

The font: Order after Ten Masters  
 Pencil, pen and ink and watercolour  
 Annotated on recto: '5. Lect 7', and on verso: '2. Lecture 1820.13' 23/5/2  
 Image used recently in the illustrated talk by Soane Fellow Michael J. Waters, November 2010. Talk was entitled: A RENAISSANCE WITHOUT ORDER: Lessons ornament and the dialogue between architectural prints and drawings



# ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME GATHERING OF REGENCY DESIGN TO BENEFIT SOANE FOUNDATION

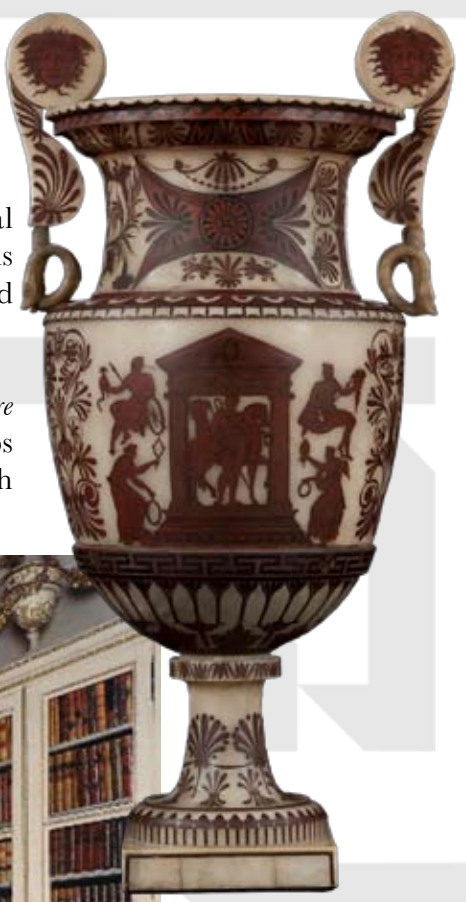
Supporters of Sir John Soane's Museum Foundation are invited to preview *Inspired by Antiquity: Classical Influences on 18th and 19th Century Furniture and Decorative Objects* at Carlton Hobbs Gallery on Wednesday, January 19, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Thanks to Mr. Hobbs' generosity, the opening reception will benefit the Foundation.

lecture will be at 5:30pm; lecture tickets are an additional \$25 per person, seating is limited; advance reservations required. Email or call the Soane office for details and reservations: 212-223-2012

"We are honored to have Sir John Soane's Museum Foundation as the opening night beneficiary," said Carlton Hobbs. "This is the single largest collection of Thomas Hope pieces to come onto the market since the sale at Deepdene in 1917, featuring 40 pieces inspired by antiquity, including an important group of Hope pieces from the Philip Hewat-Jaboor collection of Regency furniture and works of art." A fabulously successful banker, connoisseur, collector and designer, Hope was one of the key figures to shape Regency taste and, in so doing, revolutionize British design for decades to come.

*Antiquity: Classical Influences on 18th and 19th Century Furniture and Decorative Objects* will remain on view at Carlton Hobbs LLC at 60 East 93rd Street, New York, NY, through February 14, 2011.

As a highlight of the evening, Tim Knox, director of Sir John Soane's Museum in London, will deliver a talk entitled, *In Marble Halls: Showing off Antique Sculpture in British Country Houses c.1700-1800*, on the classical influence on 18th and 19th century design. A contribution of \$100 per person is suggested to support a special conservation fund administered by the Soane Foundation for work at the Soane Museum. The



Images: A monumental alabaster vase with fine Etruscan red and black painted decoration, probably Rome, early 19th Century (top) and *The Library from the Hotel Gaulin, Dijon*, attributed to Jerome Marlet, French, circa 1775.

# SIR JOHN SOANE'S MUSEUM FOUNDATION

1040 FIRST AVENUE NO. 311 NEW YORK NY 10022

WINTER 2010

## SOANE TRAVELS



©Robert Frenck  
 Istanbul: 8 to 15 May 2011

# 200+ LUCKY SUPPORTERS TAKE HOME ART CARDS



Early this fall, serious fun was had at Sir John Soane's Museum with the presentation of a most ingenious exhibition comprising more than 200 uniform postcards that had been transformed by a host of architects, artists, photographers, and designers 'Inspired by Soane'. These very same miniature works of art were then later sold anonymously via secret ballot at the Museum's Soane Banquet, the glittering and festive dinner dance held in the Banqueting Hall, Whitehall, on the evening of October 7th to benefit the Museum's "Opening up the Soane" program.

