

THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE

ELMGREEN & DRAGSET AT THE NASHER

You might not believe your eyes when you see an artwork by Elmgreen & Dragset. The artistic duo harness the power of symbols, humor and storytelling to encourage us to question the world around us. Artists Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset met in 1995 and have worked together ever since. Under the name "Elmgreen & Dragset" they have created sculptures, paintings, films, monumental public artworks and installations that place the viewer among fictional characters dealing with dramatic situations.

One of Elmgreen & Dragset's best-known works is *Prada Marfa*, a replica of a Prada boutique installed in the West Texas desert in 2005. *Prada Marfa* is a type of artwork the artists call a "denial." Although it looks like you could step inside and browse the merchandise, it was never designed to be entered. The artwork was built before the rise of social media and the artists thought it would be an unexpected surprise for the occasional traveler, but it has since become a frequent destination for selfie-takers and has been featured on Beyoncé's Instagram feed and even written into an episode of *The Simpsons*.

Some of the "denials" featured in the Nasher exhibition include a non-functioning door with two sets of hinges and handles and a donation box with no opening that has been filled with miscellaneous items you might find on a city street. Encountering these items that look like a functional part of the museum may cause you to question everything else you see in the building and perhaps even the museum itself. In the Nasher Garden, the artists have installed what seems to be a contemporary art museum that is sinking into the ground so that its sign now reads "TEMPORARY ART." When you see it, you may create a story in your mind about why this building is becoming a ruin or think about how the structures and ideas we expect to be permanent can change over time.



ELMGREEN & DRAGSET: SCULPTURES

September 14, 2019 - January 5, 2020

Visit nashersculpturecenter.org/art/exhibitions

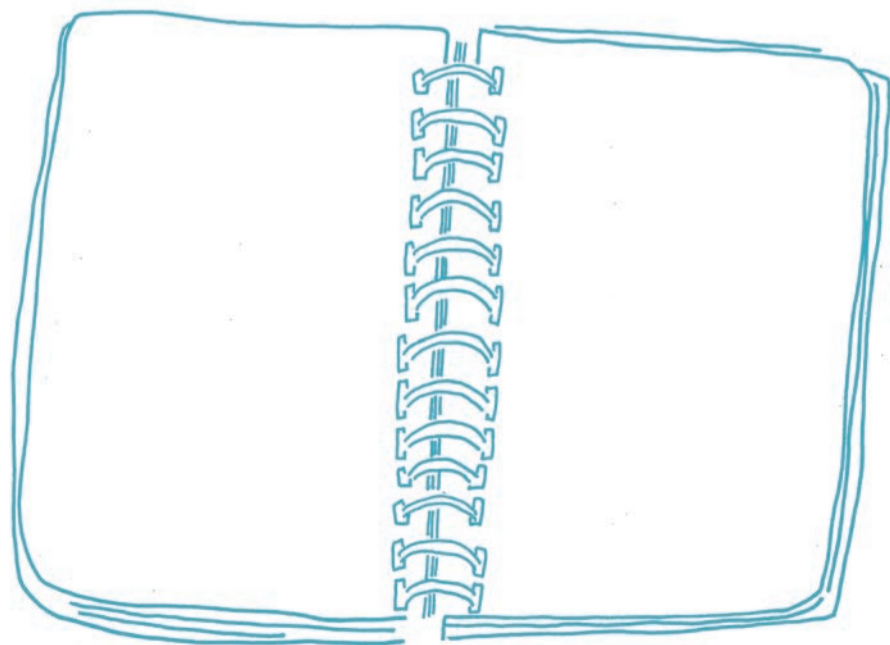
TOP: Elmgreen & Dragset, *Traces of a Never Existing History / Powerless Structures, Fig. 222*, 2001. Wood, stainless steel, aluminum, perspex, fluorescent light, paint, 10.2 x 14.1 x 25.7 feet (310 x 430 x 780 cm). Installation view: 7th International Istanbul Biennial, 21 September - 17 November 2001. BOTTOM LEFT: Elmgreen & Dragset, *Donation Box*, 2006. Glass, stainless steel, adhesive lettering, various objects, 41 1/3 x 17 1/2 x 17 1/2 in. (105 x 44.5 x 44.5 cm). Courtesy of the artists. Photo by Anders Sune Berg. BOTTOM RIGHT: Elmgreen & Dragset, *Prada Marfa*, 2005. Adobe bricks, plaster, aluminum frames, glass panes, MDF, paint, carpet, canvas, Prada shoes and bags, 189 x 299 1/4 x 185 in. (480 x 760 x 470 cm.). Permanent installation, Chihuahuan Desert, Highway 90, Marfa, Texas.

