

# SOUTHBANK CENTRE

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## Press Release

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Contact: [debra.johnson@southbankcentre.co.uk](mailto:debra.johnson@southbankcentre.co.uk); [susannah.browning@southbankcentre.co.uk](mailto:susannah.browning@southbankcentre.co.uk)

Images: [HERE](#)

Listings: [HERE](#)

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## Southbank Centre unveils Unlimited festival programme with focus on climate change, identity and marginalised experiences

- Jess Thom curates socially distanced cabaret **Touretteshero's Masked Ball** embracing facemasks artistically and practically to protect the most vulnerable, alongside other Covid-19 measures
- Thought-provoking shows include **Leave The Light On For Me**, Mind the Gap's outdoor performance about climate change, and Sonny Nwachukwu's **Saturn Returns**, explores the subconsciousness of relationships, drawing on Black culture
- **BODIES**, created by Ray Young, considers our relationship with water in a unique performance installation in a swimming pool. Audiences are invited to get involved.
- Trade peculiarities produced by Brexit are explored in artwork **Brexit Sausages**, by Belfast-based Japanese artist Shiro Masuyama
- Watch free films onsite and online including **The Empire's Old Clothes**, **On Black Pain** and **Unpredictable Bodies**
- Enjoy free events including Heart n Soul's **Do Your Own Thing Daytime Disco**, and entertainment for families: Corali dance company's fantastical **Super Hot Hot Dog** and **The Shoes of Tanbury**, inspired by a book written by Lilac Yosiphon's grandfather Shimon Ballas, an Arab-Jewish writer born and raised in Baghdad



L-R: image credits **The Empire's Old Clothes** © whatsthebigmistry, Photographer Simon Alleyne; **The Shoes of Tanbury** © Lidia Crisafulli

The Southbank Centre's biennial **Unlimited**, the major UK festival celebrating the work of disabled artists in partnership with the Unlimited commissioning fund, today announces details of its ambitious

multi-art programme platforming the extraordinary creative work of artists who identify as being disabled, D/deaf, neurodivergent and those experiencing chronic illness or mental health conditions.

The five-day festival features new commissions, bespoke one-off events and existing work and includes a huge variety of events from a socially distanced cabaret **Touretteshero's Masked Ball** (Fri 9 Sept), curated by theatre-maker and comedian Jess Thom, to an immersive sound and light performance **BODIES** (Thurs 8 Sept), taking place in a swimming pool in Leytonstone. The festival programme runs from 7-11 September 2022 and includes events spanning performance, dance, cabaret, music, visual art, film, talks and workshops. Unlimited is accessible to all, with over 50% of the programme available for free, plus 11 events which can be experienced digitally at home.

This is the first in-person Unlimited festival since 2018, with an increased focus on digital access. The Southbank Centre has been presenting the Unlimited festival since 2012 in partnership with Unlimited.

**Ruth Hardie, Head of Public Programming at the Southbank Centre**, says: "We're delighted to be hosting another Unlimited festival celebrating the incredible artistic vision and creativity of disabled artists. This year's festival includes amazing work commissioned by our partner Unlimited, and we've designed it to be as accessible as possible. Disabled artists and audiences were particularly hard hit by Covid-19, so we wanted to ensure people can experience the creative work, in a safe and appropriate way for them. We're offering a wide variety of free, ticketed and online events for all ages and interests, so we encourage everyone to get involved."

**Jo Verrent, Director of Unlimited**, says: "We can't wait for this edition of the Southbank Centre's Unlimited festival to start. We know the impact it can make on a disabled artist's career and we are exceptionally pleased to see so many of our commissioned artists being featured. This festival is a melting pot of art, debate and connection for our whole community. Which is why we are excited to offer an updated industry strand with new ways for our UK and international colleagues to connect. After the last few years, it's brilliant to have an in-person festival with great online access and specific events for those of us who are remaining masked and socially distanced (like me and many of our team and artists!)."

Full event listings are available [here](#).

## PERFORMANCE & DANCE

Mask up for a socially distanced celebration of mask-wearing and cabaret performance **Touretteshero's Masked Ball** curated by Jess Thom. Expect a mischievous, accessible, multisensory evening with an emphasis on laughter and imagination. The event will be held in the Royal Festival Hall's The Clore Ballroom and there will be additional precautions in place for those at higher risk from COVID-19. Head poolside and dive into a unique sound and performance installation **BODIES**, created by Ray Young. Commissioned by Unlimited, this immersive water, light and soundscape environment investigates the experiences of our relationships with water. Come be an active audience member in Leytonstone Leisure Centre's swimming pool (Thurs 8 September). **Leave The Light On For Me** is a joyous, rebellious outdoor performance taking on climate change and justice from the perspective of artists with learning disabilities and autism. This physical theatre performance from Mind the Gap aims to make an overwhelming issue accessible and inspire

everyone to do their part (Sat 10 - Sun 11 Sept). Using music, dance and spoken word, **Saturn Returns** is a 'choreopoem' that explores the subconsciousness of relationships, drawing on Black culture. Written and directed by Sonny Nwachukwu, Saturn Returns delves into an astral projection reality where the characters of Ada and Obi, take on forms of past, present, and future lives (Wed 7 - Thurs 8 September, and available to stream).

