



WADDESDON



Art in Nature

Saturday 24 May – Sunday 1 June 2025

Over Spring Bank Holiday weekend, the magnificent gardens at Waddesdon will become a canvas for artist inspiration as Yorkshire-based land artist James Brunt creates a brand-new collaborative artwork for a festival celebrating art in nature.

The public will see Brunt and his team in action as they create a huge *Waddesdon Mandala* on the South Lawn next to the formal Parterre from Saturday 24 to Bank holiday Monday 26 May.

Known for his intricate rearrangements of natural materials found in the landscape such as leaves and pinecones, the work follows on from his public piece known as *The Knowsley Mandala*, which was completed in Liverpool in 2022.

The word 'mandala' comes from Sanskrit and means a 'circle' or 'centre', and the interconnected swirling patterns have been used in artistic and religious cultures around the world. Now, visitors to Waddesdon will have a unique opportunity to see a monumental land-artwork being created.

Inspired by this ancient concept, the mandala will be created using diluted water-based pitch marker paint, which is expected to last for at least a month after completion before fading.

But the making of the *Waddesdon Mandala* marks only the beginning of an entire festival of land art this May half term.

From Wednesday 28 May to Sunday 1 June, a group of leading international artists who specialise in working with natural materials will be creating further artworks throughout the gardens. Their temporary installations draw inspiration from Waddesdon's unique landscape, offering visitors a chance to witness first hand their creative processes and the beautiful results celebrating the natural world.

As well as James Brunt featured artists include:

Jon Foreman from Pembrokeshire who uses materials such as stones, leaves, recycled material and general debris to create miniscule or monumental works from beaches to forests. Artist duo **Mark and Rebecca Ford**, based in the South Downs National Park, draw on techniques of willow craft and woodland management. Lancashire's **Richard Shilling** creates ephemeral art by photographing his sculptures in different ambient light, and environmental artist **Tim Pugh**, working from Flintshire and Cumbria, creates sculptures using natural materials and decorates trunks and boulders to highlight local flora and fauna. Portugal's **Ana Castilho** creates detailed mandalas inspired by her Portuguese home environment, and Lancashire's **Julie Brooklyn** makes playful interactive works alongside running *Land Art for Kids* to encourage young people to explore and appreciate creative play in nature.

Visitors will be able to see all these artists at work, and, importantly, will be able to get involved with the creativity themselves. There will also be an accompanying programme of free events with the artists, including Q&A sessions, hands-on workshops, and masterclasses.

Not only this, but everyone will be able to take part in a festival finale artwork on Saturday 31 May. Under the direction of James and his fellow artists, a large new work will be created, drawing on the help of adults and children alike.

Beyond Art in Nature, Waddesdon will offer a variety of outdoor activities for all ages throughout May.

The first bank holiday weekend of the month sees the grounds host an array of **birds of prey**. You can learn about the habits, habitats and history of these birds, and, if feeling brave, strap on a handler's glove and hold the birds yourself.

And on Sunday 11 and 18 May there is a unique opportunity to join Waddesdon's conservation team for a **Dawn Chorus Walk**. Beginning at 4am, these special guided walks offer an incredible chance to hear the magical sounds of early morning bird song in Waddesdon's grounds. Expect peace, tranquility, and a chance for a hot drink and breakfast bap after the walk. Places are limited so be sure to book early if you want you want this chance to see Waddesdon in a completely new light.

Visitors will also be able to enjoy the **Tremendous Trees Online Trail**, a free interactive digital map highlighting Waddesdon's most extraordinary trees, many of them Baron Ferdinand's original plantings, their botanical significance and their stories which are so much a part of the estate's rich history.

Pippa Shirley, Director of Waddesdon, says: *"Waddesdon is such an inspirational place for artists, and we are absolutely delighted to be working with James and his talented collaborators on this project which uses our unique landscape and beauty in such a creative way. In its celebration of natural materials, it also highlights the ephemeral nature and fragility of the environment around us and habitats for wildlife and how we all need to work together to protect them. Making collaborative art is a wonderful way to get everyone involved in thinking about the importance of place to us all."*

James Brunt says: *"I'm so excited to create Art in Nature for Waddesdon, the grounds and landscape are a perfect match for the fantastic ensemble of artists from across the UK and Europe who will be joining us this year to create and share their art. But this event is definitely not just about the artists, Art in Nature is an invitation for everyone, young and old to come along, get involved and get creative in this beautiful outdoor setting.*

Across May half term we have so much going on, from talks and masterclasses, artist workshops and film presentations to opportunities to collaborate with internationally renowned land artists creating new temporary works specifically for Waddesdon. But most importantly loads of wonderful outdoor space in which to channel your inner artists and immerse yourself in the landscape."

[Please check the website for the latest information.](#)

NOTES TO EDITORS

[IMAGES FOR MEDIA USE CAN BE DOWNLOADED HERE](#)

James Brunt image © Timm Cleasby Photography. Photo by Timm Cleasby

Waddesdon Manor was built at the end of the 19th century by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild in the style of a French early 16th-century château. Baron Ferdinand was an inspired collector, and the house was designed to showcase his exceptional collection of English and Dutch paintings, French 18th-century furniture, Sèvres porcelain, and other decorative arts. When Ferdinand died in 1898, he left Waddesdon to his sister, Alice, who also was a great collector. Upon her death the house passed to her great-nephew, James de Rothschild, who inherited a substantial part of his father Baron Edmond's great collection. In 1957, to ensure its future in perpetuity, Waddesdon was bequeathed to the National Trust. The Rothschild family continues to run Waddesdon through a family charitable trust, the Rothschild Foundation. Until February 2024, it was under the chairmanship of Jacob, 4th Lord Rothschild. His eldest daughter, Hannah Rothschild, is now the Chair. [More here.](#)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, INTERVIEWS AND IMAGES

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