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Jason Middlebrook

SARA MELTZER GALLERY

516 West 20th Street

October 13 - November 10

If dystopian novelist J.G. Ballard had been a model-railway enthusiast, he might have arrived at a vision of the future something like that of Jason Middlebrook. In a series of unnervingly gleeful drawings and sculptures, this Brooklyn-based artist lays waste to four important museums. Scale models of the Guggenheim Bilbao, the

Getty Center, and the Tate Modern are depicted covered with graffiti, strangled by weeds, and strewn with rubble. The prediction is clear and uncontested:

Buildings, art, the reputations of the contemporary great and good—all will one day crumble and decay into ruins.

Middlebrook also takes a swipe at Robert Smithson, the artist who perhaps most forcefully pointed out this truth, and the iconic status of his *Spiral Jetty*, restoring it to life as a caricature that unfurls across three panels like a giant reptilian tongue. It's an appropriate image from Middlebrook, for whom the most grandiose statement tends to provoke the rudest response.



Tate Modern, 2001.

—Michael Wilson