



## FASHION

# Prada Mode Heads to London With Cinematic Installation

● The artistic duo Elmgreen & Dragset is partnering with the Prada brand for the first time.

BY MARTINO CARRERA

**MILAN** - Exactly 20 years after erecting Prada Marfa – the permanent art installation in the desert along Route 90 in Jeff Davis County, Texas – artistic duo Elmgreen & Dragset have scooped their first collaboration with the Prada brand.

To be sure, the Prada Marfa installation – a freestanding faux Prada storefront filled with bags and accessories from the Italian luxury house that has gained cult status – was an independent project from the Berlin-based artists, never affiliated with the brand.

Until now. The duo has been conscripted for the next installment of Prada Mode, which is heading back to the Old Continent, after a few editions in far-flung destinations. The 13th iteration of the architectural and cultural activation will take place between Oct. 15 and 19 in London to coincide with fine art fair Frieze London.

For the five-day event, Prada and Elmgreen & Dragset are taking over the Town Hall, the 1937 landmark in King's Cross that was recently restored into a cultural and events venue.

In Prada's usual cross-pollination of media, the activation's centerpiece, titled "The Audience," is a movie theater-like space scattered with five life-size human sculptures mimicking cinemagoers in different poses.

An additional hyper-realistic sculpture of a female sitting at a café table, named "The Conversation," interacts with the movie screen, which is to project a film written by the artistic duo.

Intended as a short snippet seemingly taken from a feature-length drama movie, the clip shows a painter and writer discussing their creative practices and is meant to explore "spectatorship in the age of image overload, hyperconnectivity, and attention deficit," Prada said.

"The Audience" is a work about

spectatorship and redirecting the gaze of the visitors. As artists, we have often been interested in making exhibitions where the audience's attention is pulled in conflicting directions, spaces that would encourage a degree of uncertainty and where the spectator has to actively navigate seemingly familiar environments in new ways," Michael Elmgreen and Ingar Dragset, an artistic duo since 1995, said in a statement. "Being part of an audience in a cinema or theater implies being one of many, of sharing an experience, a moment within a spatial choreography. In 'The Audience,' that shared experience becomes visible and the audience becomes part of the narrative itself," they said.

While the collaboration is Elmgreen & Dragset's first with the Prada brand, Fondazione Prada, the Milan- and Venice-based art institution led by Miuccia Prada and her husband Patrizio Bertelli, hosted the duo's "Useless Bodies?" exhibit in 2022 in Milan.

As for previous editions, Prada Mode London will feature a full agenda of events and activations, including talks, conversations, film screenings and performances, in addition to DJ sets.

Earlier this year, Prada Mode traveled to Osaka and Inujima island, Japan, and Abu Dhabi. The former event held last June was the result of a partnership with Kazuyo Sejima, the cofounder of architecture and design firm SANAA, as reported, while last February's iteration in the United Arab Emirates' city was held at the MiZa district and developed in collaboration with multidisciplinary artist Theaster Gates.

Last year Prada Mode touched down in Los Angeles, presenting the third edition of The Double Club, a project by Carsten Höller, in collaboration with Luna Luna at the Luna Luna Studio.

In 2023 Prada Mode took place in





association with the Tokyo metropolitan government and the Teien Art Museum, one of Japan's main institutions. It was hosted and curated by Sejima.

The inaugural Prada Mode was staged during Art Basel Miami Beach in 2018. The following year the format touched down at Art Basel Hong Kong and Frieze London, while in 2020 Prada brought the members' club to Paris and to Shanghai, where the brand invited producer, director and writer Jia Zhangke to transform the Prada Rong Zhai villa with a site-specific installation called "Miàn" based on his cinematic work.

In 2021, the COVID-19-disrupted edition in Moscow was held in December, while in February 2022 the format touched down

in Los Angeles during Frieze featuring a collaboration with artist Martine Syms.

In November 2022, Prada Mode headed to Dubai with a reprise of Damien Hirst's "Pharmacy" installation at the ICD Brookfield Place, a skyscraper designed by Foster + Partners in the heart of the city's International Financial Centre.

Past iterations featured works and installations by several artists, directors and photographers, such as Jamie Diamond, Kate Crawford, Trevor Paglen, Lee Sook-Kyung, Kim Jee-Woon, Yeon Sang-ho and Jeong Dahee, in addition to Gates, Zhangke, Hirst and Syms, among others.

