

Serpentine Gallery

Teachers' Notes

Michael Elmgreen & Ingar Dragset:

The Welfare Show

26 January – 26 February 2006



City of Westminster



INTRODUCTION AND CONTENTS

These notes are designed to support teachers in the planning, execution and following up of a visit to the Serpentine Gallery. They are suitable for all age groups, but include specific activities that relate to **Key Stages 3 and 4** and **GCSE** and **AQA**. They are not a definitive prescription of work, but a collection of ideas and suggestions that we hope will be helpful. Feel free to adapt them to suit your needs, or use them to inspire discussion or practical work.

General contents:

- **Planning a visit to the Serpentine Gallery**
Details about how to get to the Gallery, who to contact, and how to get involved in the Education Programme
- **Michael Elmgreen & Ingar Dragset: *The Welfare Show***
Information about the artists and the exhibition
- **Background information**
The context of the exhibition and the key references
- **Questions and points for discussion**
For use at the Gallery or in the classroom
- **Artistic links**
Related links to artists
- **Additional information**
Artists' quotes, the welfare state and *The Welfare Show* catalogue contents
- **Classroom activities**
Practical classroom activities connected with the exhibition
- **Further reading**
Books and articles relating to the exhibition
- **Questionnaire**
Please let us have your feedback

PLANNING A VISIT TO THE SERPENTINE GALLERY

TRANSPORT

- Car** Parking is available near the Gallery (£1.50 per hour)
- Tube** South Kensington (1.25 km walk)
Knightsbridge (1.25 km walk)
Lancaster Gate (1km walk)
- Buses** 9, 10, 52, 94, 148

CONTACT DETAILS


Sally Tallant, Head of Education and Public Programmes
Louise Coysh, Project Organiser
Rachel Moss, Education Coordinator
Serpentine Gallery
Kensington Gardens
London W2 3XA
Tel 020 7298 1516 Fax 020 7402 4103
Email rachelm@serpentinegallery.org

EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Gallery Talks

Saturdays 3pm

Artists, writers and critics give public talks at 3pm every Saturday, with one talk relating to each exhibition being accompanied by a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter.

- 28 January **Alex Coles**, art critic
4 February **Nav Haq**, curator
11 February **Rebecca Morrill**, Serpentine Gallery Exhibition Organiser, BSL interpreted 
18 February **Mike Reddin**, political historian
25 February **Jane Trowell**, co-director, Platform

Education Private View

Tuesday 7 February

6.30 – 8.30pm

Admission free

A special viewing of *The Welfare Show* with staff from the Serpentine on hand to discuss opportunities for involvement in the Education Programme. *The Possible Politics and the Scope of Activism* Sweatshop will take place during this Private View.

Workshops for Schools and Community Groups

Workshops led by three practising artists, aimed at **Key Stages 3 and 4, GCSE, AQA** and adult groups – a visit to the Serpentine Gallery with a discussion and practical activity relating to the current exhibition.

PLANNING A VISIT TO THE SERPENTINE GALLERY

FAMILY PROGRAMME

Family Day

Saturday 4 February, 12 – 5pm

Admission free

A team of artists will work with families in response to *The Welfare Show*. Activities will include playing games such as 'What would you do if you had £100 to spend?'. All ages welcome. Children must be accompanied by an adult. No booking required for this informal drop-in event.

Uncut

13 – 17 February, 11am – 4pm

The Sackler Centre of Arts Education
at the Serpentine Gallery

Admission free

Booking essential as places are limited

A five-day course for young people aged 14 to 19. Working with artists Thorsten Knaub and Matthew Thomas, participants will create films in response to *The Welfare Show*. The work will be exhibited in The Sackler Centre of Arts Education on Friday 17 February from 4 - 6pm.

Information: Rachel Moss Tel 020 7298 1516

Email rachelm@serpentinegallery.org



Drawing Together: The Big Draw meets Carnival
2 October 2005

Photo © 2006 John Lodge

PLANNING A VISIT TO THE SERPENTINE GALLERY

MICHAEL ELMGREEN & INGAR DRAGSET: *THE WELFARE SHOW* SPECIAL EVENTS

Sweatshop

Tuesday 7 February
6.30 – 8.30pm

The Sackler Centre of Arts Education
at the Serpentine Gallery
Admission free

Sweatshops, convened by Lisa le Feuvre and Edgar Schmitz, invite writers, artists, curators and academics to explore their current research interests. This session, entitled *Possible Politics and the Scope of Activism*, will respond to issues raised by *The Welfare Show*. Speakers include John Cussans, writer, and Bernd Behr, artist.

