



SIR JOHN  
SOANE'S  
MUSEUM  
LONDON

[soane.org](http://soane.org)

# Appointment of Director

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# Welcome from Chair, Lord Sassoon

Sir John Soane's Museum is the finest monument in the world to the life, work and collections of a single creative genius. After several decades of work, and thanks to it being the most comprehensively documented historic house, 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields is finally back to a state very close to how it was on John Soane's death in 1837, as his act of Parliament requires it to be.

This means that the Museum's new Director can focus their energies on Soane's wish that the house be a place for inspiration and education – unencumbered by the all-too-common burdens of under-maintained historic buildings. The Museum is also extremely fortunate that John Soane's stock has never been higher, revered as he is by both traditional and modernist architects, and by designers and artists working, as Soane would have wished, both in traditional media and through the latest technology.

The Museum has active programmes founded on our great historic collections as well as in contemporary art and design, linked to Soane's interests as a commissioner of contemporary art and as a passionate student of the new in science and design. The success of these varied exhibition and learning programmes has attracted new audiences and means that the Museum not only exceeded its pre-COVID visitor numbers in 2022/23 but achieved a new record.

The Trustees and the famously dedicated staff of the Museum believe that there is much more that can be done to build on John Soane's legacy – the legacy of a self-made man whose story resonates powerfully and positively in the 21<sup>st</sup> century; a man who was not only an architectural mould-breaker but a driven educator as well as a host of famous parties.

The Museum is in a very strong position and there is an extraordinary opportunity for an energetic new Director to make 12-14 Lincoln's Inn Fields an even greater source of inspiration – and of fun – in the spirit of John Soane.

I very much look forward to hearing from you.

James Sassoon



PICTURE ROOM

# About Sir John Soane's Museum

Sir John Soane's Museum at No. 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields was the home of one of England's greatest architects, Sir John Soane (1753–1837), and has been a public museum since the early 19th century. Soane demolished and rebuilt three houses on the north side of Lincoln's Inn Fields, beginning with No.12 between 1792 and 1794, moving on to No.13, re-built in two phases in 1807-09 and 1812, and concluding with No.14, rebuilt in 1824. Throughout the period, he also made continuous alterations, adding more objects to his arrangements and seeking always to enhance the poetic effects and picturesque qualities of the architectural setting.

In 1833, Soane negotiated an Act of Parliament to 'settle and preserve' the house and collections for the benefit of 'amateurs and students' in architecture, painting and sculpture. On his death, this Act came into force, vesting the Museum in a board of Trustees who were to continue to uphold Soane's own aims and objectives and allow for scholars and the general public to freely 'consult, inspect and benefit' from his collections. The Act requires that Soane's interiors and arrangements of objects should remain 'as nearly as possible' as they were at the time of his death in 1837. The Museum receives an annual grant-in-aid from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and is the smallest of the UK's national museums. All three of its buildings are Grade I listed and its whole collection is 'designated' as of pre-eminent national importance.

Soane was a visionary who used his home as a laboratory for his ideas, as a professional office for his architectural practice, and as a study space for his architectural students. Over his lifetime he built up a remarkable collection of works of art, many of which are amongst the most outstanding in the world.



Photo: Celia Rogge



Photo: Celia Rogge

## The Collections

The architectural collections are of special significance comprising 30,000 drawings dating from the Renaissance to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Soane's is also a key collection in Britain for English architecture of the late 17<sup>th</sup> to the early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries with 9,000 of Soane's own drawings and almost all the surviving drawings (also approximately 9,000) of Robert and James Adam and of George Dance the Younger (more than 1,000). The Soane has an outstanding collection of architectural models – the largest collection of plaster models by François Fouquet in the world and the largest collection of cork architectural models in Britain as well as more than 100 models from Soane's own practice. Soane's library and archive uniquely illustrate the practice of architecture during a period that influenced architecture around the world. His library is a rare surviving example of an intact professional architect's library from before the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. The house and its contents can be accessed online through [multiple channels](#) including a 3D scan of the house and a full collections database.

Amongst Soane's other treasures are paintings, sculpture, Greek and Roman antiquities, architectural fragments, architectural and decorative casts, gems and many other items from masonic gloves to mummified cats. The alabaster sarcophagus of the Egyptian Pharaoh Seti I is one of the most important Egyptian objects outside Egypt and other

treasures include one of Canaletto's finest paintings, two of the surviving three series of 'modern moral subjects' by William Hogarth, three works by Turner, copies of the first four folios of Shakespeare's work and Piranesi's drawings of the temples at Paestum.

