

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

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PRESS IMAGES: [HERE](#)

Pulp and Scritti Politti to headline newly announced weekender celebrating 50 years of Rough Trade

Major celebration of a one of Britain's most influential independent music institutions will take over the Southbank Centre site 17 – 19 July 2026



Pulp © Tom Jackson

This summer, indie icon **Rough Trade** takes over the Southbank Centre for a weekend-long celebration of 50 years in the business as one of Britain's most influential independent music institutions.

As the Southbank Centre marks the 75th anniversary of the Festival of Britain and the building of the Royal Festival Hall, this weekend takeover (**17 – 19 July**) will celebrate two giants of British culture and the indelible mark they have made on the UK's artistic ecosystem. Bringing together up and coming current artists and household names who have helped define the contemporary music scene, *Rough Trade 50* will offer an unmissable insight into an institution that has played a vital part in shaping the indie music landscape since its inception. Alongside a vibrant and eclectic offering of live music, the weekend will also feature a host of cross-arts performances, a record fair, and an unmissable evening with Rough Trade Books.

Among the artists set to perform are **Pulp** (18 Jul), whose witty, sharply-observed lyrics and strikingly original sound powered a wave of social commentary in British music and marked them

out as a driving force in the Britpop movement. New music from 2025's *More* will complement their era-defining classics for a one night only performance in the Royal Festival Hall.

Meanwhile, alternative pop sensations **Scritti Politti** (18 Jul) present a riotous night of their unique underground sound, fusing unmistakable tunes and leftist political theory with truly alchemic results – expect to think almost as much as you dance.

The vibrant eight-piece band **caroline** (19 Jul) continue their meteoric rise with a night of raw and dynamic contrasts, weaving together organic and electronic, rough and refined, to produce one of the most innovative sounds in contemporary music. They will be joined by **My New Band Believe**, led by Cameron Picton of black midi, bringing shape-shifting songs which veer between hypnotic folk, panoramic pop and the all-encompassing pull of dance music.

In addition to the music, the multi-faceted prowess of Rough Trade is represented across an array of cross-arts performances and events. **An Evening With Rough Trade Books** (17 Jul) will see Rough Trade Books' authors take their writings off the page and onto the stage in a showcase of artistry and imagination, supported by immensely talented friends and performers who will help them bring their words to life. A stellar lineup, including Max Porter and Kate Stables, Ella Frears and Aidan Moffat, and Jen Calleja, will be guided through their productions by the inimitable Lily Blacksell on hosting duty.

Later, award-winning playwright and screenwriter **Hannah Patterson** presents her debut novel *Ungone* (18 Jul) with a live performance from Ana da Silva, founding member of post-punk trailblazers The Raincoats.

Finally, rounding out the weekend, Ken Loach's 1969 British classic **Kes** will be screened in the Royal Festival Hall (19 Jul), introduced by **Jarvis Cocker**, alongside a live performance of its heartrending soundtrack, composed by John Cameron, soaring to even greater heights with the support of a full orchestra.

Mark Ball, Artistic Director of the Southbank Centre, said: *“Rough Trade Records is a true icon of British culture – a label that for half a century has continually shaped, challenged and expanded our national sound. As we mark the Southbank Centre’s 75th anniversary this year, we’re proud to keep a finger on the creative pulse of a constantly changing cultural landscape, acknowledging the great icons and change-makers of our time while championing the independent voices pushing music forward. Celebrating Rough Trade’s past and present artists on our stages feels like a natural part of that journey.”*

Geoff Travis, founder of Rough Trade Records, said: *“This year means it’s 50 years since the day the first shop opened its doors on Kensington Park Road. The Rough Trade shop which became a distributor and then a Record label which has helped to bring into the world some of the very best music. Someone said we should celebrate! So here we are with a weekend takeover of the Southbank Centre. Come and celebrate with us.”*

Since the beginning of its story 50 years ago, **Rough Trade** has risen to the fore of the independent music scene and been instrumental in shaping contemporary music culture over the last half century. Founded in 1978, Rough Trade Records' boundary-pushing artists still sit at the forefront of the contemporary music landscape. Since then, Rough Trade Records has represented some of the UK's most iconic and innovative artists, from early post-punk experimenters to today's critically acclaimed new talents, such as The Smiths, Pulp, Scritti Politti and Delta 5. *Rough Trade 50* will highlight the label's ongoing role as a vital platform for independence, experimentation, and relentless cultural relevance.

Rough Trade 50 runs Friday 17 – Sunday 19 July 2026 at the Southbank Centre. Ticket sales for Southbank Centre Members commence on Wednesday 15 April and go on general sale from Thursday 16 April.

– ENDS –

EVENT LISTINGS

[An Evening with Rough Trade Books](#)

Fri 17 Jul, 7.30pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall

[Pulp](#)

Sat 18 Jul, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall

[Hannah Patterson: Ungone – The Play](#)

Sat 18 Jul, 3pm, Purcell Room

[Scritti Politti](#)

Sat 18 Jul, 3pm and 8pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall

[Kes: Live Soundtrack](#)

Sun 19 Jul, 5pm, Royal Festival Hall

[caroline & My New Band Believe](#)

Sun 19 Jul, 7.30pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall

NOTES TO EDITORS

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Press images [HERE](#).

About the Southbank Centre

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest multi-arts centre and engages the most diverse audiences of any performing arts organisation in the UK. Our biggest venue, the Royal Festival Hall (2,700 seats) is the lasting legacy of the 1951 Festival of Britain and the ambition and values of that project – that arts, ideas, innovation and culture can heal communities and should be available and accessible to everyone – are still our guiding principles today. The Southbank Centre is uniquely able to offer a wide-ranging, inclusive and world-class artistic programme spanning contemporary visual arts, music, dance, performance, literature, comedy and spoken word across the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room, the Hayward Gallery and our free spaces. We are also home to the National Poetry Library, the National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP), two resident organisations (Kinetika Bloco and Tomorrow's Warriors) and six resident orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Philharmonia Orchestra).

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