Information: Louise Coysh Tel 020 7298 1533
Email louisec@serpentinegallery.org

Tony Benn: Utopias and the Welfare State

Wednesday 22 February, 7pm

Royal Geographical Society

1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR

Tickets: £6/£4 (concessions)

TicketWeb 08700 600100

www.ticketweb.co.uk, or from Gallery Lobby

A rare opportunity to hear the great speaker and statesman Tony Benn talk about his vision for the future, including the role of utopian thinking in relation to welfare and to politics in general today.

Tony Benn retired from Parliament in 2001 as MP for Chesterfield, to 'devote more time to politics'. He was the longest-serving Labour MP in the party's history, joining in 1942 and first becoming an MP in 1950.

A Cabinet Minister in the Wilson and Callaghan governments from 1964–79, Benn was also an elected member of the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party from 1959–94, and Chairman of the Party in 1971–72.

His published Diaries in eight volumes cover the period 1940–2001, and he is also the author of seven other books, including *Arguments for Socialism*, *Arguments for Democracy*, *Fighting Back*, *Common Sense*, *Free Radical*, and *Dare to be a Daniel: Then and Now*.

MICHAEL ELMGREEN & INGAR DRAGSET: *THE WELFARE SHOW*

BACKGROUND TO THE EXHIBITION

Michael Elmgreen (born 1961, Denmark) and Ingar Dragset (born 1969, Norway) have been collaborating for more than a decade to create sculptures and installations that challenge conventional notions of institutions and public spaces. They investigate the ways in which institutions ranging from prisons, social-security offices, hospitals, museums, shops and parks govern the behaviour of individuals, often without their knowledge.

For *The Welfare Show*, Elmgreen & Dragset have changed the existing interior architecture of the Gallery's exhibition space so that visitors make their way down a series of corridors. This leads them on what the artists refer to as a 'ghost-train ride' through a number of institutional environments such as a public waiting room, a hospital corridor and an airport baggage hall. Their intention is to focus, not on the welfare state itself, but rather on the tragic or ludicrous ways in which human life is often shaped by social policies.

This travelling exhibition – also presented in Bergen, Vienna and Toronto – has been reworked by the artists for each venue so it relates to the specific context. The Serpentine show, which includes new work created for the Gallery, explores issues of economic disparity, employment, health care, immigration, the family unit, tourism and the entertainment industry.

The Welfare Show is not intended as a didactic or conclusive overview of welfare provision. Instead, the artists have set out to inspire debate and to challenge visitors about the notion of state support and shared societal values in the 21st century.

An encyclopaedic style catalogue, produced by the artists, with an extensive selection of texts on social policy and related topics is available at the Lobby Desk.

Michael Elmgreen & Ingar Dragset: The Welfare Show was initiated by Bergen Kunsthall, Norway and produced in collaboration with Bergen Kunsthall; Bawag Foundation, Vienna; The Power Plant, Toronto; and the Serpentine Gallery, London.

These notes have been divided into sections focusing on the following art works in *Michael Elmgreen & Ingar Dragset: The Welfare Show*:

- *Birthday* 2002
- *Go Go Go* 2005/6
- *Interstage* 2005 and *It's the Small Things in Life That Really Matter, Blah, Blah, Blah* 2006
- *Uncollected* 2005 and *This Space Can't Be Yours* 2006
- *Social Mobility* 2005/6
- *Reg(u)arding the Guards* 2005
- *The Welfare Show* 2006
- *Modern Moses* 2006

"The welfare models of course vary from city to city. The only factor these cities have in common is that we more or less have to speak about welfare systems in a past sense as the social security in most places has already collapsed and the social politics have become more like those in America."

(Eric Manns. 'Artworker of the week #55: Elmgreen & Dragset'. *Kultureflash* interview with Elmgreen & Dragset. *Kultureflash*, 9 November, 2005)

MICHAEL ELMGREEN & INGAR DRAGSET: *THE WELFARE SHOW*

BIRTHDAY 2002

Birthday consists of a wheelchair with a helium balloon tied to the handle. Elmgreen & Dragset frequently make use of everyday objects and materials that encourage viewers to engage with art through their own experiences and points of view. Here, the relationship between two readymade objects – a wheelchair and a child's balloon – highlights the way that disabled people are often infantilised.

Questions and points for discussion

- How do you think the work would change if a person was sat in the wheelchair?
- What does the helium balloon make you think about and how does it relate to the title of the work?
- Think about this work in terms of combining two Readymades.¹
- Discuss the impact of the introduction of the Disability Discrimination Act in the UK.