The significance of the Museum lies not only in its priceless objects, but equally in how they were arranged by Soane to represent the 'union of Architecture, Sculpture and Painting' and as 'studies for my own mind'. In his distinctive interiors, Soane created a sequence of experimental architectural spaces imbued with theatrical narrative and demonstrating his outstanding ability in the choreography of space, volume, light and shadow. The unique preservation of the objects in their original settings combined with the architecture of some of the most inventive spaces ever built make the Soane Museum an increasingly studied 'museum-piece among museums' and an icon for architects across the world. Soane's global influence as a designer has continued to the present day with virtually every architect of a significant gallery/museum over the last three decades citing his influence.



# The Building

Since 1985, the Museum has been engaged in the gradual restoration of the building fabric and the careful study and reinstatement of Soane's original interiors and arrangements, enabled by the 1997 purchase of No. 14 Lincoln's Inn Fields and culminating in a £7 million project, 'Opening up the Soane' (OUTS), funded by major trusts/foundations and the Heritage Lottery Fund. The first phase (2011-12) was the restoration of Soane's first house (No. 12 Lincoln's Inn Fields) which he left to the nation with his Museum. Works included new disabled lifts, new temporary exhibition galleries and new cloakroom facilities and shop.

The second phase comprised the meticulous restoration of the second floor of No.13 (administrative offices from Soane's death until 2009 but during his lifetime his private apartments and Model Room): the rooms opened in May 2015.

Phase 3 was completed in summer 2016 and the new spaces opened to the public in September 2016. This final phase focused on the altered spaces in the centre of the No. 13, reinstating the 'Lobby to the Breakfast Room' and refurbishing the Catacombs in the basement below. A new flexible space for temporary displays, events and installations was also created; called The Foyle Space, it takes over a room at the back of No. 12 which was actually part of No. 13 since it was re-built and knocked through into the Dome area in the late nineteenth century.

The latest restoration project has seen [Soane's Drawing Office](#), the oldest surviving example of its kind, now open to public tours for the first time in its 200-year history. The Office was the creative heart of Soane's home on Lincoln's Inn Fields. Here, Soane's draughtsmen and pupils worked on his architectural projects, inspired by his extensive collection. The Drawing Office is a central part of Soane's own legacy, where he supported the next generation of architectural talent. During the restoration, over 200 works were cleaned and reinstalled, some coming out of storage for the first time. Columns were realigned, bookcases and stained glass reinstated, and original desks and paintwork rejuvenated.





# The Programme

The Museum has put on more than 60 exhibitions since 1995 (when its first temporary exhibition gallery opened), on a wide range of subjects and drawn both from its own collections and those of other regional, national and international institutions. Among these have been the first exhibitions in Britain of the work of Frank Gehry and Daniel Libeskind and pioneering installations of contemporary artworks in the Museum itself. A number of its exhibitions have toured internationally. The Museum hosts a wide range of events and has a successful award-winning learning programme for both adults and children.

Nearly two centuries after Soane's death, the Museum continues to fill a niche in architectural and artistic education that is not filled by other organisations. Its collections and archives are consulted by scholars, architects, and students from around the world and its small team of curators contributes authoritatively to scholarship and public appreciation of the collection.

The opening up of The Drawing Office has marked the launch of a new residency programme at the Soane – [Artist at Soane](#) – which will see two artists hosted at the Museum each year, in Spring and Autumn. The two residents will be able to work in the Office and draw from the Museum's collection, exhibitions, and education programme to inspire their work.

Since 2017, the Soane has hosted the [Architecture Drawing Prize](#), celebrating the art of drawing in three categories: hand-drawn, hybrid and digital. The Museum exhibits the prize winners and shortlisted entries, and the Prize attracts submissions from around the world, attesting to the truly international nature of the Prize and the great skill and originality of entrants.

Since 2020, the Soane has presented 'By Design' in partnership with Luke Irwin, a series of public talks in which leading designers discuss their practice. Speakers in the first three seasons have included Cornelia Parker, David Adjaye and Amanda Leveté. You can listen and watch the full archive of talks [here](#).

Since 2017, the Soane has run 'Soane Lates', an opportunity to discover the atmospheric spaces of the Museum and the stories behind them after hours and by candlelight, with curated content revealing the secrets behind the collection. There is a different Late each month, each exploring a different theme of the collection.



WEST

# The Soane Medal and Lecture

The Soane Medal continues the mission of Sir John Soane to encourage a better understanding of the central importance of architecture in people's lives.

Established in 2017, the Soane Medal recognises architects, educators and critics who have made a major contribution to their field through practice, history or theory, and in doing so have furthered and enriched the public understanding of architecture. Previous winners include Marina Tabassum, Denise Scott Brown, Kenneth Frampton, and Rafael Moneo.

