

A PEEK AT THE SOANE GUEST BOOK

“WHAT DECORATOR DOESN’T love Soane’s famous breakfast room with its domed ceiling, mirrors and Greek keys?” asked interior designer Alexa Hampton recently. “None I know.”

The head of Mark Hampton LLC, she toured the museum last year, and so did fellow Architectural Digest 100 designer Miles Redd. “I always try and visit the Soane when I find myself in London,” said the Atlanta-born Redd, “and I notice something new every time I am there.” On his September drop-by, he was struck by the detail on the underside of the stairs and, as usual, “I always marvel at the use of mirrors, particularly in the stiles of bookcases. I am sure I will borrow some mirror inspiration.”

As for Hampton, who first saw the museum as a child with her father, Mark, “Not only will I use Soanian-inspired touches in my design work, but I already had ordered, received and hung a Soane Corybantes plaque from Haddonstone for my own apartment before my latest visit.” (Haddonstone is one of the new licensees of Soane decorations.)

Tom Kligerman, partner in the architecture firm of Ike Kligerman Barkley, recently got a preview tour with Abraham Thomas and Helen Dorey



Clockwise from top: Soane visitors Miles Redd, Tom Kligerman, and Alexa Hampton

of Soane’s private apartments on the second floor of No. 13 plus the Model Room.

“They’re spectacular,” says Kligerman, who is Soane Foundation President, “and they fully evidence how accurately researched the living spaces were. In these rooms we found the newly restored scale model of Pompeii that depicts acres of that ancient city in cork—the ideal material to represent crumbling marble and travertine. I was also excited to discover the striking wall-paper pattern that had been hidden for well over a century under a molding. The rooms now feature a beautifully re-created version from Adelphi Paper Hangings in upstate New York. I can’t wait to be at the official opening of these rooms in May and see them fully outfitted with artwork and furniture. They are a testament to the vitality of this museum. Sir John still lives!”

To learn more, visit:
markhampton.com
milesredd.com
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SIR JOHN SOANE’S MUSEUM FOUNDATION

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TWO DECADES SUPPORTING SOANE SCHOLARSHIP

Hail Fellows, Well Met!

THIS YEAR MARKS THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY of the annual Sir John Soane’s Museum Foundation Traveling Fellowship, which has enabled dozens of young scholars to travel to London to pursue research projects related to any aspect of Soane’s work, his museum, and its collections. We recently caught up with some of the fellows and asked them about their experiences. More memories can be found online at soanefoundation.com/fellowship.

Angelo Maggi (2001, Edinburgh College of Art, architecture) “The Soane Traveling Fellowship changed my life! I never start an architectural course without citing Sir John Soane and his contributions to the world of architecture. And, to remind me of this daily, I have Soane’s Museum Foundation invitations from the various gala dinners framed in my office. One represents the façade of Lincoln’s Inn Fields and another ‘A JefferSoanian Evening.’” Now: Università Iuav di Venezia in Venice, Associate Professor in Architectural History and History of Architectural Photography

Danielle Shea Willkens (2007, University of Virginia, architecture) “I was able to spend some time alone in the museum prior to one of the candlelit evenings. The museum was quiet, the candles were lit, and a rare thunderstorm had descended that July evening, so the sky was dark and moody. Walking through the crypt and beneath the museum dome, it felt like I stepped back in time.” Now: Auburn University, Visiting Assistant Professor of Architecture; completing PhD at the Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London

Sean Sawyer (1995, Columbia University, art history, and the first fellowship recipient) “My fondest memory is of being welcomed to the daily staff tea break, held around a big table in Helen Dorey’s office and presided over by Margaret Richardson when she was available. At first it was an intimidating affair, but soon I felt very much at home and like a contributing member of a circle that could debate the source of a molding profile in one breath and the merits of the latest films in the next.” Now: Royal Oak Foundation, Executive Director