Useful information

In the UK, the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) was passed in 1995 to end the discrimination that many disabled people face. It protects disabled people in employment; access to goods, facilities and services; the management, buying or renting of land or property; and education. Some of it became law for employers in December 1996. Others were introduced over time. For service providers (for example businesses and organisations): since December 1996 it has been unlawful to treat disabled people less favourably than other people for a reason related to their disability; since October 1999 they have had to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people, such as providing extra help or making changes to the way they provide their services; and since October 2004 they have had to make reasonable adjustments to the physical features of their premises to overcome physical barriers to access. The DDA also allows the government to set minimum standards to help disabled people to use public transport easily. Additionally, the DDA 2005 amends the DDA 1995 to place a duty on public bodies to promote equality of opportunity for disabled people. The Disability Equality Duty will come into force on 5 December 2006.

(The Disability Rights Commission website, www.drc.gov.uk/)

¹ See artistic links pages 16-17

MICHAEL ELMGREEN & INGAR DRAGSET: *THE WELFARE SHOW*

GO GO GO 2005/6

Go Go Go, which consists of a pole-dancing platform surrounded by lights, plus a mop, bucket and 'caution wet floor' sign, symbolises the kinds of low paid and under-valued work that people – often women – take on in order to earn a living. The nature of both jobs referred to, exotic dancer and cleaner, means that they often function in a cash economy. Both could be undertaken by people who do not pay tax and therefore do not appear in government statistics. The inference of the pole dancer, as low paid, low esteem work, is immediately questioned by the notion that someone has to be employed to clean the pole.

Questions and points for discussion

- How do you think the art work would change if people were performing on the pole?
- Discuss hierarchies of employment, including cleaners and pole dancers, and how these jobs are perceived.
- Do you think that pole dancing has become a more acceptable form of entertainment in London, having been glamorised in films and pop music videos, and even offered as exercise classes?
- Discuss the idea that one person could be doing both jobs part time.

Useful information

Currently the European Union Worker registration scheme, which applies to people coming to Britain from eastern European countries, requires them to pay £70 to work in the UK and they have to submit this with their passport to the Home Office. This means that there is 'mass evasion' by those doing low-paid jobs.

The UK government is considering signing up to the European Convention Against Human Trafficking, amid mounting pressure from campaign groups, following the recent conviction of five Albanian men for sex trafficking offences. The Home Office estimates that 1,400 women were brought to the UK to work as prostitutes in 2000. (The BBC News website, <http://news.bbc.co.uk>)

MICHAEL ELMGREEN & INGAR DRAGSET: THE WELFARE SHOW

INTERSTAGE 2005 AND IT'S THE SMALL THINGS IN LIFE THAT REALLY MATTER, BLAH, BLAH, BLAH 2006

The installation *Interstage* recreates a hospital corridor containing two hospital beds, a metal railing and institutional doors and light fittings. One bed is occupied by a mannequin, raising questions about the quality of state hospital care reflected in individual experiences – either reported by patients themselves or featured in the press.

It's the Small Things in Life That Really Matter, Blah, Blah, Blah is modelled after an institutional waiting room and is located next to *Interstage*. It highlights the lengthy waiting lists for health care that are common in countries with socialised medicine. More generally, it comments on a particular aspect of modern life – the amount of time wasted simply in waiting – and on the systems, including queues, that are put in place to manage people.

Questions and points for discussion

- Why has a model of a person been left in the hospital corridor? Think about the National Health Service (NHS) and the way it is perceived by the media.
- The sleeping figure is a mannequin. How do you think the work would change if it were a real person?
- Discuss the title *Interstage*. What do you think it means?
- Sit on one of the chairs in *It's the Small Things in Life That Really Matter, Blah, Blah, Blah*. Make a list of all the places where you usually have to wait.
- Discuss both art works in terms of being installations.

Useful information

Elmgreen & Dragset often change our perceptions of the white cube space, transferring spaces to other contexts of meaning, such as locating a hospital corridor in a gallery, or in the case of *End Station* at the Bothen Foundation, New York in 2005, a subway station stop that does not really exist. The visitors became passengers waiting for a train that would never arrive. At the Klosterfelde Gallery, Berlin, the artists installed an exact replica of the old gallery within the new one, titled *Linienstrasse 160*, 2001, after the gallery's original address.

In 2003 in the UK, bed occupancy was found to be as high as 99.5%, even though NHS best practice stated that any hospital should only be 82% full. A shortage of beds meant it became commonplace for patients to be seen waiting on trolleys in hospital corridors.

