

SOUTHBANK CENTRE 75 CENTRE

THE SOUTHBANK CENTRE'S PERFORMANCE & DANCE AUTUMN/WINTER 2026 PROGRAMME

FORWARD PLANNER

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Images: [HERE](#)



L-R clockwise: Baro d'evol: *Qui Som? (Who Are We)* © Christophe Raynaud de Lage; KUNSTY: *NOW NOT NOW* © Mihaela Bodlovic; Lyon Opera Ballet: *Mycelium* © Agathe Poupene; Thick & Tight: *Camp as Christmas* © Darren Evans.

The 2026/2027 Performance & Dance Autumn/Winter season rounds out the Southbank Centre's 75th anniversary year and sets the tone for a new year of vibrant, cross-arts performances from across the world. Carrying forward the celebratory energy of the 75th programme, the Southbank Centre's Autumn/Winter Performance & Dance programme, celebrates icons of the theatre and dance and spotlights the trailblazers and innovators who contribute to the Southbank Centre's vision to be the arts centre of the future.

The season platforms leading performers, theatre-makers, and choreographers with an electric line up which presents radical new works alongside festive family favourites.

Highlights include:

- The return of **KUNSTY** in November, the Southbank Centre's bold and brilliant series platforming new work from independent British artists working at the boundaries of dance, live art and cabaret. Following its inaugural iteration in 2025, this year's series features new work from Samir Kennedy and Sean Murray with 'IT'S GOT LEGS!!!!!!' (**4 November**) an infernal, infinite foreplay of a "cabaret", whilst Rosana Cade, Ivor MacAskill, Tim Spooner and Yas Clarke co-create 'NOW NOT NOW (**5 – 6 November**)', a disorienting and darkly funny deep dive into the ways we experience the flow of time. Further acts in this year's iteration of KUNSTY will be announced soon.
- **Thick & Tight** dance theatre company present **Camp as Christmas (10 December – 3 January)**, combining their signature sizzling mix of dance, mime, lip sync, drag and satire, to present a nativity story like no other. Daniel Hay-Gordon and El Perry star alongside a line-up of guest performers – to be announced – to present a celebratory, inclusive and queer take on the festive season. Expect show tunes, the avant-garde, quick changes, and possibly a carol.
- The UK premiere of **Who Are We? (Qui Som?) (Wed 14 Oct – Fri 16 Oct)** from internationally renowned French circus group **Baro d'èvel**. Actors, dancers, musicians, acrobats, clowns and ceramists, lead the audience on a journey into their inner worlds, and into the very idea of what it is to be human. Expect a high-energy production brimming with humour and playful self-reflection and an explosion of colour and form. This will mark the company's first time in the UK and is presented in collaboration with MimeLondon.
- One of the world's leading dance companies presents an unmissable double bill from two of Europe's foremost choreographers: Rose Prize winning **Christos Papadopoulos** and **Jan Martens** in **Lyon Opera Ballet: Mycelium (3 – 5 March)**. Papadopoulos' 'Mycelium' takes nature's never-ending shapes, movements and structures as his influence in a hypnotic work exploring mycelium – the vast fungal networks that lie underground. Jan Martens' 'Period Piece' calls back to a forgotten sense of normalcy in our chaotic world, all the while dreaming of a new and better one.

Aaron Wright, Head of Performance & Dance at the Southbank Centre, said: *"This season presents some of the world's most distinctive companies showcasing performance at the bleeding edge of disciplines from ballet to circus, that you won't see anywhere else. Our Autumn/Winter 26/27 season has an emphasis on new work from bold British companies developed here in the creative engine of Southbank Centre. Look out for a second edition of our new KUNSTY series as well as a Christmas run from the much loved duo Thick & Tight, with a brand new show. Prepare to be surprised and delighted as the usual definitions of dance and theatre are exploded!"*

Mark Ball, Artistic Director of the Southbank Centre, said: *"This varied and dynamic Autumn/Winter Performance & Dance season platforms some of the most exciting names in the UK cultural scene alongside some of the most exciting international choreographers and performers. From form-breaking theatre to queer cabaret and Christmas campery, it offers*

audiences an opportunity to see unique and distinctive work on our stages and it rounds out our 75th year with a commitment to innovative, multi-disciplinary programming.”