Jennifer S. Bevan (2012, University of Notre Dame, architecture) “In studying Soane’s collection of travel drawings—his own, George Dance the Younger’s and the Adam brothers’—I recognized Soane’s innovative formal arrangements already at use in the buildings of antiquity. I went from looking to Soane for lessons in the sustainable management of light and ventilation to looking *with* Soane at the works of antiquity for those same lessons.” Now: Bevan & Liberatos Architects, Charleston, S.C., cofounder and partner

Terrance Galvin (1998, University of Pennsylvania, architecture) “There were many great moments. One was back in New York, giving the Soane Fellows Lecture on Soane and Gandy’s collaborations, and the design of the Masonic skylight in the little dressing room. After the lecture, an older man came up and asked me to look at something: he unwrapped a cloth containing a shard of colored stained glass, which his father had picked up after a bombing that had shattered the skylights in the Museum. He had treasured this piece of glass all of his life and brought it to my lecture in New York, which he had seen advertised. Amazing, really!” Now: Founding Director of the newest Canadian School of Architecture at Laurentian University, in Sudbury, Ontario, Canada

Nicholas Herman (2010, Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, art history) “While at the Soane, I had the pleasure of discovering Sir John’s small but significant collection of illuminated manuscripts. Surprisingly—or perhaps not surprisingly, given the quiriness of 13 Lincoln’s Inn Fields—the precious manuscripts were kept in a hallway cupboard! At the end of my stay, I was able to conduct a show-and-tell session with the museum staff. Even the director had never before seen some of the museum’s glorious Books of Hours.” Now: Université de Montréal, Banting Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Art History and Film Studies



Clockwise from top: Jennifer Bevan in the Soane Library; Angela Maggi in his Venice office with Soane Gala invitations on the wall; Laurel Peterson selfie in the State Rooms at Blenheim Palace; Danielle Willkens in the No. 13 Breakfast Room.

To read more stories:
soanefoundation.com/fellowship

Laurel Peterson (2014, Yale University, art history) “One morning, eager to study Sir James Thornhill’s painted sketch for a ceiling at Hampton Court Palace, I arrived just before the doors opened to the public and quickly made my way to the Picture Room. Alone in my favorite room, I had ample time to gaze at the Thornhill—revealed by an open, densely hung screen—and was only slightly, but happily, distracted by the nearby Hogarth and Canaletto paintings.” Now: Yale University, doctoral candidate in the history of art

CATCHING UP WITH ABRAHAM THOMAS

Director of the Soane Museum

SINCE TAKING THE REINS of the Soane in late 2013, director Abraham Thomas has been overseeing Phase II of Opening Up The Soane, the restoration of the soon-to-be-unveiled private apartments on the museum's second floor, and orchestrating a number of full houses for the Soane's public talks.

Lectures tied to *Cities and Other Ruins* and *Diverse Maniere* grabbed sell-out crowds (including 400 for a talk at the London School of Economics) and drew artists and designers like Grayson Perry, Michele de Lucchi and Simon Fujiwara. In May, Soane's bedroom and bath and the Model Room will open to the public for the first time in 160 years, a triumph Thomas credits to the dedication of deputy director and inspectress Helen Dorey, who led the research and helped to supervise the day-to-day project.

In between appointments in his busy schedule, we posed a few questions to Abraham.

Born: Sunderland, U.K., in 1977

Parents: Both doctors

Resides in: Shadwell, a small hamlet in East London that was the birthplace of Thomas Jefferson's mother and gave its name to the Jefferson family estate of Shadwell in Virginia.

Previous position: Curator of Architecture and Design Drawings at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London

Long-term goal: "To return to Sir John Soane's original vision of an 'Academy' by engaging with contemporary architects and designers; to embark on new research partnerships and collaborations; and to use our exhibitions



SOANE CONSERVATORS AT WORK

A busy corner in the John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn Conservation Centre at the Soane showing frames in process of being conserved as part of Phase 2 of Opening Up The Soane.