The winner of the Soane Medal is selected annually by a panel of distinguished architects, critics and curators, which has been led by former Trustee of Sir John Soane's Museum, Sir David Chipperfield RA. The recipient of the Medal writes and delivers a lecture at a special event at the Museum, which is streamed live around the world. The recipient also receives a replica of the original gold medal presented to Sir John Soane by the 'Architects of England' in 1835.

The recipient of 2022's Soane Medal is the architect Peter Barber RA. One of Britain's most acclaimed architects, Barber's focus on innovative, affordable housing – particularly social housing – has been widely celebrated. You can find out more about his work [here](#).



# Governance

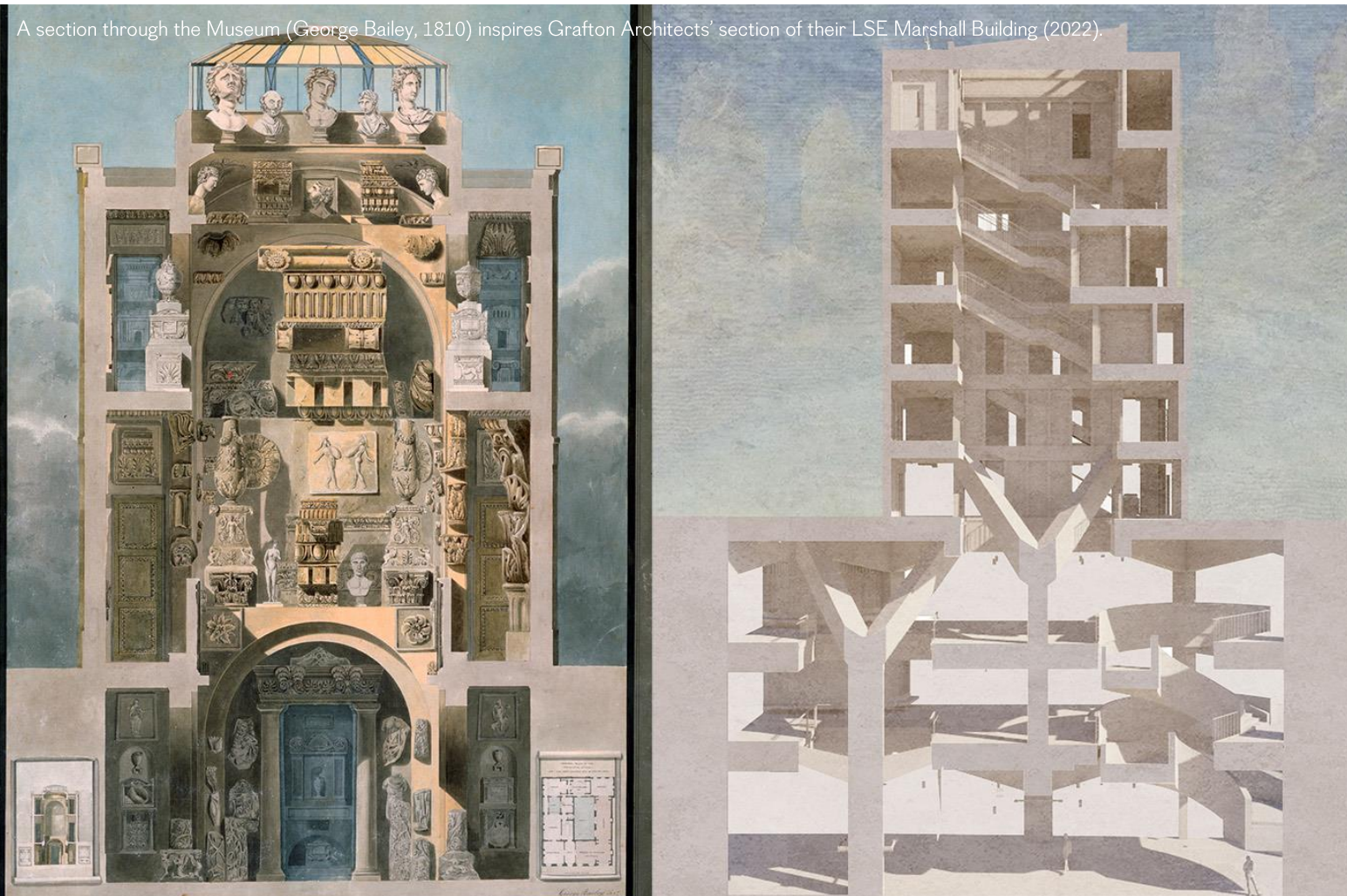
Sir John Soane's Museum is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport through a three-year funding agreement and is a registered charity (no. 313609).

