

MONUMENTAL MASONRY

WITH

BOMPAS & PARR

A CHARITY AUCTION

SIR JOHN SOANE'S MUSEUM
London, Friday 5 December 2014



SIR JOHN
SOANE'S
MUSEUM
LONDON

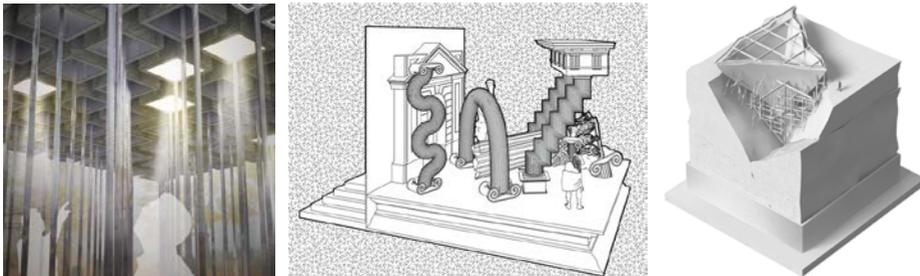
MONUMENTAL MASONRY

Monumental Masonry is a competition calling on architects and designers to create epic monuments in a magnificent celebration of death, and is a collaboration between Bompas & Parr and Sir John Soane's Museum.

The competition was designed to reignite interest in funerary architecture, tombs and mausolea inspired by the sarcophagus housed in the basement of Sir John Soane's Museum. It attracted 120 entries from international architects and designers, of which a panel of judges selected a top ten. These ten designs were then 3D-printed as models and will be displayed at the museum from 6 December 2014 to 3 January 2015.

Through the creation of physical forms and structures that commemorate lives well-lived, the competition was intended to provide an antidote to our increasingly digital society and to provide an outlet fitting the elevated sense of self that has emerged in recent years. Monumental Masonry sought to reconcile these aspects of modern life with our typically maudlin attitude to death. Mausolea are arguably a neglected aspect of the architectural discipline, interesting architecturally as they are removed from the usual practicalities required for human interaction in finished buildings, and allow designers to ignore the usual rules governing structure and form.

Soane's former home is a fitting location as he was a famed creator of funerary architecture, and had a fascination for concepts of death. The models of mausolea within his collection are powerful gateways to other architectural ideas and were essential tools in articulating architectural concepts for his students, clients and assistants. The Soane family tomb that he designed at St Pancras Old Church Gardens provided the inspiration for Giles Gilbert Scott's iconic British red telephone box.



THE RESULTS

Entries comprised everything from traditional classicist mausolea to brutalist vertical cemeteries rising like skyscrapers, serene contemplative spaces, abstract cenotaphs, monoliths made of Lego, a giant tennis ball, even a huge sock. There were two inverted pyramids, a neon sculpture, memorials were dedicated to Kanye West and Kim Kardashian (separately) and several entries designed to deliberately degrade over time. A shortlist of 24 designs was drawn up by Bompas & Parr and these were then scored by a panel of expert judges based on narrative and rationale, relevance and 'monumentality'.

The panel of judges comprised:

Sam Bompas - Partner at Bompas & Parr

Jo Burnham - Dying Matters (National Council for Palliative Care)

Carolyn Cocke - Chairman of the Mausolea and Monuments Trust

Kirsten Dunne - Senior Cultural Strategy Officer at the Greater London Authority

Sam Jacob - Acclaimed architect and critic

Laura Lee - Chief Executive of Maggie's

Neil Luxton - Stonemason from Highgate Cemetery

Douglas Murphy - Architecture critic

Frosso Pimenides - Sir Bannister Fletcher Lecturer in Architecture at The Bartlett School of Architecture

Katherine Sleeman - Palliative care expert from King's College, London

Abraham Thomas - Director of Sir John Soane's Museum

THE TOP TEN

The Top Ten best scoring entries were:

Ben Allen – Memorial to Lost Concentration

Sebastian Bergne – Tomb of the Past

Shaun Clarkson – Shaun Clarkson's Mausoleum

Deathlab/Latent – Constellation Park

DSDHA – Monumentimals

Marc Benjamin Drewes – Celebration of death

Ordinary Architecture – The Tomb of the Unknown Draughtsman

Paul M Jakulis – Wax Studies, A Tomb for a Nicrophorus Investigator

Tonkin Liu – Face to Face: Sir John

Nathan Webb – Immortality Mask

THE EXHIBITION

Models of the Top Ten designs were 3D-printed by our partners Kall Kwik and Digits2Widgets. A huge thanks to these partners for their generosity. Following the auction these models will feature in a month-long exhibition in the Breakfast Room at Sir John Soane's Museum, from 6 December 2014 until 3 January 2015.

