

# Young Architects' Trail

THIS TRAIL FOR YOUNG ARCHITECTS WILL LEAD YOU AROUND THE MUSEUM, HELPING YOU TO SEE SOME INCREDIBLE THINGS AND LEARN ALL ABOUT ARCHITECTURE

SIR JOHN SOANE'S MUSEUM LONDON



Here is a picture of a young architect measuring the Temple of Jupiter Stator in Rome, Italy. This drawing is probably not literally correct (the ladder would have to have been very long!) but it gives you an idea of what young architects did in the past.

Sir John Soane was a famous architect who lived about 200 years ago. He designed lots of buildings and even his own house. Soane liked to use his architecture to create interesting illusions and effects - you'll see lots of wonderful and unusual things as you move around the Museum.

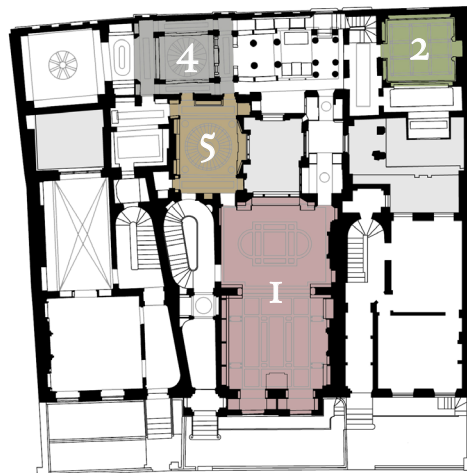


Here is a picture of Sir John Soane painted by Sir Thomas Lawrence. Soane chose to display his portrait somewhere very special in the Museum as the first thing you see when you enter. Keep an eye out for it as you go around. How old do you think Sir John Soane is in the portrait? Make a guess and then ask a warder to see if your answer is correct.



*Hello, I'm Fanny the Dog, the Soane's beloved house pet. I'll be helping you find out about Sir John Soane and guiding you around his exciting Museum. Follow*

*the numbered route on our floor plans and use the helpful colour coding system to work out your location.*



GROUND FLOOR



BASEMENT



# 1 The Library-Dining Room



Our trail will start in the Library-Dining Room. This was both a personal and public space for Sir John Soane; he would spend time here with his family as well as entertain guests and clients.

Look around the room, what are your first impressions?

The walls are painted in rich red and green tones. The colours used in this room were inspired by Soane's grand tour of Europe when he was a young man. He brought back a chip of paint from a villa in Pompeii – that's where the colour of this room came from!

Look at the top of the bookshelves – can you see the other rooms behind them? Soane is playing a trick! There are no rooms beyond the bookshelves, just mirrors to give the illusion of space. Soane liked to use architecture to create different effects and surprise people. Soane used the mirrors in his house to maximise light.



Can you find the circular convex mirrors? Do things look strange in their reflection?

Soane used these mirrors to give visitors a different perspective on the spaces they were in, like the hall of mirrors

at a funfair! Do you see how mirrors make you look at a room in a new way?

Look at the Greek and Roman vases on top of the bookshelves. These vases often depict myths or stories about the ancient Greeks.



What story would you tell about yourself on a vase?

Can you find an object which looks like the old-fashioned red telephone box? It is the model for the tomb Soane designed for his wife, Eliza, who died almost 20 years before him. Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, a famous English architect, saw the Soane family tomb and it inspired his design for the telephone box. Can you spot the similarities?



*Leave the Library-Dining Room by the door to the right and walk through Soane's Study. Turn to your right to enter the Picture Room.*

# 2 The Picture Room



This was the last room to be built in the museum, in 1824.

How many paintings do you think are in this room?

There are 118! You can see some already but where are the rest?

Can you see how Soane has very cleverly used the space in this room? Architects often have to do a lot with a small space. Soane wanted to display all his paintings together in one room so he used the hidden spaces behind the walls to give him enough room!



Can you discover where our nymph is hiding?

*NYMPH: A nymph is an ancient Greek and Roman goddess of nature.*

The area behind the paintings is called the Nymph's Recess. Look at the coloured stained glass and the statue, how do you feel in this room? Circle a word below or write down your own.

ENCHANTED    AWESTRUCK  
CONFUSED    HAPPY    SURPRISED

Can you see a picture showing a man being hit on the head by a brick?

It is in an oil painting by William Hogarth, a famous painter and printmaker in the 18th century. He was known for showing people behaving realistically (and maybe not as they should have been!) This set of four paintings is called the Election series. Soane has another series of paintings by William Hogarth, can you find where he has placed them?