(The BBC News website, <http://news.bbc.co.uk>)

MICHAEL ELMGREEN & INGAR DRAGSET: *THE WELFARE SHOW*

UNCOLLECTED 2005 AND *THIS SPACE CAN'T BE YOURS* 2006

This anonymous corridor-type space contains a Tri-vision billboard, *This Space Can't Be Yours*, which emulates the direct advertising often found in public places. The slogan on it suggests that this mass-communication medium is accessible to everyone, when in reality, it is available only to corporations and individuals who can afford to pay huge amounts of money.

From this 'corridor', visitors can see a baggage carousel, *Uncollected*, holding a single bag. Its luggage tag, which reads 'Luton – Ibiza', references another feature of modern life – low-cost international air travel. For the artists, the concept of the airport resonates with issues about immigrants, refugees and the rights of individuals to enter and leave a country, as well as those relating to tourism, trafficking and terrorism.

Questions and points for discussion

- Why can't this space be yours?
- Why do you think the baggage carousel is circular?
- Why do you think this bag has been left on the carousel?
- How does then uncollected bag make you feel in relation to the London bombings during July 2005?
- What is written on the luggage tag? What is the significance of this destination?
- Why do you think the artists have chosen for visitors to be able to view *Uncollected* only from the corridor?
- Discuss other forms of international travel and think about how people enter the country illegally. Find out more about asylum seekers and immigration issues.

MICHAEL ELMGREEN & INGAR DRAGSET: *THE WELFARE SHOW*

SOCIAL MOBILITY 2005/6

Social Mobility is located on the wall beyond *Uncollected* in the North Gallery. It consists of the façade of a door high up at the top of some crumbling stairs, with debris on the gallery floor below. Above the door is a standard 'fire exit' sign. The title of this work relates to the notion of social climbing, the desire for economic and social self-improvement, and the obstacles that get in the way.

Questions and points for discussion

- Discuss the meaning of the title *Social Mobility*.
- How many fire exit signs can you find in the Gallery?
- When displayed at the Bergen Kunsthall, Norway, the sign above the door read 'Administration'. Here, Elmgreen & Dragset were commenting on visitors only being allowed to see the front-of-house in various organisations, including museums and galleries. Why do you think the artists modified the work for the Serpentine Gallery exhibition?
- Think about the relationship of this art work to *Uncollected*.
- Discuss the idea that the welfare state gives us a false sense of security.

Useful information

For *Taking Place* at Kunsthalle Zürich in 2001–2, Elmgreen & Dragset transformed the gallery into a building site, with their performative work being the ongoing construction of the future gallery space, completed on the final day of the exhibition. Stairs to nowhere also feature in their work *Powerless Structures Fig. 202*, 2001.

MICHAEL ELMGREEN & INGAR DRAGSET: THE WELFARE SHOW

REG(U)ARDING THE GUARDS 2005

In *Reg(u)arding the Guards*, seven individuals dressed as uniformed guards are seated around an exhibition gallery, yet the space is empty – there is nothing for them to guard. The participants in this performance piece were previously job seekers on benefits, recruited by the Serpentine from job centres. The work poses questions about the nature of employment, and addresses complex issues concerning power and excessive security.

Questions and points for discussion

- How does it feel to be in the gallery with the guards? Do you want to stay a long time or leave as soon as possible?
- The uniforms are generic security guard outfits. How would the art work change if the uniforms were different?
- How is the guards' role different to the Gallery Assistants who usually watch over the art works? How are they dressed differently?
- Describe the chairs. Do they look comfortable or institutional? Do you think they are part of the art work?
- What is the significance of recruiting unemployed people to be the guards?
- Discuss how uniformed jobs have changed in status.
- Discuss this art work in terms of it being a 'live installation'.

Useful information

People have featured before in Elmgreen & Dragset's work. In *Paris Diaries*, 2003, five men were recruited to keep their diaries in the gallery space of Gallery Emmanuel Perrotin, Paris. At the Galerie fur Zeitgenossische Kunst in Leipzig, where there is high unemployment rate, two local unemployed house painters were hired to continuously paint the gallery walls over the seven-week duration of the exhibition, *Zwischen anderen Ereignissen (Between other events)*, 2000, highlighting the usually hidden installation process. More recently at the *Frieze Art Fair*, 2005, the artists staged a facsimile of their Berlin dealer Martin Klosterfelde's booth directly next to the original, complete with a Klosterfelde doppelganger and duplicate art works. Animals have also featured in Elmgreen & Dragset's work, for example as part of *Utopia Station* at the *50th Venice Biennale*, 2003, where they arranged for Lala, a performing chimpanzee, to attempt to spell out Utopia with alphabet building blocks.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) stated that the number of people out of work rose by 72,000 to 1.49 million from August to October 2005, with the unemployment rate at 4.9%. People claiming unemployment benefit rose 10,500 to 902,000.

