

Royal Institute of British Architects' Drawings Collection acquires Hawksmoor model

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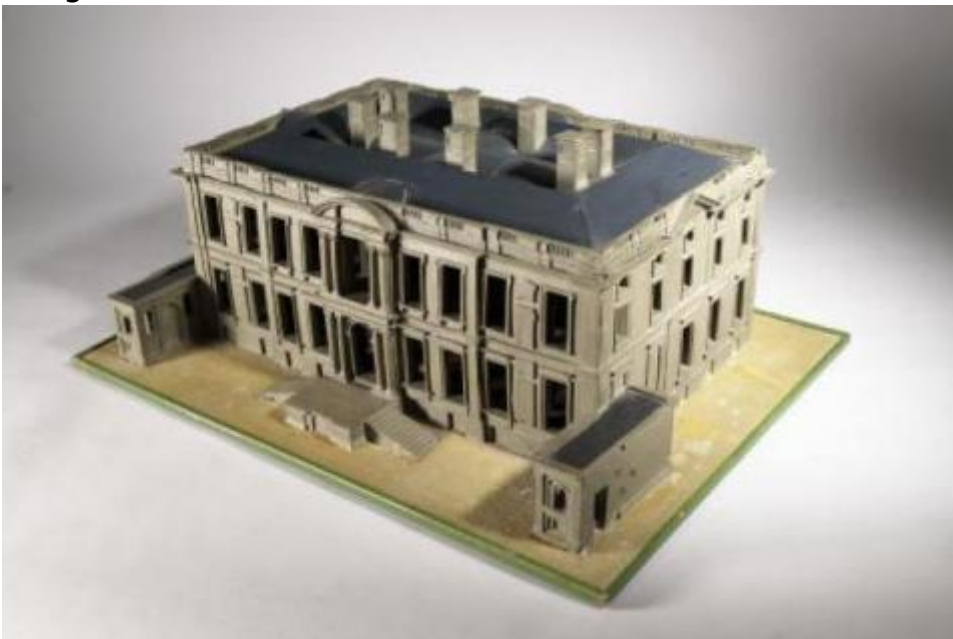
The Royal Institute of British Architects has purchased at auction the most important 17th century architectural model still in private hands: the design model for Nicholas Hawksmoor's Easton Neston, Northamptonshire, commissioned by William Fermor, 1st Baron Lempster (1648-1711).

Image



Design model for Nicholas Hawksmoor's Easton Neston

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The oak model, which was made in the 1690s, dismantles to reveal its interior, and features plasterwork details carved into the wood. Easton Neston is an astonishingly grand house for its size and its interiors as originally built, formed a dramatic sequence of rooms packed cleverly into a relatively small area. The architect, Nicholas Hawksmoor (1664-1736) was a protégé of Sir Christopher Wren and one of the most original of English baroque architects.

The model was sold this week by Sotheby's, during an auction of the contents of Easton Neston for a hammer price of £150,000 (plus buyers premium and VAT). Its acquisition by the RIBA followed a period of frantic fundraising by Charles Hind, H.J. Heinz Curator of Drawings. The RIBA gratefully acknowledges the financial support that permitted the acquisition from the National Heritage Memorial Fund (£90,275), the National Art Collections Fund (Art Fund) (£45,137), the British Architectural Library Trust (£24,082) and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's PRISM Fund (£18,055).

The model will shortly go on temporary display in the new Architecture Gallery at the and , opened last November by the V&A and the RIBA as part of their Architecture Partnership. The RIBA's Collections are unrivalled and of international importance. The Easton Neston model is a key addition to the 17th and 18th century drawings and manuscripts, which include other material by Hawksmoor.

Charles Hind, H.J. Heinz Curator of Drawings said: "We are incredibly grateful to the bodies that have given us the money to buy the model. I've known this model since I first saw it as an undergraduate in the 1970s, and although it's a tremendous shame that it is leaving the house after more than 300 years, there is nowhere else more appropriate for it to be than the RIBA."

Stephen Johnson, Head of the National Heritage Memorial Fund, said: "The Easton Neston model, a rare and intricate example of Hawksmoor's approach to his architectural designs, has not been on public display in this country for a quarter of a century. This year is the 25th anniversary of the National Heritage Memorial Fund, so it seems appropriate that because of our support visitors to the RIBA Collections at the and 's Architectural Gallery will now be able to marvel at the design vision of one of our most celebrated architects."

David Barrie, Director of the National Art Collections Fund, said: "This model is of great significance in the history of British architecture, and an extraordinary survival; we are delighted to have been able to support RIBA in making this

acquisition."

Notes to editors

For public enquiries contact the RIBA on 020 7307 3708 www.architecture.com or the V&A on 020 7942 2000 www.vam.ac.uk.

Admission to the V&A is free. Admission to the Architecture Gallery and Study Rooms is also free.

For further information and/or images contact: Zoë Wilkinson - 020 7307 3662; zoe.wilkinson@inst.riba.org.

The V&A is open Monday to Sunday 10.00 – 17.45 and every Wednesday and the last Friday of the month until 22.00.

Further information

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