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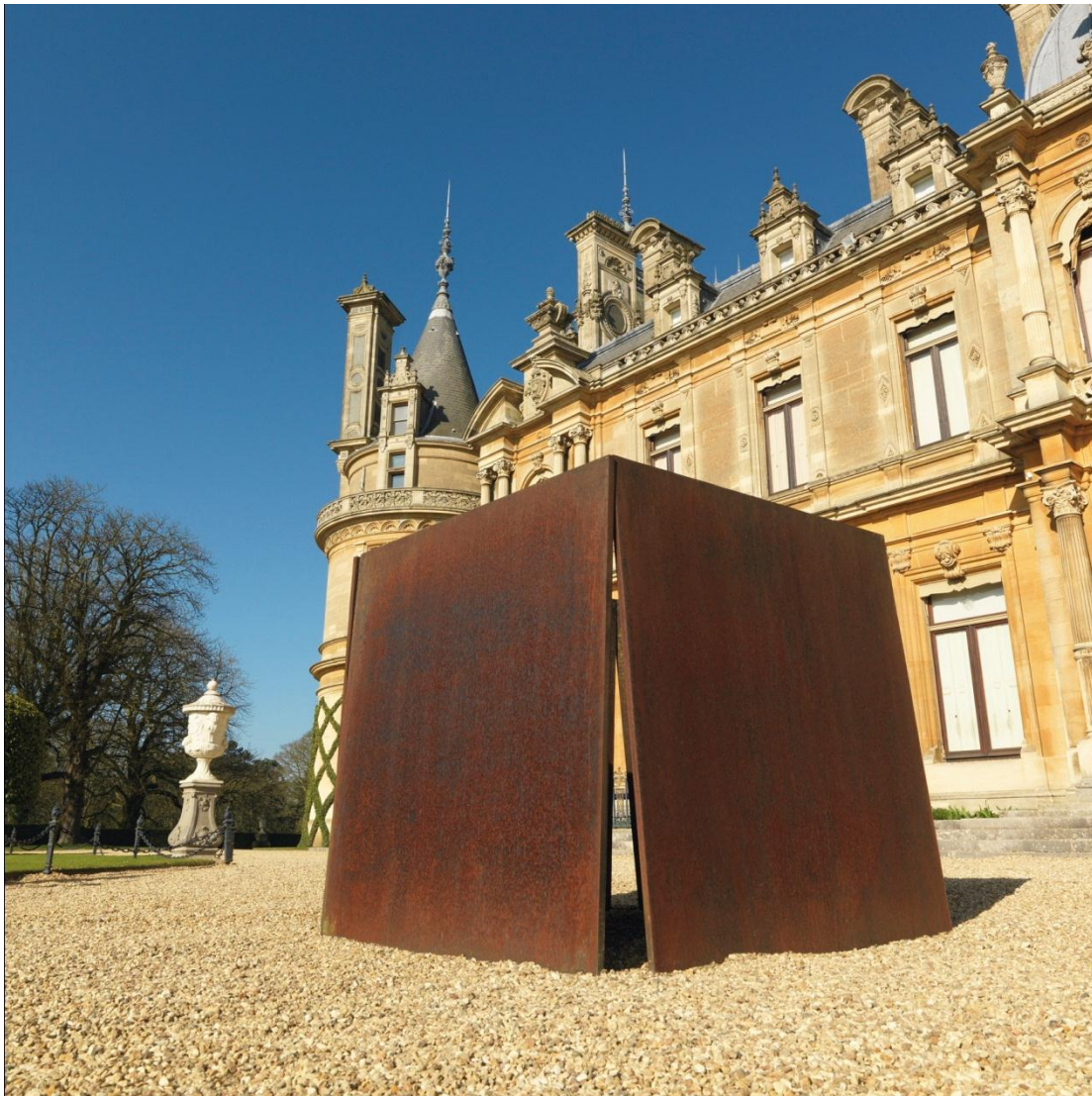
CHRISTIE'S

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HOUSE OF CARDS

**CHRISTIE'S STAGE AN EXHIBITION OF CONTEMPORARY SCULPTURE IN RESPONSE TO CHARDIN
AT THE ROTHSCHILD COLLECTION, WADDESDON MANOR, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

**MAJOR WORKS BY SERRA, HIRST, KOONS, TONY SMITH, URS FISCHER, JUDD & FLAVIN WITH
NEW WORKS BY KAPOOR, VASCONCELOS & HEIN**



Richard Serra's *House of Cards* installed at Waddesdon Manor - © ARS, New York and DACS, London

26 MAY – 28 OCTOBER, 2012

Major sculptural works by the world's leading contemporary artists will be shown by Christie's Private Sales from 26 May to 28 October 2012, in an original, curated exhibition inspired by Jean-Baptiste Siméon Chardin's (1699-1779) *Boy Building a House of Cards*, 1735, in the grounds of Waddesdon Manor in Buckinghamshire, the home of the Rothschild Collection and one of the most visited of the National Trust properties.

