



Electric Menagerie by Lauren Booth, Winter Light at Waddesdon

Waddesdon Manor, near Aylesbury, HP18 0JH
11 Nov 2017 – 2 Jan 2018, Wed – Sun, from dusk

Inspired by the real and fantastical animals associated with Waddesdon and the Rothschild family, *Electric Menagerie* by Lauren Booth (b. 1969) is a series of light-based artworks which will be placed playfully through the gardens, from the Aviary to the Stables, as part of Winter Light, the contemporary art programme this Christmas.

From the tropical birds living in the Aviary and Walter Rothschild's zebras to the ornamental dragons found on French 18th-century clocks, animals are everywhere at Waddesdon both inside and out.

Lauren Booth is a British-American mixed-media artist who has been working regularly with neon and light since 2002, creating sculptures and installations that encourage interaction and which reflect her love of varied materials put to inventive uses, colour and infused with humour. *Electric Menagerie* is a commission for the Winter Light programme, which has previously included work by artists Bruce Munro and Julius Popp and creations by Woodroffe Bassett.

Baron Ferdinand (1839-98), who built the Manor in the late 19th century, collected a great number of animals and birds which formed an important part of the experience of Waddesdon for weekend party guests. The animals, which included llamas and goats were referred to by Ferdinand as his 'zoo'. Menageries were characteristic features of other Rothschild gardens, with family members keeping donkeys, antelopes, kiwis and even kangaroos and other exotic species. Most notable was Walter, 2nd Lord Rothschild (1868-1937), nephew of Baron Ferdinand (1839-98), who formed the largest collection of animal

and bird specimens in private hands, displayed in a purpose-built museum in nearby Tring (now part of the Natural History Museum).

Works created for the *Electric Menagerie*, include:

Dylan, 2017, Rolo and Murphy, 2017, three *Neon Goats* placed on the rockwork along the path towards the Aviary inspired by the flock of Barbary sheep (a species of North African goat) that lived here in Ferdinand's time.

Bleeding Heart Dove, 2017, Parrots, 2017 and **Rothschild Mynahs, 2017** created in response to the Aviary built around 1889 to house Baron Ferdinand's collection of exotic birds. The neon **Parrots** evoke the historical experience in Baron Ferdinand's time when the parrots would have been tethered to stands on the lawn, where they could be admired by his guests, while **Bleeding Heart Dove** and **Rothschild Mynahs**, refer to the birds successfully bred at Waddesdon today. The Aviary is a working zoo with a comprehensive breeding and conservation programme.

Also on display will be:

Robin and Pheasant, 2017
Spinning Dreams, 2017
Flea Circus, 2017
Tortoise Chandelier, 2017
Strawberry Kisses, 2017
Green Snap, 2017
Fly on the Wall, 2017
The Invisible Hand, 2015
Flamingo Triptych, 2017
Red Parrot: Purple Perch, 2017
Blue Parrot: Blue Perch, 2017
Party Parrot: Blue Perch, 2017

Grounds admission, including Electric Menagerie and Waddesdon Imaginarium

Adult: £10, Child: £5, Family: £25

Free for National Trust and Art Fund members and under 5s

Bookings 01296 820414 or www.waddesdon.org.uk/christmas

Images available for download here: [Electric Menagerie](#)

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