



WADDESDON



Waddesdon Mandala by James Brunt and Jon Foreman, Art in Nature. Image courtesy of Layla Parkin.

Art in Nature

Until Sunday 1 June 2025

During the Spring Bank Holiday weekend, Waddesdon Manor’s magnificent gardens became a living canvas for Yorkshire-based land artist James Brunt in collaboration with Jon Foreman, who created a unique artwork for an exciting new festival celebrating art in nature.

The huge *Waddesdon Mandala*, spanning over 70 metres, can now be seen on the South Lawn, next to the formal Parterre.

Known for his intricate, rearrangements of natural materials found in the landscape – ranging from leaves and pinecones to stones and twigs – James’ new work at the Manor follows on from an earlier piece, *The Knowsley Mandala*, which he constructed at Halewood Park in Liverpool in 2022. Hailed then as the “magnificent mandala”, Brunt’s enormous artwork covered an area the size of one-and-a-half football pitches.

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. Visitors to Waddesdon can now marvel at this new, monumental land artwork created using diluted water-based pitch marker paint. Don't leave it too long though, as the mandala will begin to fade into the ground around a month after its completion.

The making of the *Waddesdon Mandala* marked the beginning of the *Art in Nature* festival, which has brought together leading land and environmental artists from across the UK to create and showcase new works inspired by and created in the beautiful grounds at Waddesdon.

Spread across five days – Wednesday 28 May to Sunday 1 June – the programme of events invites visitors to engage with the participating artists to create land art, accompany them on walks and engage in a series of fascinating conversations (the full schedule is below).

Among the leading exponents of making land art are **Jon Foreman** from Pembrokeshire, who uses materials such as stones, leaves, recycled material and general debris to create varying-sized works, while **Mark and Rebecca Ford**, who live 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, while **Tim Pugh**, who divides his time between Flintshire and Cumbria, creates sculptures using natural materials, decorating tree trunks and boulders to highlight local flora and fauna. Portugal's **Ana Castilho** is another artist who creates detailed mandalas inspired by the landscape and environment of her home country, and Richard Shilling's creative partner **Julia Brooklyn** makes the journey from the North West to make playful interactive works designed 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 is also 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.

James Brunt said: *"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."

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."

For more information and further details about *Art in Nature*, visit www.waddesdon.org.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

IMAGES FOR MEDIA USE CAN BE DOWNLOADED HERE

- Waddesdon Mandala by James Brunt and Jon Foreman, *Art in Nature*. Image courtesy of Layla Parkin.

FULL ART IN NATURE SCHEDULE

Wednesday 28 May

10am–4pm – Artist collaboration

Artists on site will be creating a feature artwork as a centrepiece to the festival. Explore the woodlands and create your own artworks to add to our woodland gallery

Thursday 29 May

10am–4pm – Join the artists along Baron's Walk and create your own wonderful nature inspired artworks.

11am – Workshop

A one-hour open workshop with Yorkshire based artist James Brunt.

1pm – Workshop

A one-hour open workshop with Tim Pugh.

2–3pm – In Conversation

Mark and Rebecca Ford, Richard Shilling and Julia Brooklyn discuss their work and journey into the world of Land Art, followed by a Q and A.

Friday 30 May

10am–4pm – Baron's Walk Art Trail and creative play space.

11am – Workshop

A one-hour open workshop with Pembrokeshire based artist Jon Foreman.

1–3pm – Masterclass

Leaf box masterclass with Richard Shilling and Julia Brooklyn.

2–3pm – In Conversation

James Brunt and Tim Pugh discuss their work and the role of outdoor art in education.

3.15pm – Book Signing

Book signing with James Brunt at the Powerhouse.

Saturday 31 May

10am–4pm – Baron's Walk Art Trail and creative play space.

11am–3pm – Collaboration

Join the artistic team at the Conservation Hub and help create a large festival collaborative artwork.

3.15pm – Book Signing

Book signing with James Brunt at the Powerhouse.

Sunday 1 June

10am–4pm – Baron’s Walk Art Trail and creative play space.

11am – Workshop

A one-hour open workshop with James Brunt and Jon Foreman.

11am–1pm – Masterclass

Leaf box masterclass with Richard Shilling and Julia Brooklyn.

2pm – Final Artist Creations Walk

Art in Nature Walk: artist-led walk around all the creations and hear the inspirations behind them, led by Mark Ford and James Brunt.

Please note, this schedule subject to change. See noticeboards on arrival for on the day information.

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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