

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

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For all press enquiries, please contact: Alex Kemsley
(alex.kemsley@southbankcentre.co.uk) and Yasmin Ozkan
(yasmin.ozkan@southbankcentre.co.uk)

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Press conference audio with *You Are Here* creative team [here](#)

The Southbank Centre unveils *You Are Here*: a sitewide immersive fusion of dance, music, fashion and art, celebrating and remixing 75 years of pioneering British culture

Created, directed and designed by Gareth Pugh, Carson McColl, Danny Boyle and Paulette Randall, with Sabrina Mahfouz and Natasha Chivers



The **Southbank Centre** today announces further details of *You Are Here* (3 May 2026), the centrepiece of its 75th anniversary celebrations.

Created by leading voices across film, theatre, literature and fashion – **Gareth Pugh, Carson McColl, Danny Boyle** and **Paulette Randall**, with **Sabrina Mahfouz** and **Natasha Chivers**, the landmark event will transform the Southbank Centre in a one-day, sitewide experience: an immersive fusion of theatrical performance, live music, dance, fashion and visual art that reveals the throughlines between cultural movements that have shifted Britain's kaleidoscopic identity.

Since the Festival of Britain in 1951, the Southbank Centre has been a leading cultural beacon, a meeting place for boundary-pushing artists and a welcoming space for audiences. *You Are Here* draws on that spirit and 75 years of history, reimagining the site in a takeover of colossal scale.

Tracking a riotous path from monochrome 1950s austerity to a full-technicolour present-day, *You Are Here* traces a story of ingenuity and rebellion that has run through the core of

Britain's cultural identity across the decades. Drawing on the restless innovation that has shaped Britain since the post-war years – from reconstruction of a post-war city and the spirit of the Festival of Britain, to radical artistic movements and underground subculture – the experience connects moments of uprising, resilience and joy across generations.

Paulette Randall, director of *You Are Here*, said: *“You Are Here is fundamentally a story about who we are as a country, told on an ambitious, collective scale. It brings together a team of storytellers to create something that feels both epic and deeply personal, reflecting the many voices and experiences that have shaped Britain’s cultural life. Having first worked with Danny at the Royal Court Theatre and then later on at the London 2012 Olympic Opening Ceremony, it’s a special opportunity to reunite in building a work that invites audiences to see themselves within that shared narrative”.*

Carson McColl, director and designer of *You Are Here*, said: *“When Danny approached us to develop a treatment for this show, his brief was simple: it should deliver a blast of energy and optimism. With that in mind, You Are Here is an all out celebration of the irrepressible creative spirit that keeps pushing us forward...Channeling the joy, wit, energy and supreme originality of the numerous youth and music scenes that have transformed British culture over the past seventy five years, You Are Here is a call to action, reminding a new generation of cultural trailblazers that the future is theirs to invent.”*

Gareth Pugh, director and designer of *You Are Here*, said: *“Ziggy Stardust. The Sex Pistols. Northern Soul. Acid House. Lovers Rock. None of these things could have been predicted by those who gathered at the Festival of Britain in 1951. And that’s the pitch today: that culture is forever ‘under construction.’ It’s never fixed, nor completed. And it belongs to all of us...Ultimately, this is a story about hope. If we protect our communities and cultural spaces, they offer the hope of wonderful, improbable outcomes...This show is a tribute to the wild, experimental bravery of those who came before us and to those carrying the fire today.”*

Danny Boyle, director and designer of *You Are Here*, said: *“The Southbank Centre is for everyone, like the NHS - a dose of culture, like a vitamin injection, it lifts you. Our ambition is for as many people as possible to experience the variety and vitality of this wonderful site, especially those on their first visit.*

*“In *You Are Here*, we want to send people on an adventure, through an arts centre that is usually experienced in individual venues, but transform it in people’s minds so they can see the Southbank Centre in a completely original way.”*

You Are Here draws from underground movements, club scenes, subcultural fashion, music and activism, tracing the impact of those at the vanguard of cultural and social change. Poets, MCs and rappers carry stories through the space, while choral voices and dancers translate them into irresistible sound and movement, threading a kaleidoscopic narrative throughout the day. Visitors may step from the heat and pulse of a high octane Northern Soul dancefloor to the communal joy of a house party; or move from mass participation dance to audiovisual responses to some of Britain's most anarchic fashion and nightlife movements – each transition opening a window onto the nation's ever-evolving identity.

Collaborators include: **Benoit Swan Pouffer, BFI, Boy Blue, Heart of Soul Lewisham, Danilo ‘DJ’ Walde, Deptford Northern Soul Club, Daytimers, Field Maneuvers, Kartel**

Brown, Ruth Hogben, Jenkin van Zyl, Rambert, Rupture, The Midnight Train, Vogue Rites with unannounced special guests making appearances on the day.

The sitewide spectacle honours the Southbank Centre's role as London's space for communal dance, including celebratory nods to the Lambeth Walk, tea dances and the queer Ballroom scene, alongside moments that bring together professional performers and audiences. Dance students from conservatoires across the UK perform alongside some of the country's leading companies and dance collectives, reflecting an intergenerational spirit at the heart of the takeover.

Every experience of *You Are Here* will be unique. Audiences will be able to chart their own journey through the ever-evolving experience, from stage to backstage powder room, to find both indoor and outdoor spaces across the Southbank Centre site transformed by art installations, large-scale performances, surprise guest performers and breathtaking choreography.

