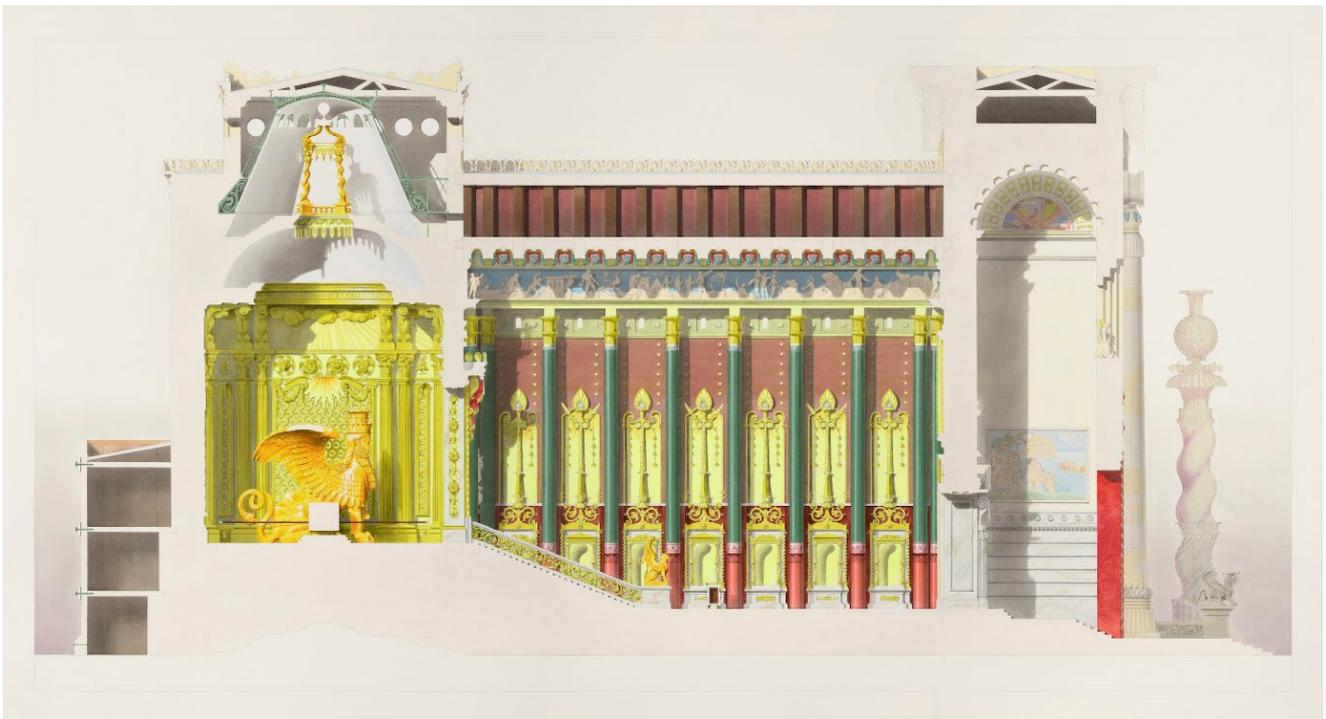




WADDESDON
Rothschild Collections

Pablo Bronstein explores the Temple of Solomon in a Jewish country house



The Temple of Solomon and its Contents

16 July – 2 November 2025

Responding to Waddesdon Manor as a Jewish country house, leading artist Pablo Bronstein (b. 1977) will unveil a grand assembly of paintings on paper depicting new versions of the Temple of Solomon.

The Temple of Solomon and its Contents features a new body of work by Bronstein, including cross-sections and aerial plans, façade and frieze details, visualisations of the Solomonic columns, the principal contents, and much more. It promises a thrilling walk – playful, erudite and at times provocative – through one of history's great fascinations, a building that exists as much in the imagination as it did in reality.

The Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem is one of the most famous buildings in history, standing for over 400 years, significant as a place and an idea that has been sought, contested and imitated. Described in detail in the Bible, no one knows what it looked like and for centuries it has been reimagined by artists and designers, archaeologists, theorists and ideologues.

Mimicking artistic attempts to reconstruct it over the centuries, from the medieval to the Baroque, Bronstein explores the idealising tendencies of architecture that dominated from the 18th to the 20th centuries.