## VISUAL ARTS

The trade peculiarities produced by Brexit get a grilling in this new artwork **Brexit Sausages** from Belfast-based Japanese artist Shiro Masuyama. The free art installation in the Royal Festival Hall deploys giant sausages in reference to the Northern Ireland Protocol, and its effect on sausage trade between Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Using storytelling, archives, audio recordings and sound design, **HEAR** by Hassun El Zafar, creates a narrative linking ecosystems' shrinking biodiversity to hearing loss. Experience three diverse ecosystems: the mangroves of The United Arab Emirates, the tropical rainforests of Borneo and a Yorkshire woodland (Wed 7 - Thurs 8 September). Major new commission **The Archive of An Unseen**, by Christopher Samuel, uses audio, video and images, to tell his life-story, growing up as a disabled, black child from a working-class background in the 1980s in the UK (Wed 7 - Sun 11 September). Hayley Williams-Hindle's **Portrait of a Brain** is a colourful, sculptural representation of a neurodiverse cognitive profile, and a chance to consider individuality of thought. Free digital street art project **Wheel Trails**, by artist Joseph Wilk, is a way for users of mobility wheels to digitally graffiti the world and is a response to the disability created through badly designed societies (Sat 10 September).

## MUSIC

Unafraid of straying from the classical pianist's usual path, **Ruth McGinley** plays Philip Glass, Eric Satie, Chick Corea and reimagined folk songs by composer Neil Martin. Ruth McGinley is a highly sought-after collaborator who has worked with musicians from backgrounds including jazz, folk and electronic (Thurs 8 September). Musician John Kelly, who is launching his first solo album, will be playing his own stirring, heartfelt music alongside friends and musical guests in **John Kelly & Friends Live** (Fri 9 September, and available to stream). **Hero & Leander** from Jack Dean & Company sees six multi-instrumentalists tell an epic seaside tale through songs encompassing folk, indie, sea shanties and choral music (Sun 11 Sept, and available to stream). Bring your best moves to **Do Your Own Thing Daytime Disco**, a free party with Heart n Soul's Do Your Own Thing DJs, with dancing, performances and their favourite tracks (Sat 10 September).

## FAMILY EVENTS

Visit the seaside with Corali dance company, sharing extracts from their fantastical new free family show **Super Hot Hot Dog**. There will also be fun and inclusive workshops with elements inspired by the fantastical seaside world. Corali is a leader in dance created by artists with a learning disability (Sun, 11 September). See a bilingual adaptation of **The Shoes of Tanbury**, inspired by a book written by director and theatre-maker Lilac Yosiphon's grandfather Shimon Ballas, an Arab-Jewish writer born and raised in Baghdad. This free event, performed in English and British Sign Language, features extracts from the show and audiences are invited to creatively share their thoughts to help the company shape the work in the future (Sun 11 September).

## ONLINE

Join us for free online screenings of eye-opening films commissioned for Unlimited. Unpack the myths and propaganda around the British Empire with a short film **The Empire's Old Clothes**, by multidisciplinary artist whatsthebigmistry. Jameisha Prescod's poetic essay film **On Black Pain** tells intimate stories of three Black people living with chronic pain, while reflecting on the colonial past of modern medicine. Sam Metz's animation **Unpredictable Bodies** explores the repetitive movements of neurodivergence, depicting unusual body movements or noises and tics through gestural line forms and dancing.

Designed to be experienced online at home, **THIRST TRAP** is part narrative, part meditation on the theme of climate change. The 30-minute sound piece comes with an experience pack of resources to change your environment (Wed 7 - Sun 18 Sept). **Saturn Returns, John Kelly & Friends Live** and **Hero & Leander** will also be available to stream online via DICE for a week after the festival finishes.

Especially for the Unlimited festival, South London brewery Ignition Brewery, which employs and trains people with learning difficulties, will be brewing a beer with a label designed by adults with learning disabilities.

Tickets go on sale to Southbank Centre Members on Tuesday July 5 and to the general public on Wednesday, July 6 [www.southbankcentre.co.uk](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk) / 020 3879 9555

# ENDS #

**For further press information please contact:**

[debra.johnson@southbankcentre.co.uk](mailto:debra.johnson@southbankcentre.co.uk)

[susannah.browning@southbankcentre.co.uk](mailto:susannah.browning@southbankcentre.co.uk)

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## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **Unlimited festival at the Southbank Centre**

Celebrating the artistic vision and creativity of disabled artists. Featuring outstanding dance, performance, comedy, music and visual art, the biennial festival showcases ambitious creative projects by disabled artists and companies. We've been presenting the Unlimited festival since 2012 in partnership with the Unlimited commissioning fund. The festival showcases new commissions, bespoke one off events and existing work. By using the term 'disabled artist' our festival includes work by artists who identify as being disabled, D/deaf, neurodivergent and those experiencing chronic illness, mental health conditions, and more. We understand that different people prefer different terminology and we subscribe to the social model of disability.

### **Access at the Unlimited festival**

Access services are available throughout the festival and are included on individual event pages. These include:

British Sign Language Interpretation; Captioning; Speech-to-Text Transcription; Relaxed Performance Audio Description; Touch Tour. Assistance is available for blind and visually impaired visitors. Please ask at the Welcome Desk, Level 2, Royal Festival Hall, for details. BSL-interpreted and Speech-to-Text transcribed events have allocated seats with clear sight lines to the interpreter or text screen. For BSL-interpreted performances, please email [accesslist@southbankcentre.co.uk](mailto:accesslist@southbankcentre.co.uk) rather than booking through the website.

### About the Southbank Centre

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre occupying a prominent riverside location that sits in the midst of 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. We want to take people out of the everyday, every day. 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/)

### Unlimited

Unlimited is an arts commissioning body that supports, funds and promotes new work by disabled artists for UK and international audiences. Our mission is to commission extraordinary work from disabled artists that will change and challenge the world. Funded by Arts Council England, Creative Scotland, Arts Council of Wales, Paul Hamlyn Foundation and British Council, since 2013, Unlimited has supported over 460 artists with over £4.9 million reaching audiences of over 5 million making it the largest supporter of disabled artists world-wide.

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