Images: Isaac Julien (left) and Damien Hirst (right)

Damien Hirst, Daniel Libeskind, and Vivienne Westwood are just a few of the many artists and architects who responded to the Museum's call to take part in the project. Twenty-five works were submitted by Americans, including Robert Venturi, Daniel Libeskind, Billie Tsien, Todd Williams, Michael Graves, A. Eugene Kohn, Joel Barkley, Cameron Mactavish, Ivan Chermayeff, Thomas Gordon Smith, and Stuart Wrede, among others. "I am struck by the sheer variety and quality of the cards we received and the project's testimony to the admiration and affection felt for the Soane Museum by so many of the greatest names in the creative industries of our time," says Tim Knox, director of the Museum. A complete listing of cards and artists may be found at [www.soane.org/exhibitions/inspired\\_by\\_soane](http://www.soane.org/exhibitions/inspired_by_soane).

# SOANE FELLOW MICHAEL J. WATERS EXPLORES AN "ANTI-CANON"

Michael J. Waters, the 2009 recipient of the Soane Foundation Travelling Fellowship, took a moment earlier this year to discuss his ongoing research with Stephanie Stokes, a member of the Board of Directors of the Soane Foundation.

**Stephanie Stokes:** You are back from a month in London: three weeks spent delving into the rich holdings of 16th and 17th-century drawings, prints, and treatises at Sir John Soane's Museum and another week familiarizing yourself with other English collections.

As I understand it, in your research project you are proposing that prints of architectural columns, capitals, bases, and cornices were catalysts for shaping architects' views of the orders in the Renaissance—and that the application of the classical vocabulary was flexible, rather than rule-bound, during the period.

**Mike Waters:** Yes. My interest in the subject grew out of a master's thesis I worked on at the University of Virginia, with professor Cammy Brothers. I saw that these small single-leaf engravings, which measure on average 6½ by 5 inches and exist today only in a handful of print collections and libraries, had not been adequately studied, even though they played an important role as a kind of 'anti-canon,' which worked in opposition to the concept of defined orders or rule-based architecture. They promoted the kind of ornamental variety that the Renaissance theorist Sebastiano Serlio termed 'licentious' architecture.

**SS:** If these prints ran against the conventional use of classical forms, were they then basically like grammars or ornament books?

**MW:** Yes, except that the designing did not end with the print, but only began there. Very rarely have scholars looked at how these



prints were used in the design process or how people physically interacted with them. I've seen many examples used in a variety of interesting and mutable ways—copied back into sketchbooks or cut and pasted to produce interchangeable parts, for instance.

Think of a grammar of ornament without a clear syntax: you have the parts of speech, but there are no rules to assemble them in a clear, cogent fashion. It leaves a lot to the user to decide, which is important because it shows that classical architecture was very open-ended during this period.

**SS:** In a sense, architecture was feeding the book and the book was feeding architecture.

**MW:** Yes. In the early Renaissance, books purposed for elite readers played a role in elevating architecture to the level of painting and sculpture. But by the 16th century, books were also becoming geared to the worker, for the didactic purpose of teaching.

**SS:** For the local builders, including the stonemasons.

**MW:** Yes, and there was also a fear in this.

Throughout the mid-16th century, many architects in treatises urged the reader to choose 'proper' models and attempted to establish rules to insure that architecture would not be too 'licentious.'

We see a similar phenomenon today, with the spread of information on the Internet and the like.

**SS:** Sir John Soane is an example of a great classical artist who was able to break the rules—but he had measured columns, so he knew how to alter the original for his personal vision.

**MW:** The Grand Tour did more than bestow prestige on Soane. The experience helped him to develop real authority through firsthand knowledge. There's a familiarity that one gains from physically measuring a building, which gives one an innate knowledge of the architecture that is unlike what can be learned from any drawing.

**SS:** Yes, and one also trains one's hand to replicate something that is modular and fits with the human body.

I understand you have a position at the American Academy of Rome next year. What are you going to do there?

**MW:** I started in architecture before I switched to history. And in Rome I'll be continuing my dissertation research mainly through hands-on work: working with built forms themselves and reading what I can from the building fabric.

As we were just saying, by physically experiencing and measuring buildings, you glean a lot more than just measurements: you start to see things.

Image: Mike Waters at work in the collections of Sir John Soane's Museum earlier this year.

# HELEN DOREY: FROM SOANE'S MUSEUM TO SHERLOCK HOLMES

The Soane's Museum Foundation board member Anne Edgar caught Helen Dorey, deputy director of Sir John Soane's Museum, in a rare quiet moment this fall.

**Anne Edgar:** Helen, how did you find your way to museum work?

**Helen Dorey:** Even as a small girl, I loved history. And when the time came for university, I studied it at Oxford.

At that time, in the late 1980s, there was a gap in the education of art historians for museum careers. While there were wonderful, rigorous programs for post-grad work, like the Courtauld, where one could study the traditional range of fine arts, there weren't comparable programs for the study of the decorative arts.

