

**PRESS RELEASE:** For immediate release - Tuesday 30 September 2025, 12:20pm  
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Images available [here](#).

**Southbank Centre and TikTok launch 'Crescendo': a new accelerator programme to discover the next generation of classical music talent**  
Violinist and TikTok star Esther Abrami joins judging panel to select 10 standout UK based creators for the *Crescendo* cohort



30 September 2025: The **Southbank Centre** ([@southbankcentre](https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk)) and **TikTok** have today announced the launch of **Crescendo**, a pioneering new accelerator programme aimed at spotlighting emerging classical music content creators in the UK, bringing the genre to new, digital-first audiences.

Designed to support and elevate creators who are passionate about classical music, **Crescendo** is now open for applications from UK-based content creators who are already producing exciting work on TikTok. With nearly a million TikTok posts under the #ClassicalMusic hashtag, which has increased by 60% on TikTok over the past 12 months, the genre is stepping beyond the concert hall and finding powerful new life online. Whether they're virtuoso performers, bedroom composers, remixing DJs, or superfans from non-traditional backgrounds, the programme is seeking fresh and diverse voices ready to unlock classical music for 21st century audiences.

**Applications are open until Thursday 30 October 2025, with ten successful creators set to join the first-ever Crescendo cohort.**

**Crescendo** represents a first-of-its-kind partnership between the UK's largest arts centre and one of the world's most influential digital platforms. The Southbank Centre is known for its commitment to a diverse classical programme for 21st century audiences, while TikTok has become a major hub for music discovery, with classical tracks and creators gaining millions of views from curious new audiences. Together, the two organisations will provide up to ten successful creators with a comprehensive programme of mentorship, resources and visibility.

A panel of industry experts – celebrated violinist **Esther Abrami** ([@estherabrami](https://www.tiktok.com/@estherabrami)), cellist and politician **Baroness Thangam Debonnaire**, the Southbank Centre's Head of Classical Music **Toks Dada** and TikTok's Head of Music Partnerships, UK & Ireland, **Toyin Mustapha** – will review applications before inviting a cohort of 10 successful creators to a celebratory event in January 2026, where they have the opportunity to connect with fellow participants.

The *Crescendo* cohort of content creators will gain:

- Free access to Southbank Centre performances and rehearsals
- Exclusive behind-the-scenes content opportunities with the Southbank Centre's Resident Artists and Orchestras
- Bespoke mentorship and platform training from TikTok on growing and engaging audiences
- Collaboration opportunities with TikTok and Southbank Centre digital teams
- Long-term involvement through the Southbank Centre's Ambassador Scheme

Participants will also receive hands-on support to develop and grow their content, as well as connect with leading figures in both the classical music and creator spaces.

**Esther Abrami, violinist and content creator**, said: *"Bridging the worlds of classical music and digital storytelling has shown me how powerful platforms like TikTok can be in connecting new audiences with the artform. Crescendo is an opportunity to give artists, creators and musicians greater access to the arts through the Southbank Centre, while celebrating the creativity that makes classical music vibrant, relevant and inspiring today."*

**Toks Dada, the Southbank Centre's Head of Classical Music**, said: *"At the Southbank Centre, sharing classical music with the widest possible audience is at the heart of what we do. We are proud to be a place where both established and new audiences come to discover and experience, live in person, the wonder of classical music in a variety of different ways – from a theatrically-staged 17th-century 'alehouse' experience, to Multitudes: our new multi-arts festival powered by orchestral music."*

*Meeting people where they are, in this digital age, is an important part of connecting with the audiences of the future. That is why, together with TikTok, as a major digital hub for music discovery, we're excited by the opportunity to work with the next wave of content creators to shine a light on this incredible artform and demystify classical music, helping to take it to a modern day audience."*

**Toyin Mustapha, TikTok's Head of Music Partnerships, UK & Ireland**, said: *"TikTok is where new audiences discover and fall in love with music of every genre, and classical is no exception. Through our partnership with the Southbank Centre and the launch of Crescendo, we're giving creators the tools and platform to showcase classical music in ways that feel fresh, relatable and exciting, helping the artform reach fans who may be hearing it for the very first time. As a celebration of British arts and culture, Crescendo will showcase the incredible talent and creativity emerging from TikTok creators across the UK."*

Today, the Southbank Centre also unveils two further highlights in its expansion of classical music programming and engagement, offering fresh ways for audiences to connect with the artform. **So Hear Me Out**, a new podcast hosted by broadcaster and Deputy Artistic Director of Resident Orchestra Chineke! Linton Stephens, together with broadcaster, writer and Southbank Centre Artistic Associate, Gillian Moore. Each episode invites curious listeners to explore the big questions classical music can help us answer and considers what the artform still has to say to us today – from whether it can offer hope to the imprisoned, to debating if video game scores count as classical music. Music featured includes Julius Eastman's *Gay Guerrilla*, John Williams' *Star Wars*, music from the video game *Soul Calibur II* and Barry Manilow's *Could it be Magic?*.

The Southbank Centre also confirms the return of **Multitudes** in 2026, following a critically acclaimed debut that drew 59% new bookers to its classical music programme. The multi-arts festival, powered by orchestral music, will open with Resident Orchestra Aurora Orchestra's theatrically staged exploration of Stravinsky's *Rite of Spring*. This groundbreaking production first premiered in 2023 and redefined the possibilities of "Orchestral Theatre" by combining memorised performance with movement, actors, design, and a new script by Aurora's Creative Director Jane Mitchell, while keeping the music and musicians at its heart.

**Crescendo** is open to UK-based creators who are passionate about classical music and are already active on TikTok. Applications are now open and close on Thursday 30 October 2025. To find out more and apply, visit [www.southbankcentre.co.uk/crescendo](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/crescendo).

– ENDS –

#### **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

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**Press images and web/social assets:**

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**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).

[www.southbankcentre.co.uk](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk)

**About TikTok:**

TikTok is the leading destination for short-form mobile video. Our mission is to inspire creativity and bring joy. TikTok's global headquarters are in Los Angeles and Singapore, and its offices include New York, London, Dublin, Paris, Berlin, Dubai, Jakarta, Seoul, and Tokyo.

**About Reduced Listening (Producer of *So Hear Me Out*):**

Reduced Listening crafts award-winning podcasts and radio programmes that blend creative storytelling, and high-quality production. They partner with major cultural organisations to develop distinctive audio content, including Serpentine Galleries, Factory International, Wellcome Trust and CERN. They produce a range of weekly radio programmes includes Gilles Peterson for BBC 6Music, and Late Junction and Unclassified for BBC Radio 3 and are known for innovative music documentary series like Decode, the multi-award winning music analysis podcast.

[www.reducedlistening.co.uk](http://www.reducedlistening.co.uk)