

# SOUTHBANK CENTRE

## Press Release

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## Southbank Centre commemorates 50 years of the Undercroft Skate Space with multimedia exhibition *Skate 50*

30 April - 21 June 2026

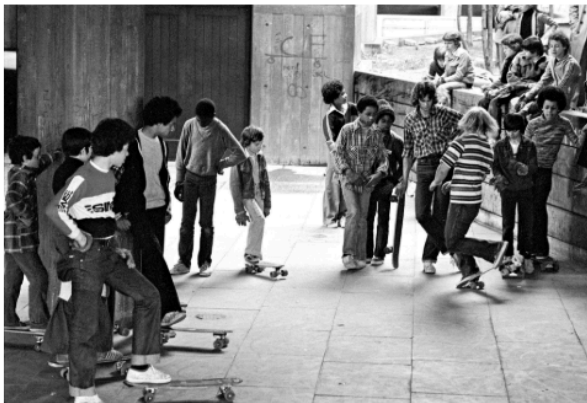


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To mark 50 years of the Undercroft Skate Space, the Southbank Centre will present **Skate 50** (30 April - 21 June 2026), a multimedia exhibition telling the history of the iconic skateboarding space and the communities it has fostered over the past half century. Developed alongside active members of the Southbank skate community, **Skate 50** will include new commissions utilising photography, moving image and sound to delve into the stories that have shaped one of the most recognisable spaces in skate culture.

The Undercroft Skate Space is widely considered as the birthplace of British skateboarding. A space left open to the public when the Queen Elizabeth Hall was built in the 1960s, its concrete ledges, ramps, and pillars were then adopted by skateboarders in the mid 1970s. Fifty years on and it is now one of the oldest continuously used skateboarding locations in the UK, home to a community that spans five generations and a cornerstone of creative expression.

From archive footage, to fashion-forward portraiture of the noughties and contemporary depictions of the skate space today, *Skate 50* will present a variety of documentary style films made up of moving image and photography, interspersed with stop-frame animations and soundscapes to tell the story of the Undercroft Skate Space. Keeping the skate community at the heart of the project, *Skate 50* stems from a series of workshops facilitated by filmmaker Winstan Whitter, bringing together different generations who have used the space over the years to identify notable events across the five decades.

Featured artists - all of whom have a personal connection to skateboarding - include filmmakers **Winstan Whitter**, **Dan Magee** and **Jack Brooks**, founder of skatewear brand Palace, **Lev Tanju**, animator **Sofia Negri**, skate collective **Keep Rolling Project** and sound artist **Beatrice Dillon**.

**Mark Ball**, Artistic Director of the Southbank Centre, says: *“The Undercroft Skate Space is a vital part of the Southbank Centre’s cultural make-up, a space that has been a home for contemporary culture, skateboarding and creativity for half a century. And who better to tell these stories than the communities that have directly used it and continue to do so. In the Southbank Centre’s 75th anniversary year we’re thrilled to be commemorating this iconic space, celebrating all corners of our site and the incredible stories that are embedded into our foundations.”*

Filmmaker and skateboarder **Winstan Whitter**, says: *“The South Bank Undercroft offered me a space I could hold with my friends, to fully express myself growing up there as in my early teens to adulthood. It’s an extremely important space for young people, to have free spaces they can hold which is still echoed today and beyond”.*

**Shane O'Brian**, a London skateboarder who first came to the Southbank skate space around 1976, says: *“Everyone knows the Southbank around the world, it’s iconic. Back in the day, if someone asked if you were a ‘Southbanker’ you’d proudly say yes - you had that title, you had your belonging. I’m 60 years old, and I’m still a skater, I’m still here now. The Southbank skate space has shaped my life from a kid of 10 to 60, with a community that has lasted decades.”*

*Skate 50* is part of the Southbank Centre’s 75th anniversary celebrations, which will take place across 2026 both at the Southbank Centre in London and across the UK. *Skate 50* is curated by Curator Cedar Lewisohn, Assistant Curator Mark Healy and Curatorial Assistant Mollie Jones with exhibition design by Woods Bagot.