33 works including pieces by Richard Serra, Jeff Koons, Damien Hirst, Donald Judd, Dan Flavin, Anthony Gormley, Urs Fischer and Tony Smith with new works by Anish Kapoor, Joana Vasconcelos and Jeppe Hein, have been chosen by Christie's as a contemporary response to an exhibition exploring Chardin's painting, being held in the house following its recent acquisition for the Rothschild collection. 16 nationalities are represented among the works, 24 of which are shown around the grounds of the Manor and the remainder indoors at the Stables. While a few of the works are on loan, the majority are for sale from £60,000 to £7.5 million (\$100,000 to \$12 million).



Lord Rothschild, commented: *“Contemporary sculpture is my personal passion and I have been a collector myself for 50 years. Seeing the works in the landscape has given me and those who live and work at Waddesdon the chance to look at the grounds with a fresh eye. I thought that the project would be a really interesting thing to do, particularly because of our Chardin show.”*

Francis Outred, *International Director and Head of Post-War & Contemporary Art, Christie's Europe*, said: *“Chardin was an extraordinary painter, perfectly capturing and distilling onto canvas the very nature of contemporary life. In his paintings depicting a boy building a house of cards, he offers a beautifully elaborated metaphor for childhood and the construction of life, shedding light on the essential forces of gravity, balance and counterbalance, as well as dexterity, chance, contingency, repetition, ritual and the ephemeral. For the first time at Waddesdon Manor, Christie's is delighted to be staging an original and curatorially conceived project, House of Cards, in dialogue with Chardin's paintings, uniting some of the greatest contemporary artists working with sculpture today. Sculptural practice has gone through remarkable evolutions since the Second World War. Where bronze, plaster and stone were previously the preserves of artists, today the proliferation of new ideas, theories and materials has had a liberating effect on cultural production. In this exhibition one encounters corten steel, plastic, glass, aluminium, formaldehyde, fluorescent tubing, as well as myriad other materials rendered in all shapes and sizes, indoor and outdoor, some serene, some fantastical, some disorientating, some enchanting. Analysing the themes associated with Chardin's house of cards, Christie's has sought out works, which stunningly showcase those principles in their own unique ways.”*

THE THEMES:

Equilibrium, Gravity and Grace

The central piece in the exhibition is **Richard Serra's** (b. 1939) *One Ton Prop (House of Cards)*, a precarious balancing act of four square steel plates secured by their own weight and combined pressure (see image on page 1). This early and iconic work, apparently light, but paradoxically massive weighing one tonne, engages the physical and mechanical principles that underpin the careful configuration of a house of cards; considerations, which have since dominated the artist's oeuvre. Teja Bach, the author of *Brancusi and Serra*, described the piece as an “*emblematic sculpture, from which, in a way all the rest of his work derives... The double title emphasizes the two components – weight and*

precariousness, the former accentuating the dangerousness of the latter. Serra's vertical sculptures have been developed expressly from the basic model of the house of cards".

