

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

MELTDOWN

Press Release

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Images: available [here](#)

Southbank Centre announces first names for Nile Rodgers' Meltdown festival

Featuring: Nile Rodgers & CHIC, the World Premiere of Eurythmics Songbook, Despacio, Thundercat, Anitta, SOPHIE, Songhoy Blues, Alfa Mist, Durand Jones & The Indications, KOKOROKO, A Night of Studio 54 ft. 'Jellybean' Benitez and Kyle Dixon & Michael Stein performing the music of *Stranger Things*

Today Southbank Centre announces the first confirmed acts for the 26th edition of *Meltdown*, its annual festival of contemporary music and culture, the longest running artist-curated festival in the world, and Music Week Awards Best Festival 2018 nominee. This year's festival is curated by Grammy Award-winning producer, composer, guitarist, CHIC co-founder, Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Inductee, Chairman and Inductee of the Songwriters Hall of Fame and Abbey Road's first ever Chief Creative Advisor, **Nile Rodgers**, and will run from **3 - 11 August**.

Rodgers presents a festival full of exclusive collaborations, world-wide one-offs and unmissable opportunities to enjoy some of the world's best dance music this summer.

The fresh, eclectic lineup offers an unrivalled insight into the mind of one of the architects of today's musical zeitgeist. Rodgers' musical roots are celebrated through a new generation of artists: jazz is explored from the LA twang of **Thundercat** to the innovative south London scene of **KOKOROKO** and **Alfa Mist**; the revolutionary sound of Motown gets a 21st century spin from **Durand Jones & The Indications**; and the peerless disco funk of **CHIC** leads a dancefloor renaissance, including a modern reimagining of the original nightclub **Studio 54** with **DJ Jellybean Benitez**, visionary pop producer **SOPHIE**, and the state-of-the-art, vinyl-only **Despacio** soundsystem - a collaboration between 2manydjs and LCD Soundsystem's James Murphy - which puts 500 dancers at the intimate centre of 50,000 watts of optimised club listening. Befitting an icon of international influence, the festival

welcomes artists who are moving new music globally from the Brazilian pop phenomenon **Anitta** to Mali's **Songhoy Blues**. Throughout it all, Rodgers showcases the enduring power of songwriting and composing to move us from drama to the dancefloor.

Nile Rodgers, Curator, said: *"It's an honour for me to step into the shoes of David Bowie, Patti Smith, Ornette Coleman, Robert Smith and so many more to curate nine nights of amazing music for the people of London on its glorious South Bank. This is my home from home and it's given me so much love and this is my way of giving back. My prime motivation was to present incredible music from all walks of life that would make everybody dance. From CHIC to KOKOROKO and our special Studio 54 night to my boy David A. Stewart and the Eurythmics Songbook, Songhoy Blues, Despacio and the full incredible lineup, we are going to dance, dance, dance from 3 - 11 August."*

Bengi Unsal, Senior Contemporary Music Programmer, Southbank Centre, said: *"We are truly honoured to have the legendary Nile Rodgers taking the reigns of Meltdown this year, and thrilled to be able to make his dream a reality here at Southbank Centre. I'm so excited to share his lineup with the world! With new, legendary, diverse, experimental and international talent, it promises something to enjoy - and something to discover for everyone this summer."*

Rodgers opens the festival on Saturday 3 August in his own inimitable style: with a massive disco all-nighter. Taking to the Royal Festival Hall stage, **Nile Rodgers & CHIC**, the musical legend and the incomparable disco hit-makers, perform a special show exclusively for *Meltdown*. Afterwards, audiences immerse themselves in a legend of disco culture, as Southbank Centre recreates the notorious New York nightclub **Studio 54** - *"The hippest place on the planet"* according to Rodgers - on the banks of the River Thames. For one night only the Queen Elizabeth Hall foyer is transformed into the seminal Manhattan venue complete with state-of-the-art soundsystem, go-go dancers and original Studio 54 DJs, including the legendary producer behind Madonna, Whitney Houston, Michael Jackson and more, **'Jellybean' Benitez** (3 Aug, QEHF).