To coincide with *Skate 50* and Go Skateboarding Day in June, the BFI will showcase a curated skate cinema programme in venue at BFI Southbank and online on BFI Player,

celebrating skateboarding's unique ability to unlock creativity; from stills photography and fashion to music and guerrilla filmmaking. PUSH PLAY (19-21 June) will include shorts, features, premieres, workshops and talks with established filmmakers discussing their roots in skating, alongside emerging voices from within the global community. PUSH PLAY proposes skate cinema as a vibrant cultural space for dialogue between cities, generations, and creative practices, beyond nostalgia or surface subculture.

**-ENDS-**

## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **Image Credits.**

**Top left to bottom right, clockwise:**

- Undercroft Skate Space, 1989 © Tim Leighton Boyce\_Curtis McCann, Southbank. Images courtesy The Read and Destroy Archive.
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- Undercroft Skate Space, 1978 © Tim Leighton Boyce\_Russ Howell, Southbank. Images courtesy The Read and Destroy Archive.
- Undercroft Skate Space, 1978 © Unknown\_Jeremy Henderson, Southbank.

### **Exhibition Listing Information**

#### **Skate 50**

<https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whats-on/skate-50/>

30 April - 21 June 2026

Undercroft, Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London SE1 8XX

This event is offered on a 'pay what you can' basis. Free tickets are available, but if you're able to pay the suggested ticket price of £8 or more it will support those who otherwise wouldn't be able to attend.

For all ages. Under-12s must be accompanied by an adult on our site.

#### **Opening Times**

30 Apr – 21 Jun 2026

Tue – Sun, 12pm – 8pm

Closed Mon

Skate 50 is closed from Tue 19 – Thu 21 May due to a building closure.

Further information:

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

### **About Winstan Whitter**

Winstan Whitter is a London raised and based skateboarder, filmmaker, award-winning director/producer/ cinematographer and film editor, with over 26 years of professional experience in broadcast, cinema and online productions worldwide. He actively works across a wide variety of content, such as drama, corporate, sports, music videos, commercials, multi-screen video installations, theatre productions and documentaries.

Winstan began the journey of Skateboarding in 1985, riding the streets, concrete parks and minicamps across the UK, Europe and the US. In 1990 Winstan supported Spike Jonze in sourcing skate locations for *Video Days* by Blind Skateboards, directed by Spike Jonze, Jason Lee and Mark Gonzalez. Winstan has since documented the London skateboarding scene whilst being an active skateboarder, supplying footage to skateboarding films like 411 Video Magazine, Puzzle Video Magazine, Underworld Element Skypager.

Winstan made his debut documentary feature film *Rollin' Through The Decades* in the mid 20s and *You Can't Move History* in the mid 2010s.

### **About Keep Rolling Project**

Keep Rolling Project combines skateboarding and education to empower under represented communities. The project delivers skate lessons, events and workshops, and supports the development of new skateboard coaches through the International Skateboarding Certification Program.

The name Keep Rolling Project is not just about getting more people on boards. It is also a pun on rolling film. Both Aurore and Rachael have backgrounds in television production and photography, so the aim has always been to ensure women are represented not only in front of the camera, but behind it as well, shaping how skate culture is documented and archived.

Keep Rolling Project created a mini documentary series for Skateism in collaboration with Nike SB, titled Collectives. This was an independently produced series that documented grassroots skate communities from London to Iraqi Kurdistan. Alongside commissioned work, Keep Rolling Project produces a self funded skate travel series, A Girl Skate Guide, which documents female skate collectives around the globe.

### **About Lev Tanju**

As the founder of streetwear powerhouse Palace, Lev Tanju is responsible for London's most prominent and buzzed-about skate company. Tanju started skating around London in 1998, living in skate houses and selling skate bits and bobs to get by. He was a founding member of the PWBC ('Palace Wayward Boys Choir'): a skate gang formed in the mid-2000s in a semi-derelict house in Waterloo nicknamed "The Palace." From these squalorous beginnings in SE1, Tanju launched his brand, which today has shops in London, New York, Tokyo, Los Angeles, Seoul, Osaka, Fukuoka and Hong Kong.