SHOW DETAILS

Forced Entertainment: Cold Sweat (London Premiere)

Friday 9 – Saturday 10 October, 7.45pm, Purcell Room.

A new theatre work from Forced Entertainment, with original texts and sound from the group’s artistic director Tim Etchells. Layering music loops with AI-generated voices, the performers are caught in some kind of drama; perhaps a play, or a TV soap. Fragments of a narrative are bound together by a mood of emotional and physical overload. Virtuoso performers map their bodies onto strange rhythms and tonalities generated by nonhuman AI voices. The figures onstage are channeling confusion, struggling to articulate desires, dreams and uncertainties, looping their way through speeches and statements that shift between revelation and cliché. With ‘Cold Sweat’, Forced Entertainment are digging further into the lip-syncing mode they established in 2024’s ‘Signal to Noise’, the result is an absurd, comical, unsettling and poetic piece of contemporary theatre.

Who Are We? (UK Premiere)

Wednesday 14 – Thursday 15 October, 7.30pm; Friday 16 October, 6.30pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Baro d’evel makes circus for the 21st century. As a bold and brilliant series of dream images that set out to capture the very essence of us, *Who Are We? (Qui Som?)* is a joyful journey into our inner worlds, into the very idea of what it is to be a human. A high-energy explosion of humour and playful self-reflection and an explosion of colour and form, the show brings together actors, dancers, musicians, acrobats, clowns and ceramists. In the words of Camille Decourtye and Blaï Mateu Trias, the directors of the company: ‘We like to think of the show as a ceremony, a re-enchantment, inviting all these disciplines, having these animals, these children, these artists on stage, to create shows that take the viewer into an inner labyrinth, into a waking dream.’ Presented in collaboration with MimeLondon.

KUNSTY | IT’S GOT LEGS!!!!!!! (London Premiere)

Wednesday 4 November, 7.30pm, Purcell Room.

Samir Kennedy and Sean Murry present an infinite, infernal foreplay of a “cabaret” in a whirlwind performance bearing witness to the artists’ fascination with the filthy and the glamorous, the pathetic and the perverse. References to familiar double acts and double entendres abound as the duo uncover the only real, concrete thing there is in this business: instability. The show exposes the precarity of constructing both performance and the self. Using the basic tools of theatre and DIY performance – microphones, speakers, lights and sets – the pair question whether the way we produce our identities is really all that different from how we put on a show.

KUNSTY | NOW NOT NOW (London Premiere)

Thursday 5 – Friday 6 November, 7pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Co-created by Rosana Cade, Ivor MacAskill, Tim Spooner and Yas Clarke, following the success of ‘The Making of Pinocchio’, ‘NOW NOT NOW’ is a darkly funny and disorienting dive into the peculiar ways we experience the flow of time. Two performers and their uncanny video doubles take us through a warped morning routine – breakfast becomes an

epic struggle as tasks loop, snag and unravel, and the possibility of getting out of the house on time becomes ludicrously distant. Zooming between the domestic and the existential, the personal and the planetary, the show is a vivid, sensory encounter with time, neurodivergence and the relentless demands of late-stage capitalism. Slow-motion selves and sped-up ghosts haunt the kitchen, demonstrating the urgency and absurdity of trying to keep pace with a world that's running out of time. Commissioned by the Southbank Centre.

[There's a Bear on My Chair](#)

Wednesday 9 December – Sunday 3 January, 10.30am and 1.30pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall.
The visually enchanting stage adaptation of Ross Collin's much-loved book, 'There's a Bear on My Chair' is the perfect festive treat for families – a heartwarming, funny and enchanting theatrical experience for children and grown-ups to treasure together.