Through Bronstein's mastery of historical styles and techniques, Neoclassicism and Romanticism vie for attention alongside recollections of Bernini (1598-1680) and Blondel (1705-1774), Sir John Soane (1753-1837) and John Martin (1789-1854). With virtuosic fluency in the different languages of architecture, the works offer the viewer alternative ways of reconstructing the lost Temple, from 'architecture terrible' to Art Deco, exploring notions of the primitive, the modern and the Holy.

Born in Argentina and raised in London, Bronstein has spent over three decades creating work centred around period styles and architectural character. His work is in the collections of institutions such as the British Museum, Tate, Centre Pompidou, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston.

As well as visualising the Temple of Solomon from the outside in different architectural iterations, the exhibition also ventures inside and depicts some of its contents, not least the Ark of the Covenant, whose appearance and ornament is described in the Book of Exodus down to its exact dimensions. Also included are the menorahs with their seven lamps never to be extinguished, the golden table for showbreads, and the columns called Jachin and Boaz, as well as sanctuaries and chambers seen through elevated cross-sections.

Alongside the exhibition will be a display of drawings and architectural books from Waddesdon's historic collection, specially selected by the artist. Encompassing designs for altars and candelabra, furniture and panelling, rooms and religious ritual objects, it will be the first time they are presented at Waddesdon.

Also on display will be examples from a unique set of 18th-century Jewish Italian embroidered hangings from the Rothschild Collection, depicting both the Temple of Solomon and the Second Temple.

Pablo Bronstein says: *"The reconstruction of ancient and biblical structures says more about the societies that reconstructed them than it does about any long-gone originals. The Temple of Solomon has had more than its fair share of attempts to imagine it in the style of the times. Attempts to fix an idea of its appearance play an intrinsic part in its appeal and it is those grandiose and often naïve acts of imagination that is the focus of my interest in this exhibition.*

"My reconstruction of the Temple will explore idealising tendencies within architecture, across porous boundaries of styles prevalent during a defining era of archaeology – roughly the 18th to early 20th-centuries – precisely the time when nationalisms sought to tie themselves to particular architectural traditions and in which nascent professional archaeology informed our understanding of the past. These versions of the Temple of Solomon are in effect monumental and often grim projections of European fantasies. I've tried to inhabit the ambitious contestants for the Prix de Rome as they set about reconstructing the Temple entirely in their own image."

Pippa Shirley, Director of Waddesdon, says: *"We are delighted to be showing these new works, specifically created in response to Waddesdon and our Jewish country houses research project and book. Serious and playful, learned and fantastical, these extraordinary paintings will delight visitors, immersing them in vivid but imaginary structures and intrigue them with the layers and meaning embedded in buildings and in styles. Rather like Waddesdon itself, Pablo's work invites close examination – the more you look, the more you find to enjoy in his use of detail, ornament and imagination. It is always immensely rewarding to work*

with artists, seeing the Manor and its contents through their eyes, and in this case, the objects which Pablo has chosen to accompany his work, and which speak to him directly.”

NOTES TO EDITORS

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

- Pablo Bronstein, *Temple of Solomon I*, cross-section 2024–2025, acrylic on paper, 105 x 200 cm / 41.3 x 78.7 in

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 at <https://waddesdon.org.uk/about-us/press/notes-for-editors/>

Pablo Bronstein (b. 1977) is one of the leading artists working in Britain today. Born in Argentina and based in London, Bronstein centres his work around period design and architecture, often incorporating elements of satire in a commentary on taste, history, culture, and society. His drawings and paintings on paper of buildings and objects range from historically accurate and analytical to overly ornamental and decorative, and this interest in architecture’s character and vitality frequently extends into live work, including performance and film. His practice also includes large-scale sculptures, wallpaper, and installations that play with a sense of space, scale, and domesticity.

Bronstein has been the subject of major exhibitions at institutions including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Tate Britain, London; Sir John Soane’s Museum, London; Chatsworth House, Derbyshire; Nottingham Contemporary, Nottingham; Institute of Contemporary Arts, London; and REDCAT, Los Angeles, among many other venues. This May, a solo presentation of his work opens at Glyndebourne in East Sussex.

A large-scale work by the artist is currently on view at Tate Britain, among paintings by Canaletto and Hogarth in the museum’s 2023 rehang. Bronstein’s work also resides in the permanent collections of Centre Pompidou, Paris; Tate, London; the British Museum, London; Victoria & Albert Museum, London; Government Art Collection, UK; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, among others.

Bronstein is the subject of over ten monographs, many made in close collaboration between the artist, the designer Mark El-khatib, and Koenig Books.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, INTERVIEWS AND IMAGES

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