Abraham Thomas at the Temple of Juno at Paestum. Photo taken in October 2013 on a Soane Travels program to Italy

and events program to create an exciting and thought-provoking space for debate and discussion."

Favorite part of the Soane: "I love the Students' Room, the site of Soane's original architectural office. It's suspended like a pod above the rear part of the museum by the colonnade-dome area, and it's not only a rare survivor, but also an inspiring combination of an educational space and a place of active design practice."

Favorite American museum: "Donald Judd's loft in SoHo. I met Michele Salola, Director of Programs, for a tour, and it was fantastic to see how many Soane-Judd connections there are—that is, both men had bespoke designed domestic spaces that also operated as spaces for displaying a very personal collection. Furthermore, both houses acted as a teaching space and both served as showcase for their author's own creative practice. Judd's sculpture and furniture are there on Spring Street, and Soane's varied examples of architectural inventiveness on show at his museum. And both houses were studios—Judd with this drafting table, and Soane with his study and architectural office. I'd also love to visit the Chinati and Judd Foundations in Marfa, Texas, one day, too."

His fiancée: "Erin Kuykendall is from Virginia, born and brought up in Richmond, and she is currently Curator of Collections at the historic house museum Tudor Place in the Georgetown section of Washington, D.C. We are planning to get married in Richmond this summer, with our reception and dinner at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts—as museums are so close to our hearts!"

SIR JOHN MAKES HIS MOVIE DEBUT IN *MR. TURNER*

IN THE CLOSING CREDITS for *Mr. Turner*, the biopic about the groundbreaking British painter, look for a well-deserved acknowledgement of the Soane Museum.



The film's historical consultant, Jacqueline Riding, who labored two years on the project, turned to her longtime friend Helen Dorey, Deputy Director, to correctly identify works for a re-creation of a Royal Academy exhibition in the film. A copy of a painting commissioned by Soane from his friend J.M.W. Turner of the Forum Romanum was used in one scene, and the Oscar-nominated production designers found inspiration in Soane Museum wall colors for the replicated Turner townhouse. For the first-ever portrayal of Soane on the big screen, actor Nicholas Jones made several visits to consult with archivist Sue Palmer as well as with the ever helpful Helen.

In other cinematic close encounters, Soane Director Abraham Thomas gave tours for director John Landis and costume designer Deborah Landis, who collaborated on *An American Werewolf in London* and *The Blues Brothers*; production designer Alex McDowell, whose credits include *Fight Club* and *Minority Report*; and costume designer Michael Wilkinson, whose 1970s-style garb enlivened *American Hustle*. "It was fascinating to walk around the Museum and hear how inspiring they all found Soane's inventive architectural spaces," says Thomas. "But it only goes to follow: Soane's mastery of light and shadow to articulate architectural space is a very cinematic concept."

ABOUT US

Mission Statement of the Foundation

Sir John Soane's Museum Foundation's mission is to provide for an expanding audience a lively educational forum in the fields of art, architecture and the decorative arts within the Soanean tradition and to assist financially Sir John Soane's Museum in London. For more details, please refer to our website: www.SoaneFoundation.com.

The Foundation is a registered 501(c)3 organization.
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A SHOW-AND-TELL TYING SOANE TO PIRANESI

"His conduct is mischievous"

MARK RAKATANSKY, A PROFESSOR AT Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Preservation and Planning, is presenting a couple of talks this year that spell out his interpretation of the materials seen in the Soane Museum's exhibition of 15 original drawings touring America in 2015. *Piranesi and the Temples of Paestum: Drawings from Sir John Soane's Museum* is on view at the Morgan Library & Museum to mid-May and then at the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University from August to November.

Intriguingly titled "His conduct is mischievous: Piranesi and Soane," the lecture explores the complex and, at times, unsettling intersections in the two men's architecture, drawings, and writings. "The quote in the title of my talk is one Soane made about the only building of Piranesi's ever realized, Santa Maria del Priorato, in Rome," explains Rakatansky. "But the conduct of both architects, in their designs as well as their writings, has been revered, and often decried, as mischievously clever."

Using new forms of digital visualization, Rakatansky will link the techniques each architect employed to achieve his designs. "Soane designed what some would consider more Piranesian space—intricate, multilayered, with interplay both within and between floor lev-

els—than what Piranesi achieved in his church, but both architects developed complex ways of layering space. In Soane's house, the interior membrane of his displays combines with his inner and outer courts to create a layering throughout." Though a far cry from the Greek purity that Soane would seem to have hoped Piranesi finally found in the ruins of Paestum, Rakatansky argues that nearly every drawing and print in the exhibition reveals "a similar intricate porosity, developed in a way that Soane even echoed in his infamous front 'loggia' at Lincoln's Inn Fields."

You can hear more of Professor Rakatansky's illuminating insights and comparisons by signing up for his lecture. Please check the Soane Foundation's COMING UP page on our website for details including dates, times and locations. Rakatansky will also be taking part of a scholarly conference being held in Palo Alto.

***Piranesi and the Temples of Paestum: Drawings from Sir John Soane's Museum* on view at the Morgan Library & Museum – January 23 to May 17, 2015 – themorgan.org | Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University – August 19 to November 30, 2015 – museum.stanford.edu**



above: The Temple of Neptune from the north-east with the Basilica to the left. image right: The Temple of Neptune looking through the peristyle from the north-west corner, showing the internal colonnades and the Basilica in the distance.



Ten Steps to Creating an Exhibition

With *Piranesi and the Temples of Paestum* touring the U.S., the Foundation took a moment to ask Dominique Jenkins, Interim Exhibitions Curator, Sir John Soane's Museum, just what was involved in developing such an exhibition. Here, Jenkins adroitly condenses a very complex process into ten steps—but we still do not recommend that you try it at home.



1. CONCEPT

What does the Soane want to explore, and why? Is there an anniversary or other event to peg? What are the objectives: is it a survey, a showcase, an investigation into a particular subject?



2. SETTING A SCHEDULE

There are loans to be negotiated, items to be conserved, a catalogue to be written, an exhibition to be designed. All of these essentials have to be mapped out on a schedule.



3. MAKING A BUDGET

Costs are broken down for insurance, loan transportation, couriers, framing, conservation, plinths, artists' fees, et cetera.



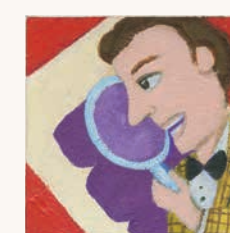
4. RESEARCH

In-depth scholarship brings sharper focus and establishes how the arrangement and display of objects will communicate the exhibition message.



5. BORROWING

Approaches are made to institutions for loans, and arrangements are made for proper shipping. Some lenders are likely to require couriers to travel with their works and oversee installation.



6. CONSERVATION

Every item in the exhibition has to be assessed by the Soane's conservation team to see if it is hardy enough for display.



7. CATALOGUE

Curators as well as outside experts write essays for the catalogue, which not only covers the exhibition but often covers material that it was not possible to include.



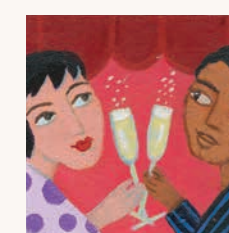
8. LABELS

Curators write the information panels, keeping in mind how much space on the wall there is for them and how much the audience will know about the subject matter beforehand.



9. PUBLICITY

Press releases go out and previews take place.



10. THE OPENING

This is a night for curators and benefactors to take a bow. Now it is on to doing education programs for children, public talks, special donor tours, and so much more.

Illustrations by Tracy Mitchell