



Press Release

Date: Wednesday 30 November 2022, 10am

Contact: Naomi.O'Toole@southbankcentre.co.uk

Images: [HERE](#)

Festival listings: [HERE](#)

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

Southbank Centre unveils Imagine Children's Festival's packed programme of creative experiences

- Live events include CBeebies' **YolanDa's Band Jam**, magician and TV presenter **Stephen Mulhern**, World's Youngest DJ **DJ Archie** and scientists **Ben Garrod** and **Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock**
- Children's literature events with **Michael Rosen**, **Cressida Cowell** and **Zanib Mian**.
- Theatre highlights include Julia Donaldson's **Tales from Acorn Wood**, **Hermit** and **Dinosaurs and All That Rubbish**
- Imagine collaborates with Hackney street artist **STIK** for free printmaking and the chance to contribute to the artist's latest art series
- Multi-artform line-up spans music, storytelling, comedy, poetry, dance and interactive activities, with **50% of events available for free**
- For the first time, all events across the festival are **relaxed**, allowing a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all



L-R: Underwater © Celia Topping; YolanDa's Band Jam © Image courtesy of YolanDa's Band Jam, Cressida Cowell © Pete Woodhead.

The Southbank Centre's annual **Imagine Children's Festival** returns from 8-18 February 2023 with a vibrant cross-arts programme, offering creative and playful experiences for families to make memories together and enjoy the February half term.

Imagine Children's Festival is London's leading arts festival for children aged 0-11 years, with a programme bursting with music, storytelling, comedy, poetry, dance, visual arts and plenty of interactive activities. This year's Imagine is a **Relaxed festival**, meaning people are allowed to enter and leave the auditorium freely, and there is an open attitude towards audience noise and movement. In addition, there are specific sensory adapted shows, BSL-interpreted and non-verbal performances programmed, allowing a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all. With **over 100 events** packed into eleven days and **50% of the festival completely free**, Imagine makes world-class artistic experiences accessible for everyone.

Ruth Hardie, Head of Public Programming at the Southbank Centre, said: *"Imagine Children's Festival is about children and families exploring new ideas and experiences together and, with half of the festival's events free and all performances relaxed, the festival continues its mission; to give every child a space to play, create and express themselves."*

Imagine Children's Festival centres the importance of play and discovery so children try new things and get excited to learn more about the world around them. Hackney street artist STIK brings **STIK, STAMP** (8-16 Feb), a free workshop where families can contribute to the artist's new art series. Work can be displayed in a gallery in the Royal Festival Hall or taken home to keep. Children can discover the joy of music with a live stage performance of the critically-acclaimed CBeebies TV Show, **YolanDa's Band Jam** (14 Feb) or party with 7-year-old **DJ Archie**, the current Guinness World Record holder for the World's Youngest Club DJ, in **Daytime Rave with DJ Archie and friends** (11 Feb). **The One and Everything Family Trail** (8-17 Feb) is an adventure to discover mysterious scripts, secret alphabets and learn about the world's endangered languages, inspired by award-winning author Sam Winston. Children can get writing and drawing with Cressida Cowell, the award-winning Children's Laureate and creator of the *How to Train Your Dragon* franchise in **Magic and Dragons with Cressida Cowell** (12 Feb). Beloved duo Jarrod and Hobbit bring a new action-packed beatboxing and comedy hoopla, **The Mighty Kids Comedy Beatbox Show Strikes Back!** (15 Feb) while classical music comes from the Aurora Orchestra's **Debussy and the Snow Elephant** (12-13 Feb), a much-loved storytelling concert with beautiful chamber arrangements.

Dance for families is woven throughout Imagine Children's Festival with enchanting story-based shows. South Asian Beeja Dance Company brings **Choogh Choogh** (11-12 Feb), a show about the joy of travelling through India on a train told by experts in the Indian classical dance form bharatanatyam. BalletLORENT perform **Rapunzel** (17-18 Feb), a dynamic reimagining of the classic fairytale by former Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy, with local school children performing alongside the company. Corali Dance Company bring the premiere of their first family show, **Super Hot Hot Dog** (14 Feb). Corali are leaders in dance by artists with a learning disability and this family show sees an ice cream seller at the seaside share the strange world of mysterious sea creatures below. **Underwater** (8-10 Feb) dives deeper into the sea and follows a ballerina discovering the underwater world. This multi-sensory dance-theatre piece is a comforting world of blue lights and bubbles created especially for under 2s.

Scientists, TV personalities and poets spark curiosity with journeys into STEM, literature and poetry. Star and Space Scientist and presenter of BBC's Sky at Night, Dr Maggie Aderin-Pocock gives a talk with mind-blowing insights from her latest book **Am I Made of Stardust?** (15 Feb). **Ben Garrod: EXTINCT** (15 Feb) sees the TV Evolutionary Biologist tell the story of life on Earth with his trademark humour, while gamer and author Janelle McCurdy leads a writing workshop inspired by video games and films, **Harness your superpowers with Janelle McCurdy** (12 Feb). TV star and magician **Stephen Mulhern** also brings his Sunday Times bestselling debut *Max Magic* series to life with readings and magic (15 Feb). The National Poetry Library hosts **Poems Go Zoom** (13 Feb) and **Poems with Pizzazz!** (13 Feb), helping children write and perform poems that celebrate outer-space, the natural world and who we are with critically-acclaimed children's poets, including Alex Wharton. Theatre highlights include **Tales from Acorn Wood** (8-10 Feb) which brings Julia Donaldson and Axel Scheffler's beloved stories to life on stage for the first time. From Holland comes the London premiere of **Hermit** (15-16 Feb), a hilarious non-verbal show about a tiny house and its strange inhabitant. Award winning theatre company Rhum + Clay bring their kaleidoscopic show **Everything Has Changed** (18 Feb) combining physical theatre, humour and spoken word, made in consultation with a child psychologist and children across London.

Free Events Highlights Include:

- **Daily Trails and Workshops:** One & Everything Family Trail (8-17 Feb), STIK, STAMP (8-16) and Wellbeing Wind Down (12-17 Feb).
- **Dance and Performance:** Rise and Fall (9 Feb), Rhymes LIVE (10 Feb) and The Marvellous Myth Hunters (12 Feb).
- **Cloze Ballroom Takeovers:** Daytime Rave with DJ Archie and Friends (11 Feb), ZooNation Youth Company's Hip-Hop Half-Term (15 Feb) and Top Draw (17 Feb).

Tickets go on sale to Southbank Centre Members on 1 December and to the general public on 2 December. www.southbankcentre.co.uk / 0203 879 9555.

ENDS

NOTES TO EDITORS

Full event festival listings available [HERE](#).

Press images can be downloaded [HERE](#).

For further press information please contact:

Naomi O'Toole, naomi.otoole@southbankcentre.co.uk

Louise Gilbert, louise.gilbert@southbankcentre.co.uk

Join the conversation:

#ImagineChildrensFestival

@southbankcentre

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. The 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



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

