



# Mobile HOME

When artist Daniel Chadwick inherited Lypiatt Park, his father's austere medieval manor, he had the challenge of turning one man's museum into his family home. By *Violet Henderson*. Photographs by *Henry Bourne*





JULIET WEARS SHIRT, ROKSANDA ILINCIC. SHOES, GIANVITO ROSSI. BOTH AT BROWNS. CULOTTES, OSMAN

Daniel and Juliet Chadwick in the dining room of Lypiatt Park. The shocking-pink sculpture and white mobile are by Daniel. The fireplace is by his father, Lynn

I've always wondered what other people use their big houses for. My bet is they only sit in one room and watch pornos there all day," says artist Daniel Chadwick with a delighted grin, as he stands in his dusty blue overalls in an east-facing reception room in Lypiatt Park, his Gloucestershire home. "Well, we actually work in this house." He swivels his white Converse (laces neatly tied) closer to the ladder he is steadying. At its summit balances his wife, Juliet, who bears a likeness, particularly around the cheekbones, to a young Jean Shrimpton. Also an artist, also wearing dusty blue overalls, she is adjusting a giant mobile. In fact, the whole room is full of Daniel's moving sculptures, wriggling and swirling and fluttering; some look like petals caught in a breeze, others neon shoals of fish. But step outside into the huge, vaulted Tudor hall, and all is calm - eerily so. For dominating this churchly space are two three-legged, 7ft-tall, quasi-human bronze figures, *High Hat Man* and *High Hat Woman*, designed by Daniel's father, Lynn Chadwick, in 1968.

Once home to Dick Whittington, Lypiatt Park is a great sprawling turreted pile set in 250 acres of ruggedly rolling parkland just outside Stroud. Its earliest part was built sometime before 1220, but since then it has been extended this way and that, making it seem more like a condensed town than a single house. Lynn, who looked like a film star with all the earthy appeal of Ted Hughes, bought Lypiatt in 1958, two years after he had won the International Sculpture Prize at the Venice Biennale, which he said felt "like a girl [who'd been] told she'd won Miss World". His acquisition didn't so much represent his great fortune but the decline of the big country house. As Daniel explains, pacing through a dining room >



Lypiatt Park spreads over  
the Toadsmoor Valley.  
Dotted around its  
250 acres (kept tidy by a  
flock of sheep) are Lynn's  
sculptures: 47 in total



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proportioned like a school hall: "Nobody in their right minds wanted a house this size any more. They didn't need all the space to upkeep. When my father bought Lypiatt, it cost £7,000, the same price as two cottages."

Lynn, who died in 2003, aged 88, made sculptures which were troubling. In fact, as the art critic Herbert Read so brilliantly described it, Lynn's was "the geometry of fear". But as the anxieties of the Cold War subsided, so did the public's appetite for it, which perhaps explains why gentler predecessors such as Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth were household names, and Lynn, to his distress, was not. But this year, which celebrates the centenary of Lynn's birth, marks an increasing rehabilitation of his fortunes. The artist's work has been exhibited in Blain Southern's London and Berlin galleries, and at Blain Di Donna in New York. Throughout May, four of his sculptures, akin to prowling steel dogs, encircled the Royal Academy courtyard, while his larger pieces consistently sell at auction for more than £1 million.

Under Lynn's stewardship, life at Lypiatt was eremitic. "My father was not social," says Daniel. "Growing up, we didn't have big parties; few people visited. He worked constantly." And he gave his metaphorical ivory tower form when he whitewashed the entirety of Lypiatt Park's gloomily gothic interior, painting over ornate cornices and dark oak panelling. The artist claimed this bold act was less an expression of his modernism, more a solution to curating his work: "If you're going to have sculpture around at all, it's best to have it against a plain background," he said.