As Chairman of the Songwriters Hall of Fame and one of the most important songwriters of the last 40 years, great songs and songwriting are at the heart of Rodgers' *Meltdown*. He asked one of his favourite songwriters, producers and artists - David A. Stewart - to put together an all star band and vocalists to perform **Eurythmics Songbook** - the greatest songs by one of his favourite bands - an international institution - in a worldwide exclusive (9 Aug, RFH).

Further Meltdown 2019 events announced today include:

- **THUNDERCAT:** Funk, R&B and punk all feed the surreal genius of LA-based bassist and singer Stephen Bruner aka Thundercat, who plays the Royal Festival Hall in a 2019 European exclusive (Sunday 4 August, RFH)
- **KOKOROKO:** Hotly-tipped London-based Afrobeat 8-piece, fresh from their eponymous first EP released March 2019, return to Southbank Centre after playing the Clore Ballroom in 2016 (Monday 5 August, QEH)

- **ANITTA:** Brazil's multi award-winning, record-breaking, biggest ever female pop star, the leading artist of a new generation of Latin American music, plays the Royal Festival Hall in her 2019 UK festival exclusive (Tuesday 6 August, RFH)
- **DURAND JONES & THE INDICATIONS:** Super slick modern Motown, from a band of highly skilled Indiana-based twenty-somethings (Tuesday 6 August, QEH)
- **KYLE DIXON & MICHAEL STEIN PERFORM THE MUSIC OF *STRANGER THINGS*:** Live performance of the soundtrack to the cult TV hit, by the award-winning composers themselves, accompanied by a supernatural neon light show (Wednesday 7 August, RFH)
- **ALFA MIST:** Leading London-based producer, composer and musician bringing hip-hop jazz vibes to his highly acclaimed strand of neo-soul (Wednesday 7 August, QEH)
- **DESPACIO:** A specially-created 50,000-watt vinyl-only soundsystem designed by James Murphy (LCD Soundsystem, DFA Records) and David and Stephen Dewaele (Soulwax, 2manydjs). Having played just a few select events across the world, the trio will be behind the decks for two nights at Southbank Centre's Clore Ballroom - a space which has welcomed dancers for more than six decades and has a capacity of just 500 - for an intimate club listening experience like no other (Friday 9 & Saturday 10 August, Clore Ballroom)
- **SOPHIE:** The British born, LA-based singer, songwriter, DJ and producer radically changed the music industry with the release of her progressive, extrasensory pop in 2012. Now a mutable and visionary artist at the top of her craft, she joins the *Meltdown* line-up with a unique and unmissable live show in the Royal Festival Hall (Saturday 10 August, RFH)
- **SONGHYOY BLUES:** Blistering Malian desert rock with tight, attacking riffs, jangling funk guitar, dance-floor brass and moves to kill, Songhoy Blues rock the Royal Festival Hall for the closing night of *Meltdown 2019* (Sunday 11 August, RFH)
- **Many more to be announced!**

Southbank Centre's *Meltdown* festival is famous for bringing to life the vision of a different musical legend each year as Curator. Nile Rodgers follows in the footsteps of 25 artists selected to share their vision – from the very first curator, British composer George Benjamin in 1993, through other luminaries such as Laurie Anderson, John Peel, David Bowie, Nick Cave, Patti Smith, Massive Attack, Ornette Coleman, Yoko Ono, David Byrne, M.I.A and, in 2018, Robert Smith.

#ENDS#

Nile Rodgers' *Meltdown*: 3-11 August 2019
Southbank Centre, London, UK

Tickets will go on sale to Southbank Centre Members on 13 May and to the general public on 14 May
www.southbankcentre.co.uk/meltdown / 0203 879 9555

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

Read the Curator announcement [here](#).

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FULL LIST OF ANNOUNCED ACTS BELOW – MORE TO FOLLOW IN COMING MONTHS

NILE RODGERS & CHIC - Saturday 3 August, 7.30pm, Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, £45 - £90

A NIGHT OF STUDIO 54 - Saturday 3 August, 10.30pm, Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall Foyer, £50

THUNDERCAT - Sunday 4 August, 7.30pm, Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, £30 - £35

KOKOROKO - Monday 5 August, 7.30pm, Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall, £25

ANITTA - Tuesday 6 August, 7.30pm, Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, £35 - £75

DURAND JONES & THE INDICATIONS - Tuesday 6 August, 7.30pm, Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall, £15

