



The artist duo and twin sisters Maria and Natalia Petschatnikov give traditional Danish porcelain figures new life when they transform the East Wing at Viborg Kunsthall into a site-specific total installation with the exhibition *fragile*.

The idea for the exhibition *fragile* arose in the autumn of 2018, when the Russian visual artists Maria and Natalia Petschatnikov visited a small antique shop in the city of Viborg. At that time the artists were part of Riddergade AIR, the residency program at Viborg Kunsthall, and spent the time researching and finding inspiration. Through the window of the antique shop, the sisters saw several of the traditional blue and white porcelain figures standing side by side. Here was everything from playing children, animals and mythological creatures. With their characteristic delicate and soft shapes, the small shiny porcelain figures represented a fragile and adventurous tale from the past.

The antique shop could have been the perfect playground for the author H.C. Andersen, whose sad philosophical tales are often told through creatures who feel unfortunate and excluded from the community, say Maria and Natalia Petschatnikov.

The small traditional Danish collectibles and the special atmosphere in the antique shop are the starting point for the extensive artistic visual study that is the basis for the exhibition *fragile*. The artist duo creates a complex site-specific installation in the East Wing at Viborg Kunsthall, which mimics the antique shop's condensed arrangements, and reinforces and enlarges the porcelain figures' themes. Topics such as identity, affiliation and historical value are put into play.

With the exhibition *fragile*, Maria and Natalia Petschatnikov want to challenge and arouse the audience's desire to discuss European traditions and aesthetics as a means of communication.

About the artists

The twin sisters Maria & Natalia Petschatnikov (b. 1973, Russia) live and work in Berlin as an artist duo exploring the boundaries between painting and installation. In their works, they draw inspiration from everyday objects, which are subtly added new perspectives with imagination and wit. The objects are carefully analyzed, painted and prepared, and ordinary objects become extraordinary narratives with new layers of meaning. Their works are rooted in an education in classical painting from Academy of Art in St. Petersburg, 1991 and in addition they are educated from among others École des Beaux-Arts, Paris, 1998 and Hunter College of the City University of New York, 1999. They have exhibited in most of Europe and been on several artist in residency programs, including at Viborg Kunsthall.

The exhibition can be experienced from Friday December 11th. Due to Covid-19, there will be no official opening of the exhibition, but instead free admission to Viborg Kunsthall all Friday in the period at 11am - 5pm.

Exhibition period: December 11th 2020 - February 28th 2021.

In connection with the exhibition, a catalog will be published at the end of January 2021.

The exhibition is supported by the Danish Arts Foundation.