The house continues to be a testament to Lynn's capabilities as a decorator-cum-designer. Take his long, smooth, shiny terrazzo dining table, which juts out on an unexpected diagonal to interrupt the big surrounding space. Or the futuristic sunken bath, which looks like a crater carved into dark volcanic rock and turns bathing into a James Bond-like adventure. From the bottom of the tub there are uninterrupted views over the emerald Toadsmoor Valley. Shelves are few: a Howard Roark figure, Lynn's concerns were loftier than where to put the bath oil.

"For a while I didn't want to take on the house," admits Daniel, the youngest of Chadwick's four children. "I wanted

something new and separate. Something that was my own." But very soon after his father died, in the same sitting room where Juliet would later give birth to his two youngest children, Daniel had a vigorous change of heart. Taking on Lypiatt wasn't going to be the easier option. For the next decade Daniel would be living with builders just to keep the house standing. And then there was the tricky negotiation of how to turn his father's museum – in all its rigorous and unrelenting glory – into his home. Because unless you are going to turn a modernist house no longer modernist, there is not much you can do to it –

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it's hardly as if there are curtains to change. And, as Daniel was aware, "the stuff I inherited was amazing. I wasn't going to be churlish and rip it out for the sake of it, especially when I think it's pretty much perfect. But it was difficult for me because, of course, I make things too."

When Daniel is not in his overalls he wears corduroy trousers pulled up by braces over crisp white shirts. He is tall, slim and elegant with a head of lawless curls. His voice is fey and softly spoken, belying his 49 years. When he mentions that very British trauma, boarding school – "it turned me into a kind of lunatic who later needed to behave like Keith Richards" – it's strangely easy to imagine him as a young boy. Even easier to see him in his twenties, aping a rock star and studying to be an architect, "so I didn't become an artist like my father. Lynn discouraged all his children from his profession," he recalls. "He felt he was lucky to have done so well, and that the art world resented him for it. He knew, painfully, that his existence was tenuous. There were always terrible worries in the house, mostly about money. He was angry." Meanwhile, in London, twentysomething Daniel was euphoric. "You know how they say so-and-so had to be carried out of a club?" he said. "Well, I usually had to be carried in." For four years his day job was building Perspex models for Zaha Hadid – "She liked me so much, she didn't let me leave the office to finish my degree." It was at night that he gravitated towards his destiny, meeting and partying with artists, particularly the YBAs. Their activities weren't pedestrian. "The first time I met Damien [Hirst] was in the

Colony Room," he remembers. "We stayed up all night, the next day and the following night. After that the friendship cemented." In 1991 he jacked in the day job to become a full-time artist.

In an interview in 1995, Lynn considered his relationship with Daniel: "On the whole, he prefers not to be known as my son, he wants to be his own... he wants me to be *his* father, as it were." But today, two decades later, as Daniel lounges almost horizontally on an Yves Klein-blue sofa and holds an iron ball of geometric shapes made by Lynn, he says, "In the film business it's normal to have generations of actors, but it seems almost to be a disadvantage in the art world. I want to undo this. In fact, I'm planning on curating a show of my work and my father's together. I'm going to tackle this issue head-on."

Inside Lypiatt Park, that process has begun. Among Lynn's tables, counters and mobiles (Lynn made them, too, and father and son share an obsession with polygons) are not just Daniel's solar-powered mobiles (one of which has just been bought by Elton John), but his 3D Perspex canvases which plot the contours of the surrounding Gloucestershire countryside. "Although that one might be going too," he says, pointing at a shocking-pink cube. "Lily Allen loves it so much, I promised it to her as a belated wedding present. Although I don't know whether I can really face parting with it." He gives it a loving pat. Elsewhere in the house there are huge kitsch colourful dreamscapes by Terry Ilott and a mirror panel with the caption *Disguise Is Mortal* by Robert Bruce-Gardner, a former boyfriend of Daniel's mother, Eva (who also lives at Lypiatt). Then there are Juliet's exquisitely realised drawings, although one is now with Hirst – who followed Daniel to Gloucestershire to be his neighbour. Currently, the Chadwicks own four and a half works by Hirst, all of them like-for-like exchanges. The half is a butterfly picture, now at the restorers, with hardly a butterfly left after a hungry bunch of moths came down from the attic to feast on their cousins' valuable corpses. "It was too macabre," giggles Daniel, "they descended in this terrible shoal." But, even without the electric-blue zing of this missing canvas, Daniel's artistic bounty brings colour and happy diversity to what must have been austere and monochrome in the extreme.