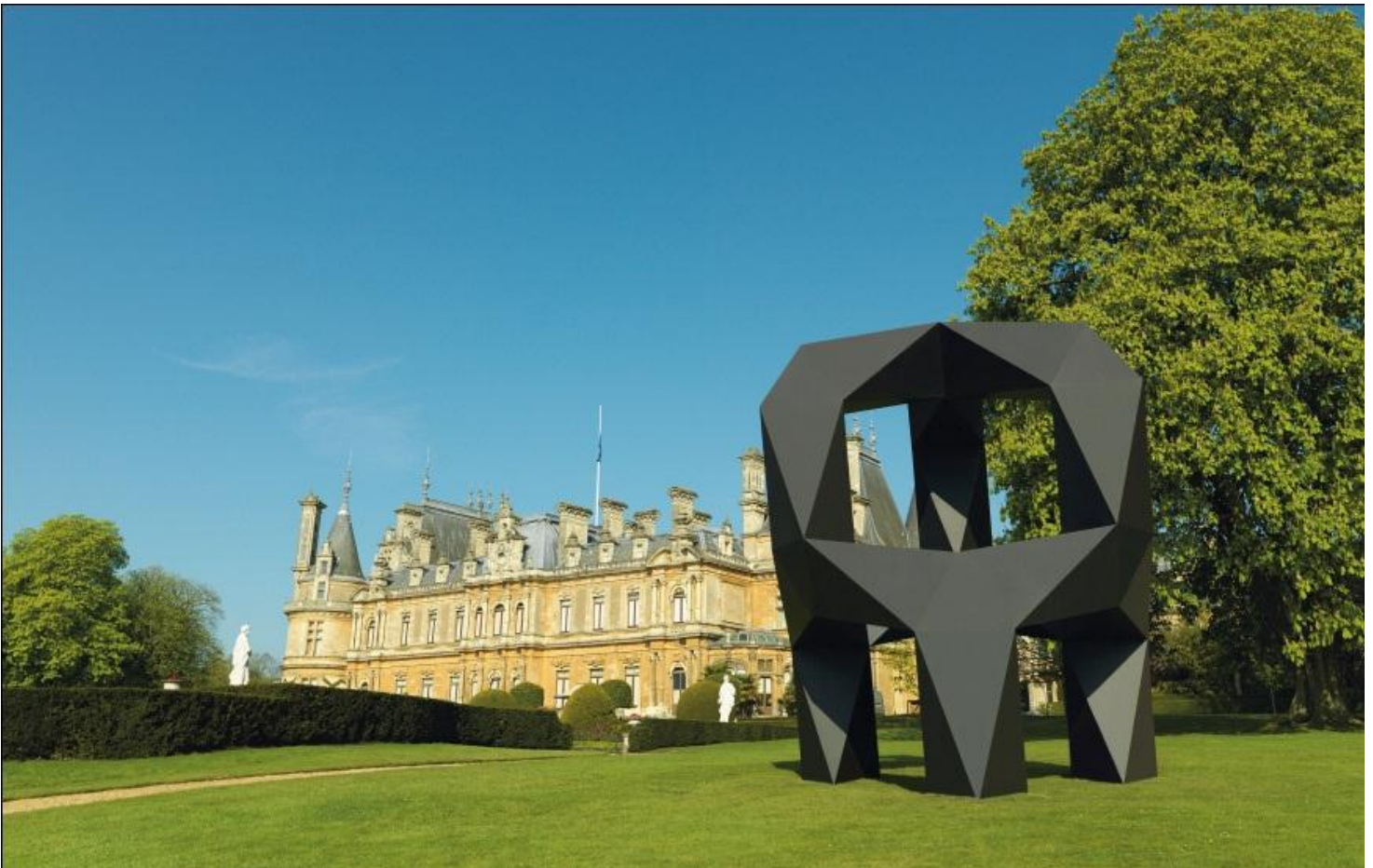
Another seminal work is by **Jeff Koons** (b. 1955) whose *Aqualung* of 1985, from the celebrated *Equilibrium* series, is rendered in warm bronze with incredible technical perfection in its detail. It is one of his early and most important masterpieces and invokes a similar absurd parody as in Serra's work described above; that life-saving equipment based on buoyancy can be rendered in massive, solid bronze. Koons said: "The tools for *Equilibrium* were cast in bronze, like *Aqualung*. If someone really desired equilibrium, was seduced by the sirens to go for it, and had enough courage, they'd put the *Aqualung* on their back and it would take them under."

Elemental Construction

Tony Smith's (1912-1980) epic *Moondog* rises over five metres from the ground gently tilting into the landscape. The piece from 1964-67 dominates the landscape. Commanding the space in which it stands, it is built like a matrix with a geometric configuration of fifteen extended octahedrons and ten tetrahedrons, the sculpture visibly mutates when viewed from different angles. At once solid and robust, from other oblique views, the sculpture appears to tilt forwards, projecting the instability innate to the stacked house of cards. This has become one of Tony Smith's most significant works and has been included in an installation at the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the National Gallery of Art Sculpture in Washington D.C.