(The BBC News website, <http://news.bbc.co.uk>)

MICHAEL ELMGREEN & INGAR DRAGSET: *THE WELFARE SHOW*

THE WELFARE SHOW 2006

Here, visitors walk through a typical office with closed doors on each side. Through a window in one of these doors, they can see a television talk-show stage dominated by a neon sign announcing *The Welfare Show*.

If there were to be a television programme entitled *The Welfare Show*, would it be a reality show that explored individual stories, or a political debate? And what effect would it have ultimately on day-to-day life and current social situations?

Questions and points for discussion

- What do you think is behind the closed doors?
- What is unusual about one of the door handles?
- Compare the office corridor to the other corridors in the exhibition, the airport corridor and *Interstage*.
- Think about the relationship of this art work to the use of neon lights in central London.
- Why do you think that members of the public are happy to discuss their personal issues on television chat shows?
- Do you think that public spaces have become so standardised that by making them for everyone they are really for no-one?

"...a foreigner, lost in a country he does not know can feel at home there only in the anonymity, service stations, in stores or hotel chains."

(Mark Auge. *Non-Places: Instruction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*. London; New York: Verso Books, 1995)

Useful information

Doors and corridors of power have featured before in Elmgreen & Dragset's work. For example *Powerless Structures*, Fig. 131, 2001, is a closed door with the handle on the wall and *Powerless Structures*, Fig. 122, 2000, features two closed doors chained together.

MICHAEL ELMGREEN & INGAR DRAGSET: *THE WELFARE SHOW*

MODERN MOSES 2006

Modern Moses brings together an everyday cash machine and a mannequin of an abandoned baby in a carrycot, apparently forgotten rather than abandoned, in front of it. The work raises questions about the economics of human life – who can afford to support a child, for example, how is the family unit celebrated and rewarded financially by the welfare state and how do the experiences of those whose lives do not conform to this unit compare? It also addresses issues about adoption and the social implications of ‘buying’ babies. This work continues an earlier series by Elmgreen & Dragset, *Forgotten Babies*, where the baby and carrycot were left in real public locations, for example on a back seat of a Mini Cooper parked outside The Wrong Gallery in New York in 2005.

Questions and points for discussion

- Discuss the reasons why a baby may be left by a cash machine. What would you do if you found an abandoned baby?
- Debate the idea that the family unit is celebrated and rewarded financially by the welfare state.
- What is the significance of the cash machine?
- Discuss the issues around who can and cannot adopt and the introduction of the Adoption and Children Act, 2005.

Useful information

From December 2005 unmarried and same-sex couples in the UK are now legally allowed to adopt children under a historic law, the Adoption and Children Act. It is one of the most significant changes in modern adoption history. Previously, only married couples or single people could apply.

Child benefit is one of the few non-means tested benefits left. It is worth £17 every week for a first-born child. For each subsequent child, there is an additional weekly payment of £11.40. The money is not taxed. It is available for every child in the UK below the age of sixteen and is paid to the parent directly responsible for care of the youngster. Those in full-time education remain eligible until the age of nineteen, but the cut-off point for children registered for work or training is eighteen. Child benefit is currently taken up by nearly all of the eligible population.

In January 2006, about a third of child trust fund vouchers sent out by the government have still not been cashed and invested by parents. Vouchers worth at least £250 were sent a year ago to parents to invest until their children are eighteen. Under the scheme, children born in the UK on or after 1 September 2002 will get at least £250 each for their fund. Families on low incomes should receive an additional £250. The money cannot be accessed until the child reaches eighteen. (The BBC News website, <http://news.bbc.co.uk>)

ARTISTIC LINKS

This section makes links to other artists relevant to *Michael Elmgreen & Ingar Dragset: The Welfare Show*.

