history to changing their situations, in Libya, Tunisia and less successfully in Syria. More extreme in some senses, but based on the same desire to alter a set of circumstances. Which has to be entirely about the power of the individual to do something.*

ME: A very nice example from recent history is when they had a dictatorial female president in South

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Korea, where they the public went peacefully out onto the streets for months, tens of thousands of people. They even cleaned up after themselves. Very Korean, very organised, incredibly polite about it, and they eventually ousted her.

RP: *She was arrested if I recall and imprisoned.*

ME: Yes she was arrested, and they voted in a new more democratic president, who immediately tried to shake-up the country's crippling corruption problem. And she, Park Geun-hye, was sentenced to twenty-four years, because actually when they were first digging into what she had done, they could see how horrible she had been. She was also the daughter of the last dictator of the country, Park Chung-hee, who ruled South Korea until his assassination in 1979. So there are situations where you can be optimistic, and democracy does function.

RP: But are you genuinely optimistic about our future, when so many of your works critique the status quo?

ME: I am worried about the situation.

ID: We are concerned, but I think making art is an optimistic act in itself, because if we didn't care we would just do nothing. We might have topped ourselves otherwise.

RP: *So you are, as I suggested earlier, constantly critiquing the system from within.*

ID: Some people do ask us, 'are you part of the system that you critique?' and we obviously have to answer 'yes, we are', we are all part of a capitalist reality, and we simply cannot escape it. Even at the coffee bar by the studio we have to pay for our coffee (as part of an exchange process). We have to react to the world that is around us. You shouldn't be naive, you shouldn't be accepting of everything. *Being critical for us is about studying every aspect of our reality.*

ME: Also of the good side, the problem at the moment is that people can become so disillusioned, that they start to become extremist, mostly towards the right of the political spectrum. But actually if you look at it there is real progress in different parts of the world. There isn't the same amount of people starving as there was before. And I think it is important to have a more varied picture so you can handle the problems and challenges of the political climate in a better way; because if it is all just 'bad' then you instantly become depressed and dysfunctional.

RP: *But it can often feel that way, when social media and television appear to indulge in negative news, as if good news doesn't sell.*

ME: But I think it is very much our generation that can't handle it (social media), because we haven't grow up with it. I think kids are much better at filtering, of not believing, of being more sceptical, and having a more relaxed (approach to everything). It is almost in their DNA, so they are more used to the constant flow of information, while our brains breakdown and become blurred.

RP: *Possibly we are also of a generation that thinks that anything in print amounts to the truth.*

ME: Exactly.





*Elmgreen & Dragset
2018
Installation view
Courtesy of Whitechapel Gallery
Photo: Doug Peters*