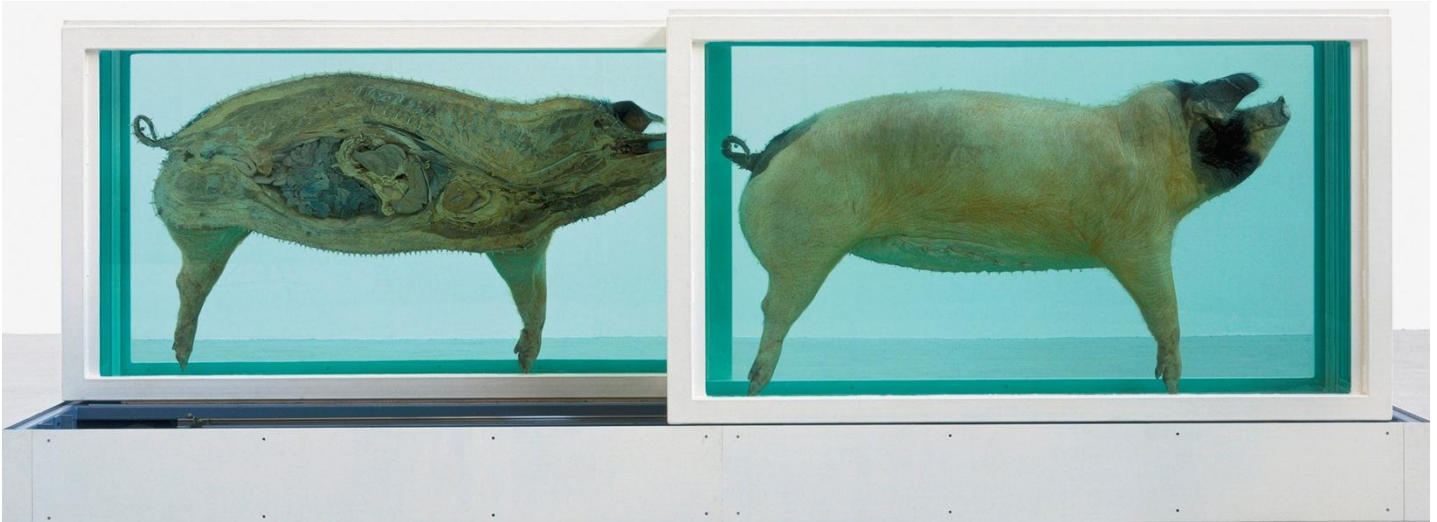
© Jeff Koons



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Donald Judd's, *Untitled (79–40 Bernstein)* work from 1979, is made from 10 rectangular units of galvanized iron lined beneath with transparent red plexiglass, the stack gleams with the shiny metal revealing a luminously scarlet plexiglass interior. This modular construction recalls the house of cards - a precipitous tower created from successive rows of stacked playing cards.

Childhood and the Passage of Life



This Little Piggy Went to Market, This Little Piggy Stayed at Home, 1996. Photographed by Stephen White
© Damien Hirst and Science Ltd. All rights reserved, DACS 2012

Another highlight among the 9 works being shown inside is Damien Hirst's (b. 1965) iconic *This Little Piggy Went to Market, This Little Piggy Stayed at Home*, made in 1996 and first exhibited in the landmark *Sensation* show held in 1997. The neatly dissected body of the pig, conserved in formaldehyde, is set in two boxes which slide past one another along a platform powered by an electric motor. With its playful appropriation of the children's nursery rhyme, the work subverts the sweet verse with the artist's characteristic, macabre aesthetic.

The giant, fantastical sculpture by the Swiss artist **Urs Fischer** (b. 1973) *Bad Timing Lamb Chop!* is an iconic sculpture from 2004-5 by Fischer who is known for his transformation of the everyday object. Towering overhead, a collided cigarette pack and simple wooden chair are magnified to huge and inverted proportions. Like the small bottle labeled, 'drink me', with its heady effects on Alice, the visitor enters into a Wonderland where the staggering verisimilitude of Fischer's sculpture leaves one happily disorientated.



© Urs Fischer.
Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Eva Presenhuber, Zürich



© Joana Vasconcelos, SPA/ DACS 2012

Joana Vasconcelos' 2012 *Pavillon de Thé*, is a 5 metre-high teapot, finely worked in filigree motifs. Conceived specifically for the Christie's sculpture exhibition and one of Lord Rothschild's favourite works, *Pavillon de Thé* presents a fantastical teapot, as if plucked from the March Hare's tea party or purloined from Chardin's *Lady Taking Tea* (1735). An exhibition of Vasconcelos' work will be held in Versailles throughout the summer at the same time as the Waddesdon Manor show.

Dexterity

In Chardin's masterful paintings, the artist beautifully illuminates the hand, celebrating its creative potential as it moves with agile, clean, dexterous movements to assemble a house of cards. In **Bruce Nauman's** *Untitled (Hand Circle)* (1996), the artist undertakes a self-referential project, paying tribute in sculptural form by casting his own hands in solid bronze.

