



Adrien Broom photographed a luminous dress in Wentworth Woodhouse, the largest private home in Britain. This image is titled *The Forest of Columns*. (Adrien Broom)

## Photographer Adrien Broom Sheds Light on Old Structures in Her Work

An eerie vision of the luminous magic we find in ourselves

By [Amy Crawford](#)

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For her most recent series of photographs, titled “Being,” [Adrien Broom](#) spent weeks hand-sewing more than 1,100 tiny LED lights into a dress. The Connecticut-based artist then took the luminous frock, along with a friend to model it, to Yorkshire’s 18th-century Wentworth Woodhouse, the largest private home in Britain. Haunted by a genial caretaker and a resident pack of whippets, the maze of more than 300 rooms (including this one, known as the Forest of Columns) was the perfect setting, the artist says, to explore how “we light our own way.” As the glowing model wandered the sumptuous, deserted interior, “the only thing you could really see was what was right around her,” says Broom, 36. She previously won acclaim for her meticulously crafted fantasies, typically featuring women and children, but these new images take a darker turn. Life can be “lonely and frightening,” she says, but “you just have to trust that what’s in front of you will keep moving.”



Amy Crawford is a Michigan-based freelance journalist writing about cities, science, the environment, art and education. A longtime *Smithsonian* contributor, her work also appears in *CityLab* and the *Boston Globe*.

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