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National Trust Press Release – Mottisfont, Hampshire

The thrill of the chase – new art installation *Hunter / Hunted* opens at National Trust's Mottisfont



Visitors to the Red and Yellow Rooms of the National Trust's historic house at Mottisfont will see something different from 19 May. Intermedia artist collective WE (Kye Wilson and Helena Eflerová) have made a new site specific, multi-channel video and sound installation in response to the estate and a particular activity from its past.

For many years, hunting animals was a central part of life at Mottisfont. Humans also pursued each other here at the weekend parties organised by Maud Russell, the arts patron and 'it' girl who made Mottisfont her country home from the 1930s onwards. The two themes come together in a garden statue at Mottisfont that has particularly inspired WE, which shows Actaeon, the hunter from Greek mythology who accidentally saw the chaste goddess Diana naked while she was bathing in the woods. She was enraged; to stop him pursuing her in any way, she turned Actaeon into a stag that was then hunted down by the hero's own dogs.

These ideas about hunting and being hunted have inspired WE to make a new two part video display specifically for Mottisfont. It will be shown on flat screens mounted below the windows of two adjoining historic rooms that were once bedrooms. Both films were made in the woods at Mottisfont, showing Helena Eflerová on one screen as the hunter, and on the other as the being that is hunted. The viewer plays the

opposite role, experiencing what it is like to pursue and be pursued, moving between the spaces to shift their perspective.

Kye Wilson wants to surprise visitors with something different that they may not be expecting. He explains: 'Hunter/Hunted was devised to provide a fresh exploration of the Mottisfont estate through the lens of contemporary art, in a way that challenges public perception of both contemporary art and heritage sites.'

Louise Govier, Visitor Experience Manager for the National Trust at Mottisfont, says 'We're delighted that Kye and Helena chose Mottisfont as the inspiration for this new piece of work. We've never had anything like it in the house before, and it's really going to add something special to the atmosphere in those rooms.'

The installation can be seen in the house every day from 19 May – 1 July 2012, from 11am to 5pm. The garden and grounds are open from 10am to 5pm.

WE (Wilson-Eflerová) are based in Hampshire. They have been collaborating since 2008 to create interdisciplinary artwork exploring themes of the human condition and embodiment, and have exhibited nationally and internationally.

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Image:

Hunter / Hunted © WE (Wilson-Eflerová)

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