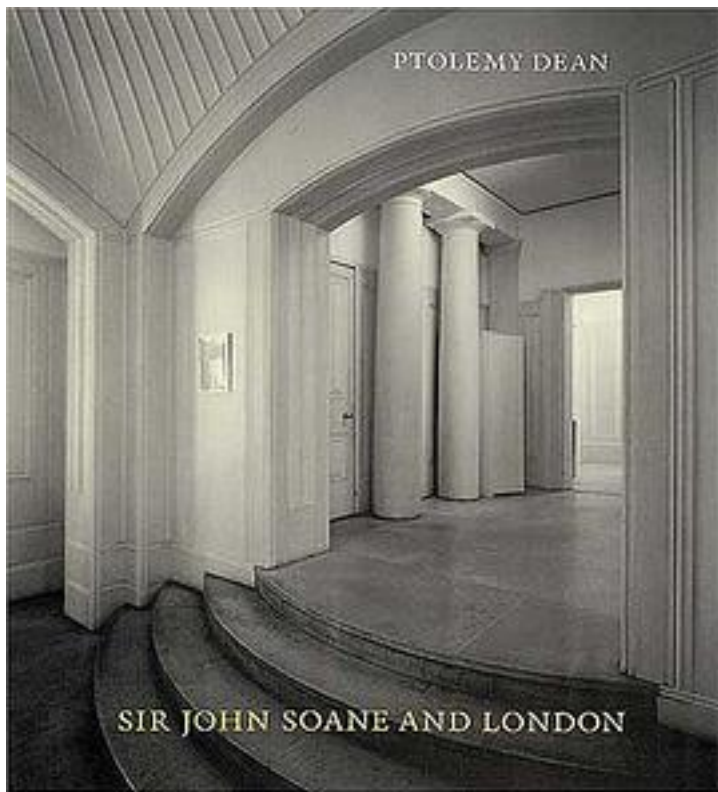


Sir John Soane and London



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The great architect Sir John Soane carried out over four hundred recorded architectural commissions in London. Although many never resulted in a finished building, these little-known commissions formed the backbone of his life and practice and were the key to its development. "Sir John Soane and London" pulls together this vast archive of work for the first time to illustrate Soane's remarkable and extensive involvement in the fabric of the city. Soane's work in London falls naturally into four areas: London townhouses, surveyorships, commissions for monuments, mausolea

and churches, and public-works commissions. Soane's London townhouse practice was the most substantial, and the architect often had to act more like a modern-day estate agent, gathering and arranging properties for his clients in the hope that lucrative architectural commissions would follow. Surveyorships, particularly the long-destroyed Bank of England, provided Soane with a regular stream of work, which he could use to develop his architectural themes, and informed the important public-works commissions in Westminster which came at the end of Soane's life. There was also a surprising amount of church and mausoleum work. All of these projects fed into Soane's wider desire to give London the buildings he felt worthy of a major European capital. "Sir John Soane and London" is organized in the same way as Sir John Soane and the Country Estate (Ashgate, 1999), with a sequence of eight case studies on important surviving Soane London buildings followed by a fully updated gazetteer of Soane's known London projects. The buildings are illustrated by newly commissioned black-and-white photographs by Martin Charles and the author's own watercolour drawings. Combined, "Sir John Soane and London" and "Sir John Soane and the Country Estate" provide the most accurate and complete record of Soane's work to date.

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