KYLE DIXON & MICHAEL STEIN PERFORMING THE MUSIC OF STRANGER THINGS -
Wednesday 7 August, 7.30pm, Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, £27.50 - £35

ALFA MIST - Wednesday 7 August, 7.30pm, Southbank Centre's Queen Elizabeth Hall, £18

EURYTHMICS SONGBOOK - Friday 9 August, 7.30pm, Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, £50 - £75

SOPHIE - Saturday 10 August, 7.30pm, Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, £25 - £35

DESPACIO - Friday 9 & Saturday 10 August, 10.30pm, Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall Clore Ballroom, £50

SONGHOY BLUES - Sunday 11 August, 7.30pm, Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall, £25 - £35

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Nile Rodgers + CHIC

Among music legends, Nile Rodgers is truly exceptional. He amplifies his legacy as a multiple GRAMMY-winning composer, producer, arranger and guitarist by constantly traversing new musical terrain and successfully expanding the boundaries of popular music. As the co-founder of CHIC and the newly elected Chairman of the Songwriters Hall of Fame, Rodgers pioneered a musical language that generated chart-topping hits like "Le Freak," (the biggest selling single in the history of Atlantic Records!) and sparked the advent of hip-hop with "Good Times". Nile Rodgers transcends all styles of music across every generation with a body of work that's garnered him inductions into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame (2017) and the Songwriters Hall of Fame (2016).

Most recently, he was appointed as the first ever Chief Creative Advisor for the legendary Abbey Road Studios to cap off a year that has included "festival best" performances at both Glastonbury and Coachella that resulted in the BBC nominating the band for the BBC Music Awards as "Best Live Performance Of 2017" and the LA Times stating "Nile Rodgers influence stretches all over Coachella, beaming the sound of a better future".

His work in the CHIC Organization and his productions for artists like David Bowie, Diana Ross, and Madonna have sold over 500 million albums and 75 million singles worldwide while his innovative, trendsetting collaborations with Daft Punk, Avicii, Sigala, Disclosure, and Sam Smith reflect the vanguard of contemporary music. Nile Rodgers & CHIC recently released their first new studio album, "It's About Time" in over 26 years to critical acclaim and a Top 10 position in the UK album charts.

***Meltdown*, 1993 – present**

Southbank Centre's annual *Meltdown* festival has been running since 1993 and is the longest-running artist-curated festival in the world. Each year Southbank Centre invites a different cultural figure to act as curator and select performers and events of their choosing. Previous curators include George Benjamin, Louis Andriessen, Elvis Costello, Magnus Lindberg, Laurie Anderson, John Peel, Nick Cave, Scott Walker, Robert Wyatt, David Bowie, Lee Scratch-Perry, Morrissey, Patti Smith, Jarvis Cocker, Massive Attack, Ornette Coleman, Richard Thomson, Ray Davies, Anohni, Yoko Ono, James Lavelle, David Byrne, Guy Garvey, M.I.A and Robert Smith. Previous performers include Philip Glass, Lou Reed, Ivor Cutler, Sonic Youth, Suicide, Nina Simone, Blur, Radiohead, David Gilmour, Coldplay, Mercury Rev, Television, The Dandy Warhols, The Polyphonic Spree, The Yeah Yeah Yeahs, Nancy Sinatra, Bert Jansch, Jeff Beck, John Cale, Iggy & The Stooges, Motorhead, Massive Attack, Moby, Nine Inch Nails, The Libertines, The Cure and Femi Kuti. *Meltdown* has a reputation for staging one-off performances and collaborations by legendary artists. Patti Smith performed 'Horses' in full for her *Meltdown*; Ray Davies re-staged the TV pop show 'Ready Steady Go!'; Jeff Buckley played his final UK show at Elvis Costello's *Meltdown*; The New York Dolls reunited for Morrissey; Nick Cave, Grace Jones and Pete Doherty sang Disney songs with Jarvis Cocker; and a rare live performance from Cocteau Twins' Elizabeth Fraser was part of Anohni's *Meltdown*. *Meltdown* is overseen by Southbank Centre Senior Contemporary Music Programmer, Bengi Ünsal.

About Southbank Centre

Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre and one of the UK's top five visitor attractions, occupying a 17 acre site 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 four Resident Orchestras (London Philharmonic Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, London Sinfonietta and Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment) and four Associate Orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra and National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain).