



A special commission:
The Mother of Parliaments: Annual Division of Revenue
A Print for The British Electorate by Adam Dant
Waddesdon Manor

British artist Adam Dant has been specially commissioned to create a 21st century almanac inspired by *Glorious Years*, the exhibition of French calendars currently on display at Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire.

The Mother of Parliaments: Annual Division of Revenue is a contemporary almanac that takes its inspiration from the current state of British politics and the political life of Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild (1839-1893), Liberal MP for Aylesbury from 1885 to 1898, who built Waddesdon Manor.

Dant's almanac is a modern and subversive response to *Glorious Years: French Calendars from Louis XIV to the Revolution*, which showcases a remarkable, but little known and never before displayed, collection of calendars (originally named 'almanacs'). The exhibition charts the evolution of these calendars from their golden period under the reign of Louis XIV, to the Revolution, when time itself was re-invented.

Dant playfully satirises our modern politicians by re-imagining them through the lens of the official almanacs of the Old Regime. He undermines these glorifying images by replacing the French kings and their attributes with modern British MPs, poking fun at the power and reverence communicated through these everyday prints.

Almanacs are political documents, issued as propaganda exercises by the French establishment, and later, by those seeking to overthrow it. Dant's design is a modern reflection of that spirit. He describes it as a print for the British Electorate, 2017 and explains:

'Suitable for hanging on the walls of every British kitchen in place of the ubiquitous kitten calendar or stately home tea towel. 'The Mother of Parliaments: Annual Distribution of Revenue ' allows for the division of the annual governmental budget amongst its various departments to be pencilled in year to year using blank roundels across the design.

Set against a backdrop of the Central Lobby of the Palace of Westminster is a schematic rendering of the important buildings, figures and symbols of government.

Familiar political faces such as the current Prime Minister, the leader of the opposition and MP's in charge of the Foreign Office, The Home Office, HM Treasury...are rendered in the timeless style of classical allegory.

The depiction of each is elevated stylistically in the manner of the 18th-century French almanac model. The drudgery and grey facade of civil service life thus acquires something of the triumphant self-aggrandisement of the French Court or Revolutionary National Assembly. Something that is definitely missing from current British politics.'

The Mother of Parliaments: Annual Division of Revenue will be displayed alongside 26 rare French calendars in the *Glorious Years* exhibition in the Drawings Room at Waddesdon Manor, 22 March-29 October 2017.

Curator: Rachel Jacobs

Adam Dant image : <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/51v2gjn9w1k6fk/AABa8PW3FHqUE9Lvx9jhBID6a?dl=0>

Exhibition images: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/djdm8rsyoho9e7/AADUOf0xb3UmomqgXBI7fJmUa?dl=0>

Events:

Lecture at Spencer House, London:

Glorious Years by Rachel Jacobs

Monday 27 March 2017, 6:30pm

***Glorious Years* Exhibition Tour, Waddesdon:**

Friday 19 May & Saturday 16 September 2017

2:30-3:30pm

---Ends---

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

Picture captions: *The Mother of Parliaments: Annual Division of Revenue, A Print for The British Electorate* by Adam Dant, 2017 © Adam Dant