

HATFIELD HOUSE – FIBRE OPTIC LIGHTING to the WINTER DINING ROOM



The Winter Dining Room at Hatfield House, home of Lord and Lady Salisbury, houses a unique collection of 17th Century classical stitched wall-hangings known as the Four Seasons Tapestries. These depict scenes of everyday rural life at that time, and how both the countryside and activities changed seasonally through Spring, Summer, Winter and Autumn.

Fragile items of such antiquity and value require extreme care in all aspects of housing and display. As a programme of painstaking restoration of these important tapestries was drawing to a close in 2015, attention turned towards how best to improve their overall presentation – most notably how to illuminate them properly and thereby reveal the delicacy of their detail and colours without causing any heat or light-induced damage.

Fibre Optics have long been considered a preferred lighting tool for situations where proper conservation is critical, and few precious exhibits require more care in this respect than ancient tapestries. As long-established and trusted experts in this specialist field, Absolute Action were called in to review and advise on optimum practice for this specific application.

When reviewing the room as a whole, with its collection also of substantial oil paintings, the magnificent carved marble fire place, fine antique furniture, and collection of *objets d'arts*, it became clear that much more could be achieved in the process than just the illumination of the tapestries themselves.

Four substantial fibre optic lighting systems were specified using the company's new high CRI, high intensity LED light-sources. From their locations outside the room, Absolute Action worked with Hatfield House's dedicated maintenance team to conceal the fibre bundles inside the usefully-hollow beams that criss-cross the ceiling. Individual fibres were then distributed throughout the bespoke fibre optic track hardware that was fitted to the beam surfaces, enabling great flexibility in lighting orientation and aspect.

From each of the efficient source lamps, more than 45 individual lights were generated – and, since only 20 of these were required to deliver a suitably diffused light covering across each of the tapestries, plenty were left over for the other features in the room. Thus all the paintings, architectural features, furnishings and *objets* were illuminated from the same original four systems.

Variable optical lenses with greater or lesser degrees of focus were applied to each fibre tip to suit its given application, component hardware being painted out to match the dark wooden beams and concealed from general view.

All the advantages of fibre optic lighting have been exemplified in this installation:

- Total Care in Conservation
- Excellent Energy Efficiency
- Minimal and Easy Maintenance
- Flexible, Discreet & Elegant Lighting
- Assured Safety and Durability
- Optimum Light Quality

Now, using the glorious central chandelier and just the fibre optic lighting systems, the whole space is suffused with gentle and well-balance lighting which delivers a beautiful warmth and brings out the full richness, as well as the subtlety, of colours from every surface.

Absolute Action bring to their work decades of experience and draw on the best resources that today's fast-moving lighting technologies offer. The company is a leading manufacturer and supplier of bespoke lighting solutions to suit both traditional and contemporary homes

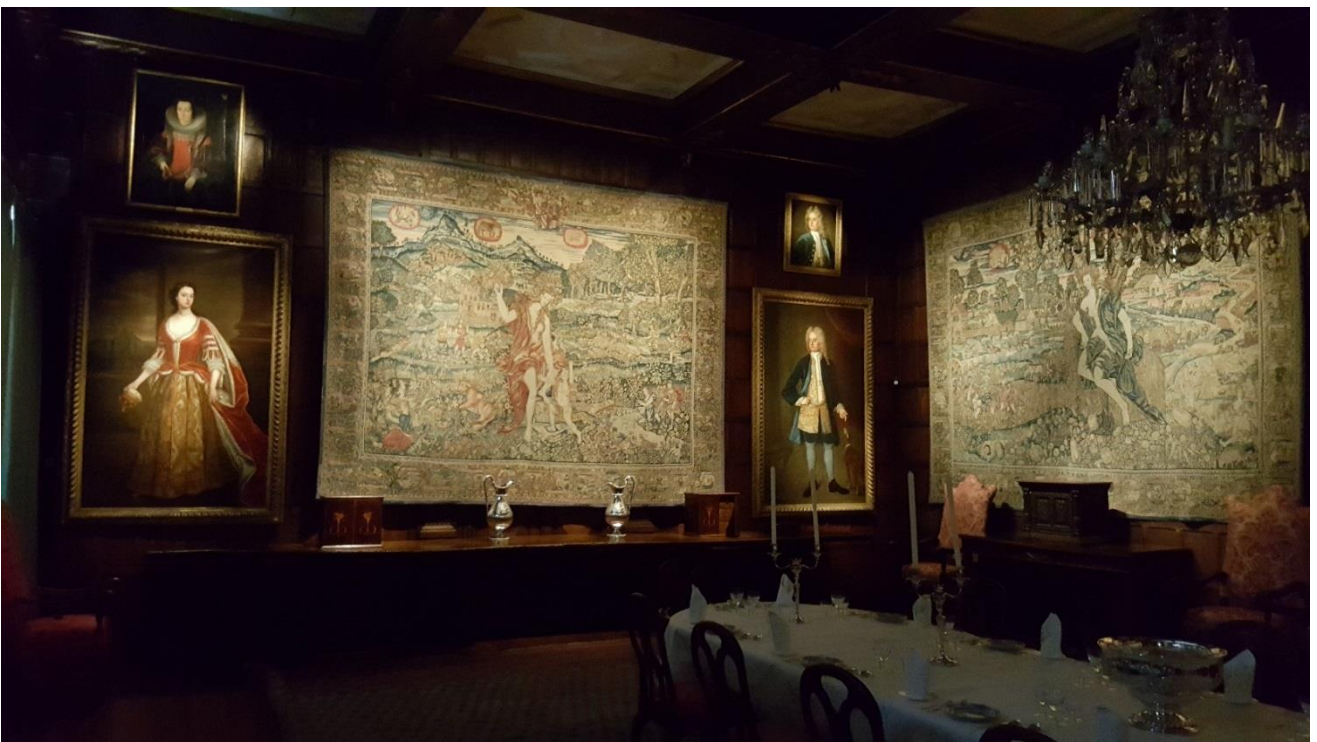
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*The Winter Dining Room: **Before** fibre optic lighting is installed*



*The Winter Dining Room: **After** fibre optic lighting is installed*



Following series of views of the room incorporating 2 of the tapestries, paintings, the fireplace and objets d'Ar

