

SOUTHBANK CENTRE MELTDOWN

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Press ticket accreditation for all *Meltdown* gigs via press@southbankcentre.co.uk

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Images: available to download [here](#)

***Harry Styles' Meltdown* dedicates a day to unsigned and emerging music talent**

A showcase of unsigned artists, curated by Styles, headlines a new wave of free participatory events and live music across the Southbank Centre festival



The Southbank Centre today announces a major new strand of ***Harry Styles' Meltdown*** festival (11 – 21 June 2026) dedicated to championing unsigned and emerging artists through a curated day of free outdoor live music on its Riverside Terrace.

Taking place on **17 June**, the Southbank Centre's outdoor festival stage will host a night-long takeover by ***Amex Unsigned***, an initiative supporting breakthrough opportunities for emerging musicians from the festival's Official Supporting Partner, American Express. The programme brings together a line-up of rising artists selected from the Amex Unsigned roster, spotlighting new voices and future talent across a setlist of free performances, adding to Styles' thoughtful *Meltdown* curation.

Now in its fourth year, Amex Unsigned creates space for new music to thrive by using the American Express platform to support breakthrough opportunities for emerging musicians, ranging from mentorship and studio time through to performances at festivals such as All Points East, American Express presents BST Hyde Park and now Harry Styles' Meltdown.

The programme reflects the Southbank Centre's long-standing commitment to supporting young people and emerging musical talent through performance, participation and music education. This includes partnerships with Lambeth Music Service and Southwark Music Service to help provide access to high-quality music education to every young person in local boroughs, alongside initiatives such as the Southbank Centre's Youth Singing

programme, which responds to a decline in arts and music provision in state schools across the UK.*

Mark Ball, Artistic Director of the Southbank Centre, said: *“Supporting emerging artists and opening up opportunities for new talent has always been central to what the Southbank Centre exists to do. This festival stage for unsigned talent will sit at the heart of Meltdown’s bustling festival spirit and reflects a shared belief in creating platforms for artists at pivotal moments in their careers and inviting audiences into spaces of discovery, experimentation and connection.”*

Dave Edwards, Marketing VP at American Express, said: *“At American Express, we’re passionate about backing live music at every level - from globally recognised festivals to emerging artists. Through Amex Unsigned we’re committed to helping UK grassroots and unsigned talent access opportunities to perform and grow their careers. We’re proud to partner with the Southbank Centre for this year’s Meltdown Festival, curated by Harry Styles, giving Amex Unsigned artists the opportunity to perform at one of the UK’s most iconic artist-curated festivals.”*

Also announced today are a further series of performances, talks and participatory events taking place across the Southbank Centre site as part of *Harry Styles’ Meltdown*.

On Sunday 14 June, **Steam Down Presents: Sounds of the Diaspora** takes over the site with a celebration of diasporic sounds and musical communities, spanning jazz, funk, grime and afrobeats in a live programme rooted in collaboration and improvisation.

On Thursday 18 - Sunday 21 June, audiovisual installation **Choose Love x Jon Hopkins** brings together music and activism in a special collaborative event supporting displaced communities and celebrating collective action through art and sound.

In the festival’s closing weekend (Sunday 21 June), **HOURLASS TECHNO** and **HOURLASS DISCO**, curated by **Harry Styles** and music producer and club night curator **Gideön**, deliver late-night dancefloor experiences shaped by underground club culture, while **Tomo Campbell** appears in-conversation for a special discussion event exploring creativity, music and contemporary culture (Saturday 13 June).

Additional participatory activity includes dance workshops inspired by choreographer **Paul Roberts**, while **Keir Stewart** presents **The Music of The Durutti Column** (Wednesday 17 June), revisiting and reinterpreting the influential Manchester group’s distinctive and atmospheric catalogue in a special live performance.

Established in 1993, Meltdown has become one of the Southbank Centre’s most distinctive contributions to the UK’s cultural landscape, inviting an artist each year to curate a programme that captures the creative energy of its moment and the interests of the curator. Harry Styles’ Meltdown, presented during the Southbank Centre’s 75th anniversary year, honours that tradition while reaffirming the Southbank Centre’s ongoing commitment to supporting interdisciplinary practice and the next generation of cultural innovators.