DEAR DALLAS DIARY

Elmgreen & Dragset's Diary series documents the everyday experiences of young people with different jobs and backgrounds. The artists began the series in Paris in 2003. The project continued in Istanbul (2013) and Hong Kong (2015), and will be on view at the Nasher during *Elmgreen & Dragset: Sculptures*. Three young men will be stationed in the galleries, writing about their lives in diaries that are available for viewers to read.

Would you be open to sharing your diary with others? How do you like to document or share your experiences? Where can you learn about other people's experiences or stories? How can stories help us learn about others?

Document your day in the space provided. Was today terrible, amazing, boring? Write or draw to share your story here



Elmgreen & Dragset: Sculptures is made possible with leading support from Perrotin. Major support is provided by Garance Primat Domaine des Etangs and The New Carlsberg Foundation, with additional support courtesy of Lora Reynolds and Quincy Lee, Leigh Rinearson, Sharon and Michael Young, The Danish Arts Foundation, Lucilo Peña and Lee Cobb, and The American Scandinavian Foundation.

HEADS UP

PORTRAITS AT THE NASHER

What can a portrait communicate to us? Artists have often gained inspiration from live models or historical figures.

Alberto Giacometti's brother Diego was his best friend, assistant and model for his artworks. Giacometti stated: "Diego's head is the one I know best. He's posed for me over a longer period of time and more often than anyone else. From 1935 to 1940 he posed for me every day, and again after the war years. So when I draw or sculpt or paint a head from memory it always turns out to be more or less Diego's head, because Diego's is the head I've done most often from life."

Diego is just one of the many subjects of the work in *Foundations: Elmgreen & Dragset*. The exhibition focuses on how artists have sculpted heads over time, many of which are portraits. Additional subjects are authors, children, a king and a dancer. Some works on view honor specific figures, such as poet Charles Baudelaire, and others depict the artist or someone the artist knew well. The sculptures are created from a mix of traditional and unexpected materials such as wax, bronze, plaster, clay, steel, leather, and marble. The objects also range in style from realistic to abstract.

Why do you think artists create portraits? What can you learn about someone's personality from their portrait?

FOUNDATIONS: ELMGREEN & DRAGSET

September 14 - December 30, 2019

Visit nashersculpturecenter.org/art/exhibitions



TOP LEFT: Medardo Rosso, *Sick Child (Bambino malato)*, 1889. Wax over plaster, 10 5/8 x 10 x 7 1/4 in. (27 x 25.4 x 18.4 cm.). TOP RIGHT: Alberto Giacometti, *Bust of Diego (Buste de Diego)*, 1954. Painted bronze, 15 1/2 x 13 1/4 x 8 1/4 in. (39.4 x 33.7 x 21 cm.). BOTTOM LEFT: Pablo Picasso, *Head of a Woman (Fernande)*, 1909. Plaster, 18 1/2 x 14 1/8 x 13 3/4 in. (47 x 35.9 x 34.9 cm.). BOTTOM CENTER: Constantin Brancusi, *Bust of a Boy (Buste d'enfant)*, 1906. Bronze, 12 1/4 x 8 x 7 in. (31.1 x 20.3 x 17.8 cm.). BOTTOM RIGHT: Auguste Rodin, *Hanako*, 1908. Plaster, 6 3/4 x 4 5/8 x 5 1/2 in. (17.1 x 11.7 x 14 cm.). All Artworks: Raymond and Patsy Nasher Collection, Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas.

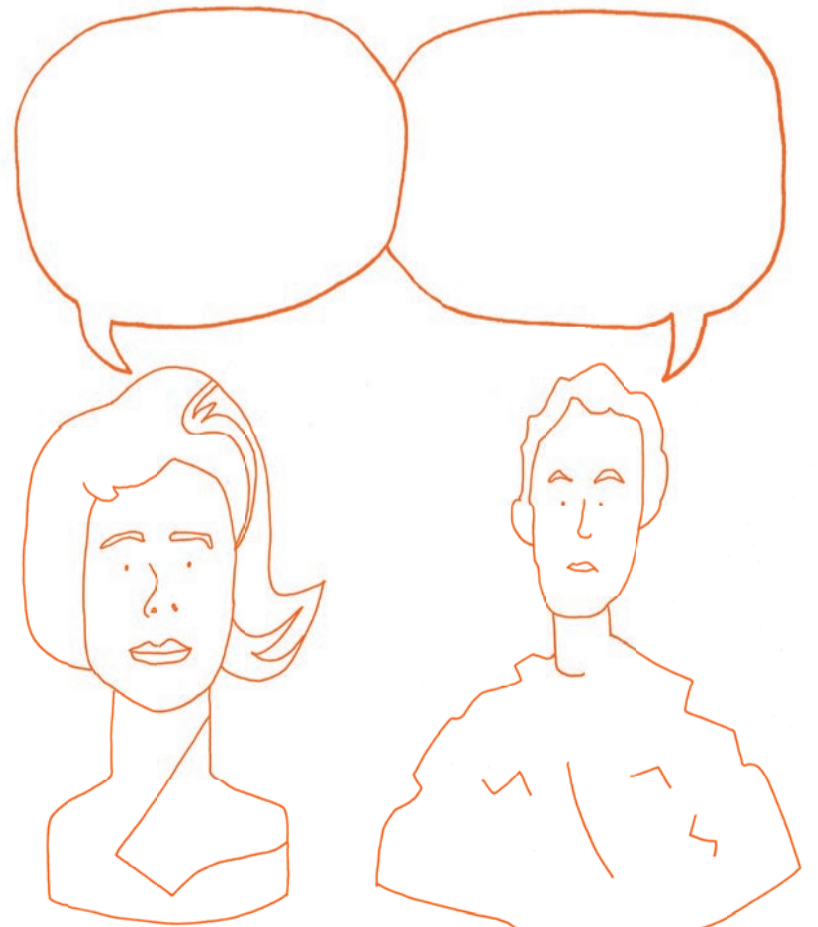
TALKING HEADS

When artists Elmgreen and Dragset chose to install a gallery of heads from the Nasher Collection, they also wrote a script imagining what the heads would say to each other and about each other. Write a dialogue between the sculptures pictured below. What are their personalities? What will they say?



Jeff Koons, *Louis XIV*, 1986

Pablo Picasso, *Head of a Woman*, 1957



Roy Lichtenstein, *Head with Blue Shadow*, 1965

Alberto Giacometti, *Bust of Diego*, 1954



Interview by CARRINGTON TURNER, Senior at Booker T. Washington High School for the Performing and Visual Arts

This summer, Education Intern Carrington Turner interviewed the Nasher's Senior Graphic Designer, Lindsey Croley, about her work, her background and her inspiration.

CARRINGTON TURNER: What are the requirements to be a graphic designer?

LINDSEY CROLEY: A graphic designer needs to know how to use the Adobe Creative Suite, have a clear understanding of color theory, and know basic design principles. It also helps to have a BFA in visual communications. Most importantly, a graphic designer needs to have thick skin and be able to look at every experience as an opportunity for growth.

CT: How did you know that you wanted to be a graphic designer?

