

## PRESS RELEASE

### Theydunnit: Meet the couple that solves country house mysteries for a living

Fledgeling company reveals forgotten English culture and architectural traditions



An Essex-based couple has set up a business that specialises in uncovering the forgotten cultural significance of English country houses, palaces, and churches. Founded last year, Byrga Geniht ('bɪəgə ge'niht) is the project of art historian James D. Wenn and his partner James Syrett, after their research revealed a suite of symbols that find their way into some of England's most important historic buildings.

"We didn't set out to discover this knowledge; it just landed in our lap," explains James D. Wenn, "I was asked to interpret a garden building at an estate in Essex, and the research snowballed from there."

Among their discoveries are a number of geometric allusions to the rhombic dodecahedron, the shape of the Universe according to Plato, and the natural form of the garnet crystal.

"My training is in the study of Anglo-Saxon culture at Cambridge University, and then the study of country houses at Leicester," James continues. "Nobody had done that

combination of degrees before, but it turns out that Anglo-Saxon iconography underpins great swathes of architectural tradition from Henry III until the early 20th century, when the knowledge dies out.”

The pair has already picked up some notable clients. They unravelled the meaning of the Coronation Pavement in Westminster Abbey, and advised representatives of the King in advance of his coronation last May. Their biggest client is Soultton Hall, Shropshire, and owner Tim Ashton said of the firm:

“Engaging Byrga Geniht to investigate the hidden depths of this heritage site and my family’s story within it has been transformative. This newfound knowledge empowers us to share a richer and more authentic story with visitors, bringing Soultton Hall to life in a way we never thought possible. The partnership has not only enhanced Soultton Hall’s identity but has also opened new opportunities for business growth through increased visitor engagement and expanded networking within the heritage sector.”

Co-founder James Syrett said, “The journey so far has been totally extraordinary. However, we are just getting started, and we believe many more heritage buildings need to find their true place in the story of England. This is too big to ignore.”

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