PR Contact: ben@breadandbutterpr.uk

[Thick & Tight: Camp as Christmas](#) (World Premiere)

Thursday 10 December – Sunday 3 January, various timings, Purcell Room.
Thick & Tight's signature, sizzling mix of dance, drag, mime, lip-sync and satire, come together in a spectacular show that affectionately trashes the festive season. A classic nativity cast, plus a few unexpected extras, deliver show tunes, avant-garde performances, quick changes, and possibly a carol. Always camp, a little bit Christmassy. Daniel Hay-Gordon and El Perry star, alongside guest performances to be announced. The atmosphere will be celebratory, inclusive and queer, striking a few festive notes alongside a hearty helping of irreverence and subversion to the conventions of the season. Commissioned by the Southbank Centre.

PR Contact: Anna Goodman abstrakt@abstraktpublicity.co.uk

[Fascinating Aïda](#)

Friday 11 December – Sunday 3 January, 7.30pm and 8pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall.
The sensational cabaret group return with a new show following a hugely successful 40th anniversary tour. Adèle Anderson, Dillie Keane, Liza Pulman and musical director Michael Roulston take to the stage with brand new songs generated by human neural networks and using their combined deep-learning age of 278 years. The group have data-mined their back catalogue to bring to life their greatest, most sensationally analogue show ever.

PR Contact: sally@hobpublicity.co.uk and carl@hobpublicity.co.uk

[Cirque Alice](#) (European Premiere)

Sunday 13 December – Sunday 3 January, various timings, Royal Festival Hall.
Lewis Carroll's classic adventures are reimagined through breathtaking acrobatics in this joyous, unforgettable performance filled with breathtaking twists and astonishing, gravity-defying feats. Set against an enthralling soundtrack of contemporary arrangements of some favourite classical hits and starring the greatest acrobatic performers from around the globe, this magnificent spectacle features stunning performances by mesmerising aerialists, mind-bending contortionists, exquisite puppetry, dancers and guest musicians.

PR Contact: molly@aboutgracepr.com

[MimeLondon: FOOD](#) (UK Premiere)

Wednesday 13 – Sunday 17 January, 2.30pm / 5pm / 7.45pm, Purcell Room.

The directorial debut from circus artist Michael Zandle transforms the simple act of eating into a maniacal, almost mechanical ritual. Boundaries between desire and necessity blur, giving rise to something grotesque, surprising and disturbingly hypnotic. Through acrobatics and object manipulation, circus performers create a vivid physical language that questions our consumption habits – habits subtly shaped by desires that may not be entirely our own.

[MimeLondon: INHALE DELIRIUM EXHALE](#) (UK Premiere)

Saturday 23 January, 7.30pm; Sunday 24 January, 5pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall.

Artist Miet Warlop – recently appointed to represent Belgium at the 2026 Venice Biennale – brings to life the inner turbulence of the creative process. Accompanied by a group of performers, 1,500 metres of silk fabric, and music from DEEWEE, in this show Warlop draws inspiration from the movement of waves – a symbol of change and unpredictability, and a metaphor for imagination and transformation.

[Lyon Opera Ballet: Mycelium](#) (UK Premiere)

Wednesday 3 – Friday 5 March 2027, 7.30pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall

One of the world's leading dance companies presents an unmissable double bill from two of Europe's foremost choreographers: Christos Papadopoulos and Jan Martens.

In 'Mycelium', Christos Papadopoulos takes nature's never-ending shapes, movements and structures as his influence. The result is a hypnotic work exploring mycelium – the vast fungal networks that lie underground. With this work, Papadopoulos creates an organic dance, transforming and broadening the way bodies interact, sense, and come into contact with one another. The piece is set to a mutating soundtrack from electronic composer Coti K. Jan Martens' 'Period Piece' calls back to a forgotten sense of normalcy in our chaotic world while dreaming of a new and better one. It's exuberant and minimalistic, serious and absurd, and as much about the mind as it is the body. The presentation of Lyon Opera Ballet: Mycelium is made possible with the support of Dance Reflections by Van Cleef & Arpels.

ENDS

This forward planner is available in a range of formats. Please email press@southbankcentre.co.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

For more information about the Southbank Centre's 75th anniversary celebrations, visit southbankcentre.co.uk/our-75th-anniversary

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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