Luckily, I heard about a post-grad program established by Erica O'Donnell in the 1960s based at the V&A—the Study Centre for the Fine and Decorative Arts. I had an incredible experience learning about textiles, silver, porcelain and furniture as well as architecture, painting, and sculpture from art historians and curators in the various disciplines. One of the patrons of the program was Peter Thornton, who at the time – this was 1986—was the director of Sir John Soane's Museum.

**AE:** The Museum must have been quite different nearly a quarter of a century ago.

**HD:** Yes, a very different place then, one typewriter, no photocopier, and no centralized source of information about the Museum's works of art. It was Peter who initiated a system, which brought together all the previous paper based records of works of art into a series of record boxes containing individual records for every item in the collection.

We are, in fact, still working on this with the next step being to transfer into one digital record as part of a Collections Management System, all that we know about the provenance, condition, and whereabouts of each object. The whole thing has been a huge task, particularly because our past records—many handwritten and all on paper—



yield incredibly interesting insights, sometimes from the most marginal of notations.

**AE:** What are you working on now?



**HD:** Well, just this summer, the Museum received permission from the Heritage Lottery Fund to proceed with the first phase of "Opening Up the Soane," a project that calls for the restoration and opening up of the entire second floor of 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, larger temporary exhibition galleries, better visitor facilities and enhanced overall collection care and building maintenance.

So I'm in the middle of a number of what we call "paving projects," tasks that need to be completed step-by-step to pave the way for the completion of the opening up and reinstallation project by 2014—whether it be the creation of a new, expanded museum store in the basement, getting hundreds of pieces of furniture to restorers, or dealing with contracts—we are almost at the point of selecting a building contractor for the overall project.

In January 2011, we will be re-hanging the Picture Room to restore the hang as it was when Soane died in 1837. By late January, this should be completed, with the largest of Soane's three Canalettos, the *Riva degli Schiavoni*, once again hanging in the place of honour above the fireplace, just as Soane had it.

And, at this very minute, in fact, I am reviewing the final layouts for the reissue of Joe Links' *The Soane Canalettos*, which was first issued in 1998.

**AE:** I wonder that you have any time for yourself!

**HD:** Oh, I do a lot! I'm involved in Moggerhanger Park, a private home in Bedfordshire that Soane rebuilt between 1790 and 1816, where I've served as a trustee for over ten years; I'm active as a Trustee of the Twentieth Century Society in London, which works to safeguard the best buildings of the last century; and I serve on the works of art committee for The Athenaeum Club here in London.

**AE:** OK, all this sounds wonderful, but what do you do to relax?

**HD:** Many things, of course, but one of my great enjoyments is performing with a group devoted to 18th-century dancing. I've found that one simply cannot be worried or anxious while dancing the minuet.

**AE:** The Foundation's director Chas Miller has told me about another side to you, one you haven't mentioned yet: your love of all things Sherlock Holmes! Do you collect "Holmesian" memorabilia?

**HD:** Oh, no. I just love the game of it—endless speculations and researches into the inconsistencies and delights of the Sherlock Holmes stories and visits to strange and occasionally disreputable sights on the trail of the exact locations. It has led to friendships across the world with an extraordinary range of people from ambassadors and professors to obsessive collectors!

**AE:** Well, I was interested to learn of this passion of yours, because conservation and museum management are a bit like detective work anyway, aren't they?

**HD:** Yes, indeed. It's all very forensic!

Images: Helen Dorey (inset, and above) leads a group of Soane Foundation Director's and friends on a tour of the Museum's current conservation studios in October 2010. Photos by Richard N. Snyder.



We know a good bit about how Sir John Soane celebrated Christmas, thanks to *The Soanes at Home: Domestic Life at Lincoln's Inn Fields* (1998) by Sue Palmer, archivist, Sir John Soane's Museum:

*Soane's Office shut down briefly at Christmas and his pupils had Christmas and Boxing Day off, and sometimes also December 27th. This, however, did not stop Soane working, and he seems to have worked on most Christmas Days—writing letters, settling accounts or drawing plans. On 25 December 1797 for instance he records 'At home all day ab[ou]t Bank Drawings.' Occasionally he even visited people on business.*

*Mrs. Soane often seems to have visited the children at the Foundling Hospital either on Christmas Day or soon after, usually in company with her friend from Chertsey, Sarah Smith. Then at 4.00 pm they sat down to dinner, usually with a number of guests, although in 1804 Mrs. Soane merely records 'At home all day, Mr. Turner dined here.'*

## 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 details on Sir John Soane's Museum Foundation, including opportunities for

support, a list of our Board of Directors, events, trips and other details, please refer to our website: [www.SoaneFoundation.com](http://www.SoaneFoundation.com).

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