Harry Styles is Meltdown’s 31st curator. Past curators include Little Simz (2025), Chaka Khan (2024), Grace Jones, David Byrne, Yoko Ono, Nile Rodgers, M.I.A., David Bowie and Patti Smith.

Harry Styles' Meltdown runs 11 – 21 June 2026. All events are on-sale now.

www.southbankcentre.co.uk/meltdown

- ENDS -

NOTES TO EDITORS

Artist names for Amex Unsigned are to be announced.

Listings:

London Parks: An Exhibition

Thu 11 Jun - Weds 1 Jul, Riverside Terrace

Futuretense x Meltdown: deep tan + VIIZER07

Thu 11 Jun, 6pm, Riverside Terrace

Warpaint

Thu 11 Jun, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall

Simmer Down x Meltdown

Fri 12 Jun, 2.30pm, Clore Ballroom

Don't Keep Hush

Fri 12 Jun, 6pm, Riverside Terrace

Stephen Fretwell

Fri 12 Jun and Sat 13 Jun, 7.45pm, Purcell Room

Shabaka & Friends

Fri 12 Jun, 8pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall

Ninajirachi

Fri 12 Jun, 11pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall Foyer

Relaxed Sessions: Dad Dancing

Sat 13 Jun, 11am, Clore Ballroom

The Distraction Pieces Podcast: Live

Sat 13 Jun, 1pm, Purcell Room

Saturday Sessions: Dad Dancing

Sat 13 Jun, 1.30pm, Clore Ballroom

Riverside Boogie: Meltdown Edition

Sat 13 Jun, 2.30pm, Riverside Terrace

Midnight Train

Sat 13 Jun, 4pm, Riverside Terrace

Erika de Casier

Sun 13 Jun, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall

Fousheé

Sat 13 Jun, 8pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall

Kamasi Washington: Jazz Legends Reimagined

Sun 14 Jun, 3pm, Royal Festival Hall

Nilüfer Yanya

Sun 14 Jun, 3pm & 8pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall

Steam Down Presents: Sounds of the Diaspora

Sun 14 Jun, 3pm, Riverside Terrace

An Evening with New Young Pony Club

Sun 14 Jun, 7.45pm, Purcell Room

Kamasi Washington: Fearless Movement Live

Sun 14 Jun, 8pm, Royal Festival Hall

Harry Styles & Jules Buckley Orchestra

Tue 16 Jun, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall

Getdown Services

Tue 16 Jun, 7.45pm, Purcell Room

Amex Unsigned

Wed 17 Jun, 6.30pm, Riverside Terrace

Mulatu Astatke

Wed 17 Jun, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall

The Guilty Feminist & Tracey Emin in Conversation

Wed 17 Jun, 7.30pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall

For Vini: A Tribute to The Durutti Column

Wed 17 Jun, 7.45pm, Purcell Room

futuretense x Meltdown: Joviale + Loie

Thu 18 Jun, 6pm, Riverside Terrace

bar italia

Thu 18 Jun, 7.30pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall

Beverly Glenn-Copeland

Thu 18 Jun, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall

Choose Love x Jon Hopkins

Thu 19 Jun - Sun 21 Jun, various times, Purcell Room

Push the Button

Fri 19 Jun, 6pm, Riverside Terrace

Orlando Weeks

Fri 19 Jun, 7.30pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall

Devonté Hynes Ensemble

Fri 19 Jun, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall

Foundation.FM Presents Movement

Sat 20 Jun, 2pm, Riverside Terrace

Jon Hopkins with Maddie Ashman & Leo Abrahams

Sat 20 Jun, 4pm & 8pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall

Yussef Dayes

Sat 20 Jun, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall

James Murphy

Sat 20 Jun, 11pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall Foyer

Dance with Kindness

Sun 21 Jun, various times, Queen Elizabeth Hall

HOURLASS DISCO

Sun 21 Jun, 2pm, Riverside Terrace

Soulwax

Sun 21 Jun, 7.30pm, Royal Festival Hall

HOURLASS TECHNO

Sun 21 Jun, 9.30pm, Queen Elizabeth Hall Foyer

*In 2024, the Cultural Learning Alliance found that 42% of schools did not enter any pupils for music GCSE in 2024. In addition, the CLA found that the vacancy rate for music teachers increased sixfold between 2010/11 and 2022/23, while teacher recruitment in music in the same period had fallen by 56%. The CLA also drew attention to what it called an 'enrichment gap' with young people from wealthier backgrounds having much greater participation in the arts compared to their peers from lower-income backgrounds.