When you leave the Picture Room, go down the stairs to the right which will take you to the Crypt.



### 3 The Crypt

**CRYPT:** A crypt is usually found underneath a church and used as a place for burial.

Welcome to the Crypt! We learned earlier on in the trail that Soane liked to use architecture to play with light and create different effects. In this space Soane used architecture to make people think about life and death. Lots of the objects in the Crypt relate to Greek myths, death and the afterlife.



Circle or write the words that best fit how you feel in the space?

SPOOKY   DARK   MYSTERIOUS   INTERESTING   STRANGE .....

Find the darkest part of the Crypt – how does it make you feel standing there? Now find the lightest part – do you feel different standing here?



Can you find an ancient Egyptian sarcophagus?

**SARCOPHAGUS:** A sarcophagus is a type of coffin, usually made from wood or stone that was often used by the ancient Egyptians.

Look closely at the sarcophagus; it is covered with writing called hieroglyphs. What do you think they say?

The sarcophagus was made for the King Seti I and is over 3,000 years old. It is made from one solid piece of stone, so it is very heavy! John Soane was so pleased when he bought it that he held a party in his Museum for three nights in a row to celebrate.



Can you find a head of Medusa?

**THE MYTH OF MEDUSA:** Medusa was once a beautiful but vain girl. She made the mistake of boasting that she was the most beautiful girl in the land, better looking than any goddess. The gods heard this and as punishment they turned her in to a Gorgon – a monster with snakes for hair. Worst of all, anyone she laid eyes upon immediately turned to stone – be careful as you look at her!

Can you find a shepherd who sleeps forever?

**THE MYTH OF ENDYMION AND SELENE:** Endymion was a beautiful young shepherd who lived in ancient Greece. Selene, the goddess of the moon, fell in love with him and asked Zeus if he would put Endymion into an eternal sleep so that she could always watch him sleep.



When you have seen the Crypt, go back up the stairs you came down. Turn right at the top of the stairs to enter the Colonnade and Dome area.



## 4 The Dome



This is the oldest part of Soane's Museum. There are lots of interesting architectural features in this room, look around at the walls, the floor and even above and below!

Can you match each picture to the correct word?



COLUMN    CAPITAL    FRIEZE  
BUST    SKYLIGHT    URN

Can you find the bust of Soane? He looks more like a Roman emperor than an architect – even the sculptor thought that the bust looked a lot like Julius Caesar! Do you see the two figures on either side of the bust? They are the famous painter, Raphael and the famous sculptor, Michelangelo. Soane placed himself beside them to show the unity of painting, sculpture and architecture.



*Leave the Dome area by the door to the left of the statue of Apollo to enter the Breakfast Room.*



## 5 The Breakfast Room

This is one of the most famous rooms in the Museum.

Soane was a very inventive architect, and in this room he has used some of his best architectural effects.

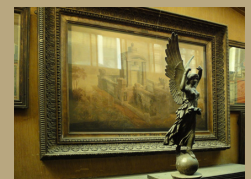
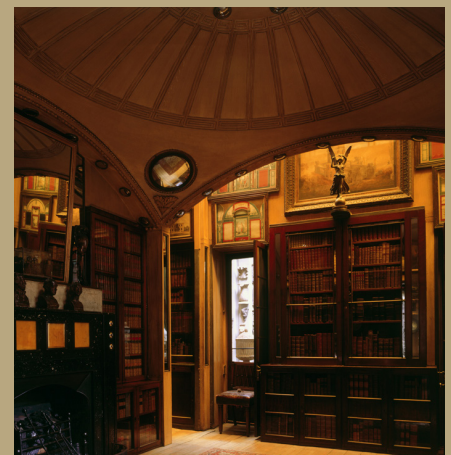
Look up - it looks like the ceiling is floating above you! This is called a pendentive dome, which is a round dome with pointed corners allowing it to sit on a square base; Soane was famous for using them in his designs.

Soane has been very clever with his use of light and dark in this space – can you think of three ways in which Soane is increasing light in this space?



Can you see more circular mirrors like we saw earlier? There over 100 mirrors in this room! Why do you think Soane had so many mirrors in here?

Can you find Nike? She's the winged goddess of victory. Soane placed her in front of a picture of his family tomb to show the triumph of life over death.



*From the Breakfast Room you can go up the main staircase to the first floor where you'll find the Drawing Rooms and another fun trail all about our current exhibition!*