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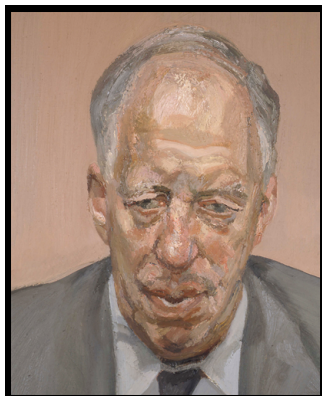
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Jacob Rothschild Hosts Party at Manor Festooned by Brazilians

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Interview by Farah Nayeri



May 11 (Bloomberg) -- **Jacob Rothschild**, the U.K. financier and multimillionaire, is exhibiting wacky designs by Brazil's **Campana Brothers** on his family estate.

Chandeliers and furniture by Fernando and Humberto Campana are on display through Oct. 31 at **Waddesdon Manor**, a 19th-century Loire-Valley-style chateau that's the last big Rothschild house open to the public. The patrician host says he was inspired by **Jeff Koons's** 2008-9 show at **Versailles** and **Cy Twombly's** ceiling recently unveiled at the **Louvre Museum**.

"There's a great movement to doing contemporary art in heritage properties," says the 74-year-old baron, wearing tweed and an open-necked shirt. "I thought it would be interesting if you could attract a rather different audience at Waddesdon in addition to what we're doing already.

"Many people are doing contemporary art, very few people are doing design, so we thought that was a niche we might contribute toward," says Rothschild, who is worth 390 million pounds (\$586 million) according to the **Sunday Times Rich List**.

Lanky and amiable, with sharp blue eyes, Lord Rothschild, as he is best known, runs the London-based **RIT Capital Partners** Plc investment trust (market value: 1.66 billion pounds). He also runs the estate in Buckinghamshire, north of London, though the Renaissance-style house, most of its contents and the gardens immediately around it belong to the **National Trust**, a charity that preserves U.K. heritage sites.

Younger Visitors

Rothschild, who inherited the estate in 1988 from his father's cousin's wife, is introducing contemporary art and design to draw younger visitors. "The more people who see it, the merrier," he says. "It's a kind of sentimental reaction, but I think it's a positive thing to do."

The Campanas, whose designs the baron collects, were introduced to him by Brazilian-born **Lily Safra**, whose foundation board he sits on. **Jeff Koons's** sculpture "Cracked Egg (Blue)" is also on show at Waddesdon through Oct. 31.

Lord Rothschild inaugurates the Campana show with a buffet lunch in a beautifully converted dairy on the edge of a duck-filled pond. Though it's his birthday, he squirms when guests (including one who came in a blue helicopter) try to sing him happy birthday. In attendance are the Brazilian ambassador, the Campanas and a smattering of affluent couples -- the women all thin, tanned and perched on high heels.

The menu includes cold cuts, terrine, garden greens, and macaroni and cheese. Tables are set with tulips and white plates bearing the Rothschild coat of arms: five arrows representing the five sons of the dynasty's founder, who were each sent to a different European country.

Coach House

Most of the Campana works are in the refurbished coach house of the former stables. The designers' dealer Michael Hue-Williams, who is present, says the Waddesdon event is "not really a selling show," and marks the publication of the Campana Brothers' catalogue raisonne.

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Still, the works, which Hue-Williams says range from 45,000 euros to 140,000 euros, find buyers on the opening day. According to Hue-Williams, two wall lamps made with discarded fragments of Murano glass sell for 80,000 euros each.

Other Campana creations are shown inside the chateau, including a chandelier festooned with the legs and torsos of glass dolls, and chairs made of rolls of rubber. The works blend into the manor's circular Blue Dining Room, decked with 18th-century paintings of ladies in powdered wigs.

Chardin's Cards

The chateau itself is a suite of majestic rooms filled with fauteuils, tapestries, bibelots, a porcelain service given by Louis XV to the Austrian ambassador, and paintings. Chardin's "Boy Building a House of Cards" (1735), bought by the baron in 2007, is in an alcove on its own. Wall-sized **Francesco Guardi** views of Venice are in the lobby, while a small **Lucian Freud** portrait of the baron hangs among the family pictures.

Most of the 360,000 annual visitors are non-paying National Trust members. The 17 percent who do pay spend as much as 15 pounds per adult to see the house. Other income comes from a hotel, gift shops, a wine business offering Rothschild bottles, restaurants and cafes, and venue hire.

Profits, which don't cover the costs of the museum-like estate, all go to the **Alice Trust**, a Rothschild family endowment set up to keep Waddesdon alive, according to Waddesdon Chief Executive Fabia Bromovsky.

Waddesdon is not the only heritage site that has kept Lord Rothschild busy in his lifetime. As the first chairman of the **Heritage Lottery Fund**, he oversaw more than 1 billion pounds in grants toward revamping museums and heritage sites.

He chaired London's **National Gallery** from 1985 to 1991, and later spearheaded the expansion of **Somerset House**, the neoclassical Thames-side home of the **Courtauld Institute**.

'Very Worrying'

Today, with the U.K. boasting the largest deficit ratio in the Group of Seven nations (more than 11 percent of gross domestic product), Rothschild sees hard times ahead.

"It's very worrying," he says, days before the May 6 U.K. general election. "I'm afraid that the arts, culture and heritage sector will suffer."

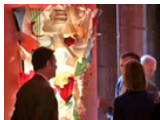
At the same time, once the **2012 London Olympics** are over, he says, lottery cash should be freed up for the arts.

Private donors are also likelier, given the current climate, to step in. "There has been a recovery in the world economy, and taxation is going to remain high, which is a kind of incentive to do good things," says Rothschild. "So I'm not too pessimistic."

To contact the writer on the story: **Farah Nayeri** in London at farahn@bloomberg.net.

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