The Museum is governed by a Board of Trustees in accordance with the Sir John Soane's Museum Order (1969), which incorporates the provisions of Sir John Soane's original Act of Parliament of 1833 by which the Museum was established.

Every year, the Museum publishes an Annual Review, with cultural voices exploring the Soane and its programmes. The latest and previous Annual Reviews from 2015/16 can be accessed [here](#).

Total income for the Museum for the year ending March 2022 was £3.2m. The Museum's Annual Reports and Accounts can be accessed [here](#).

A section through the Museum (George Bailey, 1810) inspires Grafton Architects' section of their LSE Marshall Building (2022).



# The role

With the forthcoming retirement of Bruce Boucher at the end of 2023, the Board of Trustees now wishes to appoint an exceptional candidate as Director to lead the Museum through this next exciting period.

The Director will work with the Board to ensure Sir John Soane's extraordinary home and collection remain accessible to the nation and continue to engage new audiences and stimulate debate through research, the maintenance of an inspiring visitor experience and through a thought-provoking exhibition programme.

The Director of the Sir John Soane's Museum will be an inspiring leader with an excellent reputation across the arts and heritage sector, and appropriate academic background or qualifying experience in a relevant area will also be important. Candidates will bring strong management experience, outstanding communication skills and a willingness to play a significant role in fundraising to ensure the future sustainability of the Museum.

The Director will also be appointed by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport as the Accounting Officer answerable to the Public Accounts Committee for the effective stewardship and management of public funds.

## Key duties and responsibilities

### Strategic Leadership and Management

- Lead the organisation, working effectively with DCMS, the Chair and Board of Trustees and advisory boards, observing good governance practice;
- Lead the senior management team, ensuring a cohesive working culture and strategic alignment and provide thoughtful and inspiring leadership to staff and volunteers;
- Promote a collaborative and supportive working environment in which talent can develop and thrive;
- Promote and embody a commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion and access;
- Be the lead ambassador and advocate for the Museum and nurture key stakeholder relationships, including the community of artists and key donors, to maximise engagement and broaden philanthropic support;
- Secure the Museum's long-term sustainability by setting medium to long term financial goals;
- Working closely with the senior management team, promote an entrepreneurial approach to income generation;
- Champion high ethical standards across the organisation, protecting the museum's reputation and mitigating risk.

### Collections and Programme and Advocacy

- Direct the curation, management, care, security and development of the Museum's collections and displays.
- Set the vision and strategy for diverse and innovative creative programmes, which grow audiences locally, nationally and internationally, including online;
- Develop and nurture partnerships with communities, creative practitioners and organisations, to support strategic initiatives.

### Communications and External Relations

- Be the primary spokesperson for the Museum, guiding communications and media relations to minimise reputational risk;
- Lead the Museum's fundraising effort, working with the Board of Trustees to nurture existing relationships and cultivate new sources of support, to ensure its future ambitions are realised.
- Maintain and foster networks that raise the Museum's public profile and visibility nationally and internationally;
- Maintain an active dialogue with architects, artists and policymakers, positioning the Museum at the heart of national and global conversations about architecture and design.



TEMPLE AT PESTUM. (G.B. PIRANESI. 1720-1778)

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# Person Specification

The ideal candidate will bring all or most of the following attributes:

- A strong track record of senior leadership, preferably gained in the arts and culture sector, although the candidate need not have previously led an organisation;
- The ability to think strategically, with sound business planning skills and experience of defining, setting and delivering on strategy;
- A collegiate and inclusive leadership style with the ability to motivate and inspire staff at all levels;
- A demonstrable commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion;
- Communication skills effective with a diverse range of audiences, fluency in writing and speaking, and an ability to engage stakeholders internally and externally, maintaining and growing patrons and supporters;
- The ability to represent the Museum nationally and internationally at the highest level and inspire within the museum world and beyond;
- The ability to be an external advocate and to maintain and build good relationships with existing and new stakeholders and supporters;
- The foresight to have a sense of what is coming in the sector and an ability to navigate the complexities of the national museum world;
- A broad understanding and interest in Sir John Soane and the areas covered by his collection;
- An interest in contemporary architecture and design;
- An understanding of the unique nature of Sir John Soane's Museum and strong aesthetic judgement.

# Terms of appointment

The salary for the role is c.£85,000. Some flexibility may be available.

The post will be based at Sir John Soane's Museum, 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A 3BP.

The Director is entitled to the Alpha Civil Service Pension Scheme and 31.5 days annual holiday entitlement.

## How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to Sir John Soane's Museum on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at [www.saxbam.com/appointments](http://www.saxbam.com/appointments) using code EAJNB.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring\* form.

The closing date for applications is midnight BST on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023.

*\* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.*

### **GDPR personal data notice**

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