3D-printing has revolutionised the world of design in the early 21st century, providing designers with faster proof of concept and visualisation of form at the development stage, and has since gone on to enjoy rapid deployment in industrial settings. These extruded nylon models are the modern heirs to the plaster models of tombs and mausolea on display in Sir John Soane's Museum.

1.
DSDHA, LONDON
MONUMENTIMALS
3-D PRINTED, 2014, NYLON

Rationale: in the UK, we give nearly twice as much money to animal charities than we do to disability charities, while in America it has been revealed that more money is spent by parents on their pets than on their children. With the proliferation of animal-based memes on the internet, it is far more likely that contemporary mausolea will be built to honour our furry friends than for our human counterparts. In response, Monumentimals proposes a series of monumental animal mausolea. Taking inspiration from ancient Egyptian cat mummies and sarcophagi (some of which are included in Soane's encyclopaedic collection), the form of the proposal pays homage to the animals' better days, encasing and protecting a stone sarcophagi inside a series of monumental masonry slabs.

£500-750



2.
PAUL M JAKULIS
WAX STUDIES, A TOMB FOR A Nicrophorus INVESTIGATOR
3-D PRINTED, 2014, PLA PLASTIC

Rationale: What about the little things? When the family dog died, Soane erected a mighty tomb for her remains, inscribed 'Alas, poor Fanny'. What about beetles? This monument is for the beetles. I'm burying a burying beetle. It is quite a fantastic little thing. This is what they do:

The Nicrophorus Investigator begins to dig a hole below the carcass. While doing so, and after removing all hair from the carcass, the beetles cover the animal with antibacterial and antifungal oral and anal secretions, slowing the decay of the carcass and preventing the smell of rotting flesh from attracting competition. The carcass is formed into a ball and the fur, skin or feathers stripped away and used to line and reinforce the crypt, where the carcass will remain until the flesh has been completely consumed. The burial process can take around eight hours. Several pairs of beetles may cooperate to bury large carcasses and then raise their broods



communally. The female lays eggs in the soil around the crypt. Larvae hatch after a few days and move into a pit in the carcass which the parents have created. Although the larvae are able to feed themselves, both parents also feed the larvae in response to begging.

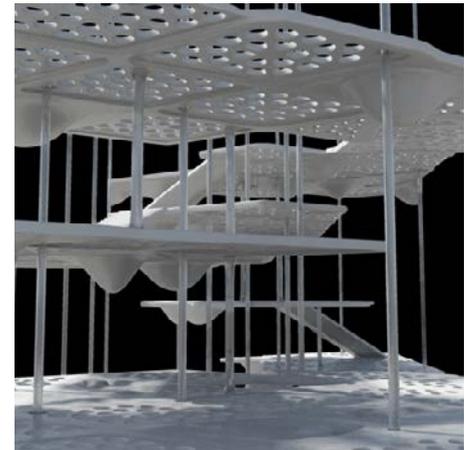
£250-450

3.
DEATHLAB/LATENT, NEW YORK
CONSTELLATION PARK
3-D PRINTED, 2014, PLA PLASTIC

Rationale: A suspended public memorial, harnessing science while respecting spirituality. Given rapidly depleting cemetery space in cities, increasing urban populations, and acute environmental toll on both burial and cremation, alternative funerary practices are inevitable, yet currently unresolved. Our cities require new mortuary options which respond to the constraints of ecology, time and limited burial space.

5,400 lives memorialized per year: the deceased are honoured in short-term shrines. Remembrance is materialized through individual 'mourning lights' whose aggregate glow generates a perpetual landscape of memory. The memorial serves as an enduring collective urban cenotaph for intimate individual memories – supporting the diverse cycles and vitality of life. Its 'footprint' is invisible.

£500-750



4.
NATHAN WEBB, LONDON
IMMORTALITY MASK
3-D PRINTED, 2014, PLA PLASTIC

Rationale: Death masks were a luxury preserved for the rich and famous, great thinkers, scholars and rulers would gain immortality by casting a mold of their recently deceased heads, preserving what they looked like for ever.

Times have changed but human nature hasn't, everybody still wants the opportunity to both be remembered and to live forever. The posthumous performances of Michael Jackson and Tupac amazed and bedazzled hundreds of thousands of people from beyond the grave. This very much puts a whole new angle on the idea of the celebrity being immortal.

A hidden screen below ground projects 3D imaging on to a transparent surface of sheet glass: The Immortality Mask

£350-500

