

Press release 17.1.2023

An art museum's architecture and art collection through the eyes of an artist: *Elina Brotherus – Visitor* at the Didrichsen Art Museum, Helsinki 11.2.–28.5.2023

The spring exhibition *Elina Brotherus – Visitor at the Didrichsen Art Museum* in Helsinki presents a new photographic series *Visitor (Villa Didrichsen)* by photographer and video artist Elina Brotherus. The series inspired by the architecture and art collection of the museum is accompanied by Brotherus's earlier, thematically related photographs and video works.

**Press conference at the Didrichsen Art Museum on Friday, 10 February 2023 at 11 am.
Artist Elina Brotherus is present at the event.**

The exhibition *Elina Brotherus – Visitor* at the Didrichsen Art Museum juxtaposes Brotherus's recent work with key themes from her long career. Drawing on the unique atmosphere of the museum, the exhibition is the first public display of Brotherus's photographic series *Visitor (Villa Didrichsen)*, shot at Didrichsen Art Museum between 2021 and 2022. Architect Viljo Revell designed the building (1958, 1964) on Kuusisaari Island in Helsinki originally as the home of Marie-Louise (1913–1988) and Gunnar Didrichsen (1903–1992). The couple's passion for collecting art led to the founding of an art museum in 1965.

Photographing a building reminds me of making a portrait of a person: you have to show the characteristics and essence of the place. Every house has a soul, and for Didrichsen it is the art collection. The collection predates the house and has guided the work of architect Viljo Revell as he designed the building.

Elina Brotherus

The starting point for the *Visitor (Villa Didrichsen)* series was Brotherus's freedom to play with the architecture, interior and art collection of the museum. In her works, Brotherus creates an alternative reality parallel to the known history of the building. The figures in the pictures, the visitors, bring the spaces to life with their presence: they make phone calls, prepare dinner, lounge by the pool and plan an art exhibition. Brotherus, who is well versed in the history of art, also introduces assemblages she has created using works from the collection. She addresses the works, for example, by colour or by mirroring the themes of the works. Brotherus seeks the specific character of a place; in the *Visitor (Villa Didrichsen)* series, she deepens her research of the lived space and the visual arts and its traditions.

Architecture has played a growing role in Brotherus's work in recent years. Brotherus has photographed her work in spaces created by Alvar Aalto, Friedensreich Hundertwasser, Michel Polak, Matti Suuronen – and now Viljo Revell. The photographs and video works selected for the exhibition from Brotherus's earlier production have a thematic connection to the *Visitor (Villa Didrichsen)* series – from architecture to art historical reinterpretations of the themes of the reclining figure and the bathers. Alongside art history and architecture, an important source of inspiration for Brotherus's work is literature, which is visible in the series *Sebaldiana. Memento mori (2019)*. Didrichsen's exhibition is the most comprehensive display of this series in Finland to date.

The article in the Visitor exhibition catalogue is written by art critic Helen Korpak. The exhibition team members are Elina Brotherus and the Didrichsen Art Museum staff. The works are on loan from the artist, art foundations and private collections.

Elina Brotherus (born 1972) lives and works in Helsinki and Avallon, France. With a rich and international exhibition career dating back to the late 1990s, Brotherus has been awarded the Pro Finlandia Medal of Honour (2012) and the French prize Prix Niépce (2005).

Meet the Artist Elina Brotherus at the Didrichsen Art Museum:
Sat 11.2., Sat 18.2., Sat 25.3., Sat 29.4., Sat 20.5., Sat 27.5., Sun 28.5.
at 1 pm

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Opening hours

Tue–Sun 11 am – 6 pm
Mon closed

Tickets

16 / 14 / 10 / 5 / 0 €
Campaign: 19.2.–28.5.2023 18–30-year-olds 5€

Public guided tours in English

On the first Saturday of each month at 12 noon