LC: I actually started out in textile design. I loved painting on fabric and creating patterns. I found the most efficient way for me to create a pattern was to do so in Photoshop, which led me into the exploration of digital design. I fell in love with ability to layer images, patterns, and color digitally. It was at that point I decided graphic design might be a place for me.

CT: How does your job contribute to the Nasher Sculpture Center?

LC: When an exhibition comes to the Nasher, it usually comes without an identity system. My job is to understand the exhibition and then translate that visually to others through various items such as invitations, brochures, signage, advertising, etc. I do the same for all programs that the Nasher creates.

CT: What are some of your challenges?

LC: It can be difficult believing in your design when others do not. Learning when to push back and when to concede is something that I am always working on. Taking criticism is not hard. The hard part is using the criticism to make whatever it is I am working on better.

CT: What software or programs do you use to create your work?

LC: I use Illustrator, InDesign, and Photoshop in the Creative Suite to design everything I do.

CT: What is the process when creating a design? Where do you start?

LC: I always start with research. I learn as much as I can about the project, exhibition, program...whatever it is, I am like a sponge. Then I start to think about how I can translate the overriding theme into something visual that conveys an emotion. I build a toolbox of elements that convey that emotion. Those elements include color, typography, texture and photography. After I have created the "toolkit," I start playing around with the layout. I make a lot of mistakes and then finally something sticks. Mistakes are the best way to figure out what works and what doesn't.

CT: How much time does it take to create a design?

LC: It depends on the thing that I am designing. If it is an exhibition identity system, that takes a couple of weeks. If it is a flyer, maybe thirty minutes. There is so much that needs to be designed here at the Nasher and I am the only designer, so I have learned to design really fast.

CT: Where does your inspiration come from?

LC: I love beautiful things! I am inspired by nature, by people, and by art. Working at the Nasher with a multitude of artists is incredibly inspiring for me.

CT: How are you able to keep your work original?

LC: I am always pushing myself to do better or more inspiring work. I think that by not allowing myself to get too content, it helps me keep my work original.

CT: How would you describe graphic design using one word?

LC: Communication.

Interested in a career in the arts? Taking on a summer internship is a great way to gain experience and learn something new.

Find out more about careers in the arts at nashersculpturecenter.org/read-watch/learning-resources.

Internship Diary

Text and drawings by Grace Doyle,
sophomore at Sarah Lawrence University

Dear Diary,

Today was my last day as an intern for the Nasher Sculpture Center. We're about three months past when I excitedly drove to Target to pick out clothes that made me look "business-y" and arrived at the museum office for my first day. In my pocket, I now have three months of experience from a place with some of the most creative, kind, and collaborative people in the art world, and can confidently say that I've had the best summer on record.



It's been a whirlwind of meeting new people, editing videos, sitting in on meetings, listening to the fascinating inner workings of a museum I'd grown up enjoying, and proudly accomplishing eating at every food truck at Klyde Warren Park during my lunch breaks.

I can't tell you how lucky I feel to have had the opportunity to be around such amazing people, and to spend the past three months working on projects with them. Overall this summer has taught me the importance of being a life-long learner and to surround yourself with people who are passionate about the work that they do.

I can't thank the Nasher enough!