- **Duchamp, Marcel (1887 – 1968)** French-born avant-garde artist and art theorist who became an American citizen in 1955. By 1911 Duchamp was part of the Cubist circle, and in that year he produced his first work to show real originality – *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 1*. This first conspicuous success as a painter was also Duchamp's last, for in 1913 he made his first Readymade and from this point virtually abandoned conventional media. With Man Ray and Francis Picabia he formed the nucleus of New York's Dada movement. Duchamp's main contribution to this was the Readymade, the best known of which was *Fountain*, 1917, consisting of a urinal bowl signed 'R. Mutt', which was rejected by the Society of Independent Artists. Duchamp's iconoclasm and experimental attitude have been enormously influential, most obviously on Conceptual art, but also for example on Minimal art and on Pop art, in which the Readymade has played such a big part.
(Ian Chilvers. *Oxford Dictionary of 20th-Century Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998)
- **Hans Haacke (born 1936)** German Conceptual and experimental artist, active mainly in the USA. From about the mid-1960s, he became interested in spectator participation, the social function of art and ecological issues. Haacke's work has often caused controversy because of his preoccupation with exposing systems of power and influence. His *Real Time Social System*, 1971, featured photographs of a large group of New York slum buildings, all owned by one firm, while captions revealed an array of holding companies, mortgage data, assessed values and property taxes. When the Guggenheim Museum cancelled his exhibition there rather than show this work, Haacke did one which traced the various family and business ties between the Guggenheim trustees.
(Ian Chilvers. *Oxford Dictionary of 20th-Century Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998)
- **Felix Gonzalez-Torres (1957 – 1996)** – Born in Cuba. Gonzalez-Torres's artistic career was devoted to creating deeply self-conscious and self-questioning monuments that challenge the structures and value systems that give objects their status, define their function, and provide a network of meaning that shapes who we are and how we relate to the world around us. The meanings of his works, he insisted, occupy the space of the 'in-between', the grey areas where questions are never fully possible to reconcile. Elmgreen & Dragset's *Go Go Go*, 2005/6, pays direct homage to 'Untitled' (*Go-Go Dancing Platform*), 1991, exhibited as part of the exhibition *Felix Gonzalez-Torres (1 June – 16 July 2000)* at the Serpentine Gallery. This consisted of an empty, pale-blue platform resembling a sculptural plinth, which was animated by the occasional unannounced performance of a bikini-clad dancer, questioning the nature of the sculptural monument as static and unchanging.
(*Felix Gonzalez-Torres*. London: Serpentine Gallery, 2000)

- **Santiago Sierra (born 1966)** – Born in Madrid, Spain. Lives and works in Mexico City, Mexico. With performance, installation, photography and video-based work, Santiago Sierra addresses controversial socio-political issues of labour and exploitation, concentrating on the current power structures of our evolving global economy. Sierra sets about exposing systems of power by paying people to perform labour-intensive tasks that are often absurd and degrading, as a means to reveal structures of political or cultural authority. He focuses on the plight of the exploited labourer by demonstrating the oppressive monotony of his or her daily routine. The artist's actions are tied to the specific reality of a particular location. For example, in Guatemala City in 1999, Sierra remunerated eight illegal workers to remain inside cardboard boxes for the duration of one of his exhibitions. At the Venice Biennale, 2003, for *Wall Enclosing a Space*, Sierra, occupying the Spanish Pavilion, granted access only to Spaniards carrying proof of their identity.
(Uta Grosenick, ed. *Art Now Vol 2*. Köln: Taschen, 2005)
- **Monika Sosnowska (born 1972)** – Polish artist who creates work that is frequently reminiscent of eastern European public buildings, particularly through her use of industrial-coloured paint that calls to mind public buildings such as schools and hospitals. For the exhibition *Monika Sosnowska* (5 December 2004 – 16 January 2005), at the Serpentine Gallery, she was commissioned to produce *Untitled*, 2004. Using the exhibition space of the Serpentine as the starting point for her work, Sosnowska designed an installation that dramatically transformed the configuration of these galleries. Her labyrinthine environment comprised a series of irregularly shaped chambers and interconnecting passages. In this work, the monochrome walls, floor and ceiling and the irregular form of the artist's installation recall the low-cost décor and structures often found in Polish architecture of the 1970s and 80s. Her previous installations have included a series of doors opening onto each other in maze-like formation and a corridor that gradually diminishes in size, *Untitled*, 2003, at the *50th Venice Biennale*, 2003.
(*Monika Sosnowska*. London: Serpentine Gallery, 2004)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Artists' Quotes

"Our works that take on spatial issues seek to raise questions about public space, urban planning and architecture on a much broader level, and the white cube is just one extreme example of public architecture and the conventions within it. We have also made installations based on hospital rooms and prison cells, we have done street signs and rest rooms, a subway station and even a public sculpture garden for unwanted sculptures. Our aim is to investigate some of the power structures that these spaces derive from, and by exchanging and replacing some of these structures show how fragile they actually are."