Architecture of Space



Untitled by **Anish Kapoor** (b. 1954) is an elegant monolith created in dialogue with the present exhibition and installed for the first time at Waddesdon. The dense black stone should not by rights reflect anything, light being absorbed by its cold, organic material. However, polished to perfection, the mesmeric

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totem interacts and reflects a space beyond its own materiality. Anish Kapoor was chosen from a shortlist of artists to produce a permanent artwork for the Olympic Park. *Orbit*, the tallest sculpture in the country, was unveiled in May of this year and will open to the public in time for the London 2012 games later this summer.

Also made for the show is a three-part piece entitled *Geometric Mirror A-C* by Danish artist **Jeppe Hein** (b. 1974) using geometric shapes of polished stainless steel which mirrors its surroundings.

Other artists represented include Antony Gormley, Robert Indiana, Xu Bing, Eva Rothschild, Tony Cragg, Ai Wei Wei, Bruce Nauman, Kader Attia, Alexander Calder, Beatrice Caracciolo, Eduardo Chillida, Wim Delvoye, Dan Flavin, Do Ho Suh, and Thomas Schutte.

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Images available on request
Visit Christie's Web site at www.christies.com

Notes to editors:

Opening times for the gardens, aviary, shops and restaurants including *House of Cards* in the gardens: Wednesday – Sunday (closed Mon & Tues): 10.00am -5.00pm.

Entry cost for the above from £6.50 - £20.50 depending on season and whether adult/child/family ticket. National Trust members go free.

For information about House entry times including *House of Cards* show in The Coach House please visit the website www.waddesdon.org.uk or telephone: 01296-653226. Waddesdon Manor, nr Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP18 0JH.

About Christie's

Christie's, the world's leading art business, had global auction and private sales in 2011 that totaled £3.6 billion/\$5.7 billion. Christie's is a name and place that speaks of extraordinary art, unparalleled service and expertise, as well as international glamour. Founded in 1766 by James Christie, Christie's has since conducted the greatest and most celebrated auctions through the centuries providing a popular showcase for the unique and the beautiful. Christie's offers over 450 auctions annually in over 80 categories, including all areas of fine and decorative arts, jewellery, photographs, collectibles, wine, and more. Prices range from \$200 to over \$100 million. Christie's also has a long and successful history conducting private sales for its clients in all categories, with emphasis on Post-War and Contemporary, Impressionist and Modern, Old Masters and Jewellery. Private sales totaled £502 million / \$808.6m in 2011, an increase of 44% on the previous year. Christie's has a global presence with 53 offices in 32 countries and 10 salerooms around the world including in London, New York, Paris, Geneva, Milan, Amsterdam, Dubai, Zürich, and Hong Kong. More recently, Christie's has led the market with expanded initiatives in growth markets such as Russia, China, India and the United Arab Emirates, with successful sales and exhibitions in Beijing, Mumbai and Dubai.

Waddesdon Manor

Waddesdon Manor was built from 1874 by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild to display his outstanding collection of art treasures and to entertain the fashionable world. It combines the highest quality 18th century French decorative arts, magnificent English portraits and Dutch Old Master paintings with one of the finest Victorian gardens in Britain, famous for its parterre and ornate working Aviary. The house was bequeathed to the National Trust in 1957 and is now managed by a family charitable trust under the chairmanship of Lord Rothschild. Waddesdon is one of the most visited historic houses among England's National Trust properties. The collections are a reflection of the passions of the Rothschilds who created and have cared for Waddesdon, from Baron Ferdinand, who built the Manor in the late 19th-century to Jacob, the present Lord Rothschild, through whom contemporary collecting has been revived. The Coach House opened as a new venue for contemporary art exhibitions in the grounds of the Manor in April 2009 with a retrospective exhibition on the work of Angus Fairhurst, a collaboration with Arnolfini, Bristol and in 2010 showed "Glass Experiences", an exhibition of contemporary chandeliers by Brazilian designers, the Campana brothers and the installation of Jeff Koons' Cracked Egg (Blue) in the Conservatory. 2011 exhibitions focused on Andy Warhol, and included a sculpture by Anish Kapoor in the grounds, alongside permanent works by Sarah Lucas and Stephen Cox. 2011 also saw the opening of Windmill Hill, a new bespoke archive by Stephen Marshall Architects to house and offer study space for the Rothschild Family archives and the Rothschild Foundation.