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Snowdrops out already as Nymans prepares to unveil golden tree

A GOLDEN tree sculpture by internationally renowned artist Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva will be unveiled on January 11 at the National Trust's Nymans - where snowdrops are already brightening the borders.

By **DEBORAH STONE**

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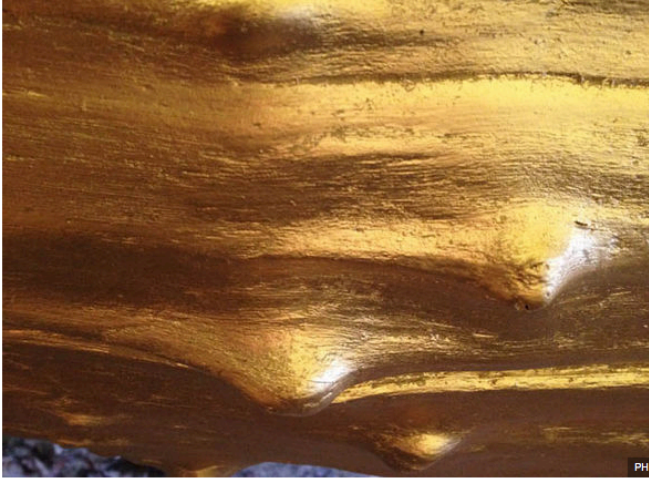
The golden tree sculpture by Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva will be unveiled on January 11

Elpida has transformed a 20ft (6metre) sweet chestnut tree, felled during the great storm of 1987 in Nymans' woodlands, into Rapture - a sculpture covered with 23.5 carats (4.7grams) of gold leaf.

Inspired by the romantic ruins in the garden, Elpida stripped back the bark to sculpt it into an elegant column before gilding it.

It now stand on the hillside at Nymans, in Sussex, where it reflects the low winter sunlight to add impact to dramatic views across the Weald.

But the unusually mild winter weather means there are already plenty of snowdrops to see as well as the blossoms of camellias, scented daphne and the scribble-like flowers of witch hazels.



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The unveiling will be the National Trust's Nymans

Rapture will be on show until February 28 and Nymans Lead Ranger, Chloe Bradbrooke, said: "I work with trees every day in their many varied forms and they are beautiful in their own right, but it's exciting to see one so transformed."

I'm grateful for the opportunity Nymans have provided
Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva



Elpida, who works with video and sound as well as sculpture, said Rapture highlights the fragility of nature, the effect of time passing and shows how the past and present can combine to regenerate and evolve.

"I'm grateful for the opportunity Nymans have provided to realise this work, which acts as a striking beacon for nature," she said.

Rapture is part of the National Trust's national contemporary art and craft programme, Trust New Art, which can be seen at selected historic houses, countryside and garden properties

It aims to connect more people to National Trust places through contemporary art and craft and has been developed in partnership with Arts Council England.

Entrance to see Rapture is by normal admission charge, and free to National Trust members.

For more information visit: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/nymans or call 01444 405250.