(Eric Manns. 'Artworker of the week #55: Elmgreen & Dragset'. *Kultureflash* interview with Elmgreen & Dragset. *Kultureflash*, 9 November, 2005)

"Hans Ulrich Obrist once pointed out that our performances seem to contain just a minimum of the traditional performance elements whereas our installations can be characterised as very performative. The performances that we do are rather what one can describe as live installations - the action is only there because some particular elements need to be triggered into a certain movement or some particular dynamics."

(Eric Manns. 'Artworker of the week #55: Elmgreen & Dragset'. *Kultureflash* interview with Elmgreen & Dragset. *Kultureflash*, 9 November, 2005)

"Our works are very simple, they are, in a way, minimal, and this is not to make a reduction, but to open up... We're not making entirely interactive works that demand a certain behaviour of the audience, you know, like push this button, or step here kind of things. We're creating the art work, and then we're not sure about what the reaction of the audience will be." ('Performative Constructions'. *Powerless Structures*. Interview by Hans Ulrich Obrist. Reykjavik: Galleri Ingólfsstræti & Reykjavik Art Museum, 1998)

The Welfare State

Welfare is the well-being, happiness, health and prosperity of a person or community. It is also the financial support given by the state. The 'welfare state' refers to an ideal model of provision, where the state accepts the responsibility for a comprehensive and universal welfare for its citizens. The history of the welfare state starts around 1945, when Clement Attlee was elected prime minister. However, the welfare state blueprint mainly came from outside the Labour party relying on John Maynard Keynes - his arguments on the virtues of full employment - and also William Beveridge. In fact, the 1942 Beveridge report outlined a plan for postwar social reconstruction, covering every citizen regardless of income and offering a 'cradle-to-grave' welfare state. Key reforms during the Attlee government included the Family Allowance Act, 1945, the National Insurance Act, 1946, and the National Health Act, 1946. There were also changes in housing and education, the latter resulting from the Butler Act, 1944, providing compulsory free primary and secondary education for all.

The welfare state was largely accepted by both major parties after 1951 until the radical Thatcher administrations after 1979. Thatcher opposed a welfare system leading to a review of welfare and some 'retreat' in pensions, housing and healthcare. Today the welfare state just about retains its founding principles but there have been many changes. Contributory benefits, like the basic state pension, are slowly disappearing. It is not an ungenerous state, but to accept its help and support means submitting to intrusive means tests. The development of a global economy has implications for national welfare policies. The Swedish model of welfare goes beyond the British model in its commitment to social equality and is similar to the situation in Norway and Denmark.

Questions and points for discussion

- What is the welfare state?
- What has caused its decline?
- How socially responsible has it been?
- To whom is welfare extended and how does the government decide to support one thing over another?
- How do upcoming elections affect what is highlighted by the different parties?
- Think about how personal experiences and media perspectives affect our perceptions of the welfare state. Should we believe everything we read in newspapers or see on television?
- Find out about and give your views on the Government Green Paper *A new deal for welfare: Empowering people to work* launched on Tuesday 24 January 2006 (The Department for Work and Pensions website, www.dwp.gov.uk/)
- What role does art play in prompting debate around issues such as welfare?

The Welfare Show encyclopaedic style catalogue, produced by the artists, focuses attention on welfare systems in the Western world, including articles, images, official forms and booklets.

Michael Elmgreen & Ingar Dragset: *The Welfare Show* catalogue contents

A ADOPTION, AGE, ARCHITECTURE, ARMY, ART
B BUREAUCRACY
C CANADA PENSION PLAN, CAPITAL, CHEATING, CHILDREN, CITY PLANNING, CLASS, CRIME, CULTURE
D DEATH, DEMOCRACY, DESIGN, DISCRIMINATION, DREAM (AMERICAN)
E ECONOMY, EDUCATION, EIN EURO JOB [ONE EURO JOB], ENVIRONMENT, ETHICS, EXCLUSION
F FLEXIBILITY, FREEDOM, FUTURE
G GENDER, GENTRIFICATION, GINI COEFFICIENT [INCOME INEQUALITY], GLOBALIZATION
H HEALTH, HIERARCHY, HOMELESS, HOMOSEXUAL RIGHTS
I IMMIGRATION, INDIVIDUALISM, INTEGRATION, INTELLIGENTSIA
J JUSTICE
K KINDERGARTEN
L LANGUAGE, LEISURE
M MAJORITY/MINORITY, MARRIAGE, MARX, MEDIA, MEDICINE, MONARCHY, MOTIVATION, MUSEUM, MUSIC
N NATION, NATIONALISM, NATURE, NEOLIBERALISM, NEWS
O OMBUDSMAN, OUTSOURCING
P PATRIOTISM, PENSION, POLICE, POSTMODERNISM, POVERTY, PUBLIC SPACE
Q QUESTIONS
R RACISM, RELIGION
S SÆBE-DIREKTIVET [THE SOAP DIRECTIVE], SEX, SOCIAL HOUSING, SOCIAL SERVICES, SOLIDARITY, STATISTICS, STRIKE, SUBVERSION, THE SWEDISH MODEL
T TAX, TOURISM
U UNEMPLOYMENT, UNWORT DES JAHRES [THE WORST NEW ANNUAL TERM IN GERMAN LANGUAGE]
V VOLLBESCHAFTIGUNG [NO SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS OF UNEMPLOYMENT]
W WEALTH, THE WELFARE SHOW, WORK, WUNDER [MIRACLE]
X XENOPHOBIA
Y YOUTH
Z ZOO

CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Cross-curricular links: English (writing, speaking and listening), Geography, Citizenship, PSHE, ICT

- Use the Internet to find out more about the issues brought up in the exhibition *Michael Elmgreen & Ingar Dragset: The Welfare Show* in relation to the UK. How are these issues relevant to you in your everyday life?
- Choose one of the other countries that *The Welfare Show* has or will be exhibited in (i.e. Norway, Austria, Canada). Choose one art work, such as *Uncollected, 2005*, and list the issues relevant to that work, for example immigration and terrorism. Find out about these issues in relation to the country you have chosen. Do you think the meaning of the art work might change when displayed in its new context? Would you change any part of the art work? For example, the luggage label in *Uncollected* is different in London than it was in Bergen.
- Draw a large mapping diagram linking the art works by themes, for example employment issues are brought up by *Go Go Go, 2005/6* and *Reg(u)arding the Guards, 2005*.
- Choose an issue from *The Welfare Show* catalogue contents. Find out more about it and use this as a starting point for creating an art work.
- Elmgreen & Dragset have commented that *The Welfare Show* is a grotesque tour through the welfare state, like a funhouse or a ghost ride. As a group curate your own exhibition of art works using issues in the exhibition as a starting point.
- Create a TV studio set and use it to debate issues resulting from a visit to the exhibition.
- Discuss the statement 'the welfare state now only for show'.

FURTHER READING

Selected books and catalogues:

- 1995 Mark Auge. *Non-Places: Instruction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity*. London; New York: Verso Books
- 1998 Ian Chilvers. *Oxford Dictionary of 20th-Century Art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- 'Performative Constructions'. *Powerless Structures*. Interview by Hans Ulrich Obrist. Reykjavik: Galleri Ingólfsstræti & Reykjavik Art Museum
- 2000 *Felix Gonzalez-Torres*. London: Serpentine Gallery
- 'In between events...' *Manifesta 3*. An email conversation between Daniel Birnbaum and Michael Elmgreen & Ingar Dragset. Ljubljana: Manifesta 3
- 2001 Beatrix Ruf, ed. *Taking Place: The Works of Michael Elmgreen & Ingar Dragset*. Kunsthalle Zürich. Germany: Hatje Cantz Verlag
- 2004 *Monika Sosnowska*. London: Serpentine Gallery
- 2005 *Elmgreen & Dragset: The Welfare Show*. Norway: Bergen Kunsthall
- Uta Grosenick, ed. *Art Now Vol 2*. Köln: Taschen

Selected articles and reviews:

- 2005 Eric Manns. 'Artworker of the week #55: Elmgreen & Dragset'. *Kultureflash* interview with Elmgreen & Dragset. *Kultureflash*, 9 November

Selected websites:

- The BBC News website, <http://news.bbc.co.uk>
- The Department for Work and Pensions website, www.dwp.gov.uk/
- The Disability Rights Commission website, www.drc.gov.uk/
- The Guardian Limited website, www.guardian.co.uk
- The Home Office website, www.homeoffice.gov.uk/

6. Please rate each section of the notes according to how useful they were:
(1 not useful/ 2 satisfactory/ 3 useful/ 4 very useful)

- Planning a visit to the Serpentine Gallery
- *Michael Elmgreen & Ingar Dragset: The Welfare Show* – an introduction
- Background information
- Questions and points for discussion
- Artistic links
- Classroom activities
- Further reading

7. Did you use the teachers' notes to visit the exhibition?	YES	NO	(please circle)
Did you make a preparatory visit?	YES	NO	(please circle)
Did you come to the Education Private View?	YES	NO	(please circle)

8. Do you have any suggestions for future teachers' notes, or for any other resources?

Thank you for filling out this questionnaire. Please send it to us with your name, address and telephone number. You will be entered into our prize draw for a contemporary art book, which will be held on 27 February 2006.