### **About Sofia Negra**

Sofia Negri is an animator who has focused on skateboarding and the culture around it. After getting her BA in Animation from Middlesex University in 2020, she is a freelance animator in London. She has worked with a variety of clients including the Roundhouse, Meta, Amnesty International and Save The Children. She's directed, animated and produced *The Skatebook*, an independent animated documentary which got her the Emerging Filmmaker Prize from the Roundhouse and the Wiggin Foundation and a nomination from the BFI Future Film Festival.

### **About Dan Magee**

After moving to London from Bedfordshire in 1994, Dan Magee spent several years skateboarding at the Undercroft during his University years. It was here he made the connections to start Blueprint Skateboards, which is known as the most influential U.K based skateboarding brand during the Mid 90s to 2010. Dan and the skaters he filmed, paved the way for skateboard brands and skateboard filmmakers in the U.K today. His most notable works within skateboarding are : *Waiting For The World* : 1999 / 2000 *First Broadcast* : 2000 / 2001 (with Adam Mondon) *Lost & Found* : 2005 (with Neil Chester) *Make Friends With The Colour Blue* : 2010 (with Neil Chester & Dane Crook).

Now working in advertising and commercial content, Dan combines skills he learned from the skateboarding world with the network he has grown from both sides of his life. In this film, Dan revisits the Undercroft and its surrounding areas with shared experiences and his own archival footage, exploring how skateboarding existed at The Southbank before it became an official skate space.

### **About Beatrice Dillon**

Beatrice Dillon is an artist working in composition, performance, and installation. Her practice uses digital synthesis and acoustic instrumentation, across projects varying in scale: from intimate, experimental pieces to large-scale, multi-speaker commissions. Space, restraint, and pattern are central elements in her work, which balances precision and unpredictability. Originally trained in fine art, she draws from interests including Japanese aesthetic philosophies and the rhythm languages of different music traditions.

Her work has been presented internationally in museums, concert halls, clubs, and festivals. Recent projects include: 'Workaround' (PAN, 2020), 'Impossible Ideal Angle' (Haus der Kunst, Munich, 2022), 'Sift: Piano, Vibraphone, Other...' (London Symphony Orchestra, 2024), 'Seven Reorganisations' for Explore Ensemble (HI, 2024), and 'Basho' (Portraits GRM, 2025) commissioned for Acousmonium sound-diffusion system, Ina GRM Paris. She was soundtrack composer for Helen Marten at Art Basel, Paris 2025. Dillon's new work for synthesis and acoustic ensemble premieres Spring 2026.

### **About Jack Brooks**

Jack Brooks is a seasoned documentarian and videographer with over a decade of experience capturing London's skateboarding scene. His work is renowned for its raw, unedited charm. Jack has been filming for Palace Skateboards for over a decade now.

He has always had a hunger for the latest media, and a deep knowledge of, and reverence for, videos. This passion has inspired, informed, and enriched his own work for a company whose appreciation for our culture is unsurpassed. As well as filming for Palace, Jack is also in charge of the video archives. He has diligently sifted through numerous tapes, meticulously cataloguing the footage. This has made him an invaluable resource with a comprehensive memory of some serious skateboarding history. He delved into those archives for *Skate 50*, and we greatly appreciate the insights he shared into the process behind the ender to one of our favorite parts of all time.

### **About the Southbank Centre**

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre, occupying 11 acres along the river and its 4 venues anchor London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. We exist to present great cultural experiences that bring people together and we achieve this by providing the space for artists to create and present their best work and by creating a place where as many people as possible can come together to experience bold, unusual and eye-opening work. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. Southbank Centre is made up of the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as being home to the National Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. It is also home to 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 PUSH PLAY at BFI Southbank**

19-21 June 2026. Further details of the BFI Southbank programme in venue and online will be announced in late March. [Tickets](#) for BFI Southbank screenings are on sale to BFI Patrons on 5 May, BFI Members on 6 May, and to the general public on 8 May.



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