In 2025, the House of Commons Education Select Committee reported, from official evidence sessions, how the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) and Progress 8 school league table metrics systematically forced senior leadership teams to allocate education hours and funding to "core"

subjects (Maths, English, Sciences, History/Geography, and Languages), effectively relegating music and arts to an optional, after-school, or heavily squeezed luxury.

In 2025, the UK government reported that local spending on youth services fell by 73% between 2010/11 and 2022/23, with more than 1,000 youth centres closing and over 4,500 youth worker roles being lost.

About Amex Unsigned

Amex Unsigned is an American Express initiative that creates space for new music to thrive by using the American Express platform to create breakthrough opportunities for emerging musicians, ranging from mentorship and studio time through to performances at festivals such as All Points East, American Express presents BST Hyde Park and now Harry Styles' Meltdown.

About American Express

American Express (NYSE: AXP) is a global payments and premium lifestyle brand powered by technology. Our colleagues around the world back our customers with differentiated products, services, and experiences that enrich lives and build business success.

Founded in 1850 and headquartered in New York, American Express' brand is built on trust, security, service, and a rich history of delivering innovation and Membership value for our customers. We seek to provide the world's best customer experience every day to a broad range of consumers, small and medium-sized businesses, and large corporations, and we build and manage relationships with millions of merchants across our global network.

About American Express Experiences®

Through Amex Experiences®, Cardmembers have access to presale tickets, as well as some of the best seats and exclusive offers at some of the UK's most sought-after entertainment events via partnerships with a range of institutions including AEG (American Express presents BST Hyde Park, American Express presents Roundhay Festival, All Points East, The O2 Arena and British Airways ARC), All England Lawn Tennis Club (The Championships, Wimbledon), Formula1®, Brighton & Hove Albion Football Club, Somerset House (Somerset House Summer Series), London Restaurant Festival, the National Theatre and Aviva Studios the home of Factory International. Amex Experiences is just one example of the powerful backing that American Express provides its Cardmembers.

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). The Southbank Centre's 75th Anniversary Season is supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies. www.southbankcentre.co.uk

About Harry Styles

Harry Styles has become one of the most influential forces in modern culture—but he keeps hitting new peaks. The British singer-songwriter's new album is a deeply personal statement: *Kiss All the*

Time. Disco, Occasionally. It arrives March 6, nearly four years after his modern classic *Harry's House*, the Grammy-winning Album of the Year for 2023.

"Aperture" sets the tone for the whole album: experimental, wildly adventurous, flamboyantly original, with the message: "We belong together." It's the sound of an artist who feels free and confident to try anything, with his longtime collaborator Kid Harpoon. Like the rest of the album, it breaks new ground for an artist who keeps refusing to repeat himself.

Styles surprised everyone with his first solo albums, *Harry Styles* and *Fine Line*, on Columbia Records. He defied clichés with sophisticated songwriting that established him as a fiercely independent voice. *Harry's House* became a record-breaking cultural phenomenon, reaching No.1 in 28 countries. "As It Was" became one of the biggest hits of all time, topping the Billboard chart for 15 weeks. He returns to the stage in 2026 with his global Together, Together tour. *Kiss All The Time, Disco, Occasionally* proves he's still pushing boundaries as one of the most ambitious artists in contemporary music.

About Meltdown

The Southbank Centre's award-winning Meltdown festival has been running annually since 1993 and is the longest-running artist-curated music festival in the world. Each year the Southbank Centre invites a different cultural figure to act as curator and select performers and events of their choosing. Previous curators include Little Simz, Chaka Khan, Christine and the Queens, Grace Jones, Nile Rodgers, Robert Smith, M.I.A., David Byrne, Yoko Ono, Anohni, Patti Smith and David Bowie. Previous performers have included Philip Glass, Lou Reed, Sonic Youth, Nina Simone, Blur, Radiohead, Coldplay, The Libertines, The Cure and Femi Kuti. Meltdown has a reputation for staging one-off performances and collaborations by legendary artists.