Mark Ball, Artistic Director of the Southbank Centre, said: *"You Are Here captures something about the Southbank Centre – it's ever-present role as a place where people come together to experience culture in all its forms, and where different ideas and communities meet. As we mark 75 years since the Festival of Britain, this moment reflects both past and future: open, experimental and shaped by the cultural pioneers of this country."*

The creative team for the project reunites collaborators behind landmark works including London's 2012 Olympic Opening Ceremony, directed by Boyle and Randall, and *Free Your Mind* at Manchester's Aviva Studios.

You Are Here is produced in collaboration with the BFI at BFI Southbank and across the UK via The BFI Film Audience Network, supported by National Lottery Funding.

Inspired by *You Are Here*, BFI Southbank will present Rip It Up: a takeover which brings young curators and speakers together, exhibiting work by and about young people. Taking place on Sunday 3 May, this takeover will celebrate the changing face of youth rebellion, diving into the youth driven movements which have defined our cultural identity, the agonies and ecstasies of growing up in Britain, and the issues facing the next generation. You can read more [HERE](#). From May – October BFI Film Audience Network (FAN) will present a UK-wide Rip It Up season, supported by BFI National Lottery funding

***You Are Here* takes place on Sunday 3 May 2026. Tickets are on sale now at www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/you-are-here/.**

NOTES TO EDITORS

Press conference audio, chaired by Ruth Hardie, Southbank Centre's Head of Public Programming [here](#)

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[About 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).

www.southbankcentre.co.uk

About Gareth Pugh and Carson McColl

Gareth Pugh and Carson McColl are creative directors and co-founders of the award winning independent design studio HARD+SHINY.

The pair started in fashion – showing under Pugh's name they ran a successful fashion brand for over fifteen years, staging critically acclaimed fashion shows in London, Paris and New York – before shifting focus toward stage and screen, and large scale special projects.

Over the past decade the couple have steadily gained a reputation for an audacious and original creative approach, rigorous attention to detail, and high impact, unforgettable storytelling.

Together they have worked with some of the most popular artists of our time – including Beyoncé, Lady Gaga and Rihanna – and with some of the world's most important cultural institutions, including The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Louvre, as well as designing shows for the New York City Ballet, the Opéra Garnier and the Royal Ballet & Opera.

Most recently the pair moved into film, heading up both production and costume design for Danny Boyle's 2025 blockbuster '28 Years Later' and on his upcoming feature, 'Ink.'

About Paulette Randall

Paulette was the Associate Director of the Opening Ceremony for the 2012 London Olympic Games. Paulette was awarded an MBE (Member of the Order of the British Empire) in the 2015 Queen's Birthday Honors List for her services to Drama.

Television credits include: Coronation Street, The Wives, Waterloo Road, EastEnders, Hollyoaks, Tin Star, Death In Paradise, Casualty, River City, Holby City, The Real McCoy, Desmond's, Porkpie, C4, The Crouches, Comin Atcha, Kerching!, The Little Miss Jocelyn Show (Creative Consultant). Theatre credits include: The Fellowship (Hampstead Theatre), Doctor Faustus (The Globe), Love Letters To The NHS (National Theatre Wales), Daisy Pulls It Off (Park Theatre), The Disappearance of Dorothy Lawrence (Vital Exposure), Obama-ology (RADA), Play Mas (Orange Tree Theatre), Frankie and Johnny in the Clair De Lune (Chichester Festival Theatre), Rudy's Rare Records – starring Lenny Henry (Birmingham Rep and Hackney Empire), Fences (Theatre Royal Bath, Tour and West End), the sketch show Funny Black Women on the Edge.

About Sabrina Mahfouz

Sabrina is a writer and maker, whose theatre shows include A History of Water in the Middle East (Royal Court), With a Little Bit of Luck (Paines Plough/BBC) and Metamorphoses (Shakespeare's Globe). She writes and produces TV, most recently on Beef (Netflix), Golf (Netflix), Full Circle (HBO) and #1 Happy Family USA (Amazon). She has written non-fiction with her debut book These Bodies

of Water: Notes on the British Empire, the Middle East and Where We Meet (Tinder Press) and has edited a number of anthologies. She is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature.

About Natasha Chivers

Natasha is a London based lighting designer. Her work has been seen in over 20 countries and in a wide variety of places from the Berghain club in Berlin to Kensington Palace, and from an old Jam Factory near Tower Bridge to Studio 54 in New York. Recent theatre and dance credits include Inter Alia (West End/ National Theatre); Prima Facie (West End/ Broadway/UK Tour – Drama Desk Winner, Olivier and Tony Award Nominated); Peaky Blinders (Rambert/ World Tour); Evening All Afternoon (Donmar Warehouse); Oedipus (West End/Broadway); The Hills of California (Broadway/West End – Tony Nominated); Message in A Bottle (Sadlers Wells/Tour); Oresteia (West End/ Park Avenue Armory/Almeida – Olivier Nominated).

Awards: Winner of the Drama Desk Award for Outstanding Lighting Design for a Play for Prima Facie. She won the Olivier Award for best lighting for Sunday in the Park with George.

She was nominated for a Tony Award for Prima Facie in 2023 and in 2025 for Hills of California.