– Grace



WHAT LIES BENEATH

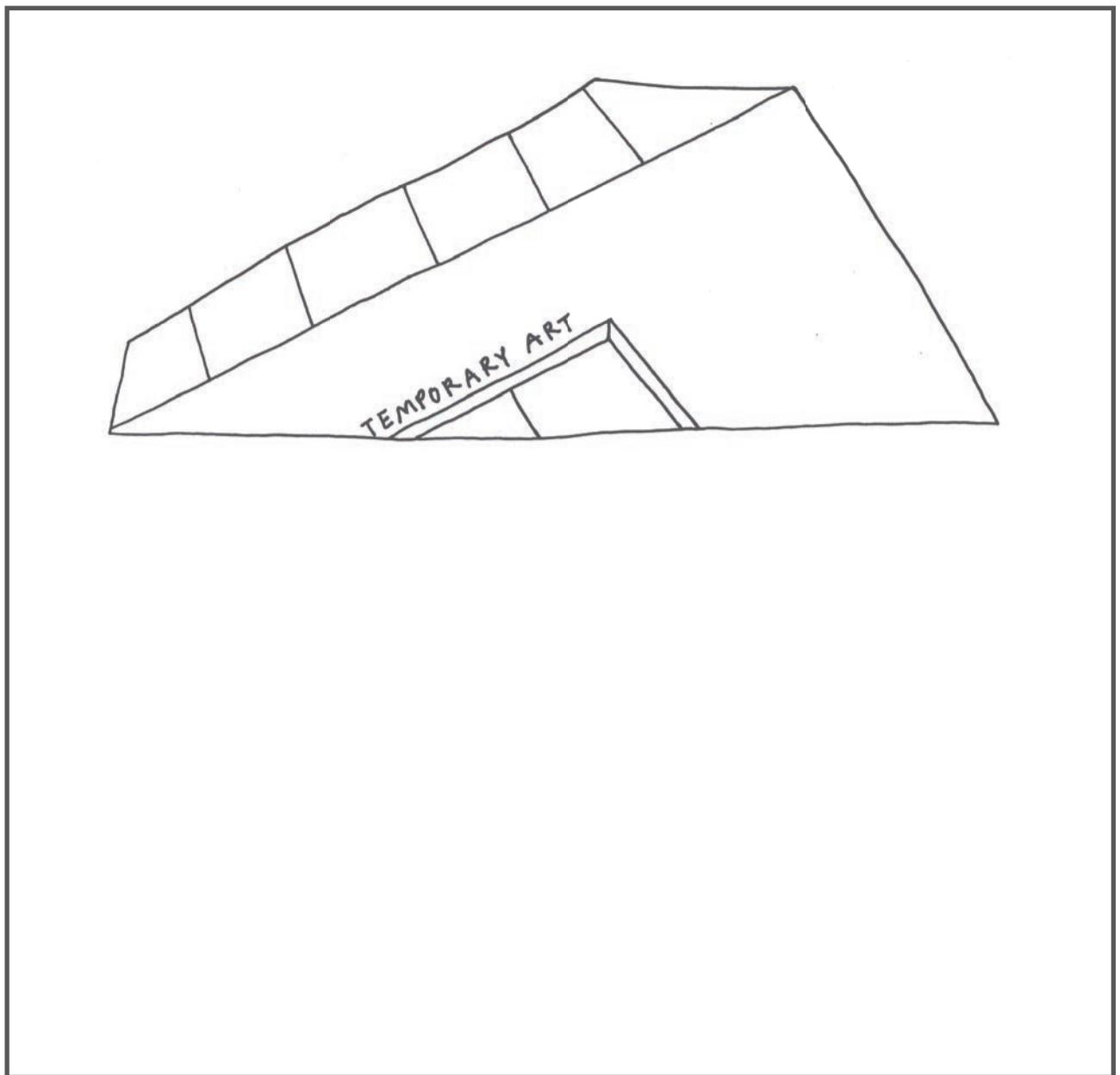
In their artwork, *Traces of a Never Existing History / Powerless Structures, Fig. 222*, (pictured on page 1 of this issue), artists Elmgreen & Dragset form a scene that invites viewers to create a story in their minds about a contemporary art museum that seems to disappear below the ground.

Use the space at the right to make a drawing of what could be beneath the partially sunken museum. You can be practical about what might happen to a real building in this state, or you can let your imagination run wild!

On a separate page, write a short story that describes what has happened to the building and what is going on in your drawing.

We would love to see what you create!

Send a digital copy of your drawing and story to the Nasher by emailing Colleen Borsh at cborsh@nashersculpturecenter.org.



Elmgreen & Dragset in Other Words

Use the key below to decode a quotation by artist Michael Elmgreen about why he and Ingar Dragset use humor in their work.



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