Now 31, Juliet met Daniel when she was 23. She came to Lypiatt to work as his assistant – he needed help building three nine-metre mobiles for Canary Wharf. Daniel had been previously married to Georgia Byng (now artist Marc Quinn's >



wife), with whom he has a daughter, Tiger, 23, who also has an apartment at Lypiatt. When Juliet walked into Daniel's workshop, the artist wasn't looking for a girlfriend. "But then I began to like her. I said, 'God, Juliet, I'm sick of all these nasty redhead girlfriends I've had. I'd really prefer someone like you.'" At which point Juliet interrupts – this is a story they've clearly shared before – "I used to dye my hair brown back then." And Daniel happily shakes his head, "I'm addicted to redheads."

**H**e proposed to Juliet six months later, in the higgledy-piggledy Woolpack Inn in nearby Slad, which the artist bought more than a decade ago and where Laurie Lee used to drink his dry cider. The wedding was in Lypiatt's chapel; the service (which Daniel described as "sort of vaguely pagan, I think") was conducted by Keith Allen, dressed as a toadstool. Halfway through proceedings there was an interruption when the crypt opened and out rose John Cooper Clarke, reciting poetry.

Juliet retrieves a photo album. She wore two dresses – one cream, the other identical but in emerald green, both by Giles Deacon. In her hair were cobalt butterflies, further creations by Hirst, while Lily Allen lent her blue stilettos. Daniel looks like a Seventies Hollywood star in a white velvet suit made by his tailor, John Pearse. So well does Lypiatt lend itself to weddings, there have been two at the Park since the Chadwicks' own. In the same stone chapel, built in 1367, *Vanity Fair's* fashion and style director Jessica Diehl married photographer Phil Poynter – afterwards Kate Winslet, Louis Dowler, American *Vogue's* Plum Sykes and Toby Rowland drank martinis under falling fireworks. A year later, photographer Rachel Chandler and model-turned-stylist Tom Guinness took part in a shamanic ceremony that segued into an all-night celebration, with Mark Ronson on the decks.

Later, when his wife is no longer in the room, Daniel reflects: "Before we met, I badly needed some stability. I was all over the place, making terrible decisions. Instead, I needed to get this place together. I needed an anchor. I owe so much to Juliet!"

It can't have been easy for a 23-year-old girl to move from London to a house that, rich as it was in groundbreaking art, had little to offer by way of comfort. It was only last year that a couple of rooms had central heating installed. Before then, keeping warm – or even alive – was a job, until one particularly desperate cold spell when Juliet trawled Amazon to find all-in-one > 358



*Clockwise from above:* Lypiatt Park's top-floor corridor. The concrete statue of David is by Cockings & Hodge, two local artists; Juliet reclines on a chaise-longue in the porch with three "Chadwick terriers, accidental mixtures of poodle, chihuahua and Jack Russell," says Daniel; an occasional breakfast room – the shelves are filled with every kind of art book; a top-floor bedroom, with a Chinese Chippendale bed bought by Lynn; the vast dining room – offsetting Lynn's austere furniture and sculpture is a Damien Hirst spot painting, which the artist created especially for the space; Daniel has turned one of the house's reception rooms into a space to exhibit his mobiles. He likes to use Perspex for its "optical qualities. Plus, it will almost never degrade," he says



HENRY BOURNE





Top: two of Lynn's sculptures, *High Hat Man* and *High Hat Woman* (both 1968), stand in the Tudor hall. Above: Juliet designs her exquisite wallpapers in an attic studio in the Victorian stable block. Below: the sitting room, one of the few rooms in Lypiatt with central heating – a recent luxury. Lynn died in this room, and Daniel and Juliet's youngest children were born here

