



Press Release

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Southbank Centre announces free public events for Christine and the Queens' Meltdown



L-R: Faggamuffin Bloc Party © Haruki, Faggamuffin 2022; Sisu © Rob Jones

The **Southbank Centre** today announces an ambitious free multi-artform programme as part of **Christine and the Queens** highly anticipated **Meltdown** festival, taking place this summer, Friday 9 June until Sunday 18 June.

This year's Meltdown is a celebration of Christine and the Queens' vibrant creative vision, showcasing an extraordinary programme from trailblazing artists who are pushing the boundaries with their fearless self-expression. As part of the Southbank Centre's ongoing commitment to deliver free culture for everyone, there will be a broad range of activities on

offer for all to enjoy, from live performance theatre and cabaret nights to immersive activities and multi-sensory events. Christine and the Queens' free programme brings colour, joy and unity to London this summer and further cements the Southbank Centre's mission to support creatives by providing a range of spaces for artists to platform their work.

To kick-start the first weekend of the festival, dub collective **Faggamuffin Bloc Party** return to the outdoor Riverside Terrace on Friday 9 June for an electric evening that celebrates the visibility of LGBTQI+ people of African and Caribbean heritage. Showcasing their most prestigious talent, DJs will fill the space with afro-beats and pulsating sounds.

On Saturday 10 June, **Rain Crew** calls all dancers to the floor for their legendary *Summer Jam* in an electric programme of movement workshops and hip-hop dance battles, not to mention a battle prize pot of £500 to the winning duo. True to the spirit of this year's curator, Rain Crew aims to spotlight underrepresented voices, engage with new cultural perspectives that challenge the status quo as well as delivering opportunities for dancers who are using hip hop as a vehicle for social change.

Across both Sundays, we have 'Reign Down', a celebratory party that starts with leading DJ **The She Jay** who brings **We Are Dopamine** collective to the terrace for a day of skilful sets on the decks on Sunday 11 June, transforming the site for play and nostalgic connection, with games and activities for audiences to get involved in. Get ready for a plethora of music genres from modern grime and techno to disco and soul. Meanwhile on Sunday 18 June, female and non-binary DJ collective **Loud LDN** deliver an electric afternoon of drum and bass and synth pop.

Christine and the Kings with Pecs and Sisu takes the helm for the final weekend of Meltdown. On Friday 16 June, Sisu will host a stimulating mix of club and electronic music from leading DJs in the underground music scene alongside **Pecs Drag Kings**, a female/non binary theatre company who produce raucous cabaret shows for the LGBTQ+ community. Sisu have gained international recognition by building partnerships with a breadth of artists across the globe, alongside delivering an inspirational education programme for young creatives. At the heart of Sisu's work is the nurturing of new talent entering the electronic music community, a continuation of the Southbank Centre's relationship with Sisu and their ongoing support of their initiatives.

To close Christine and the Queens' Meltdown, **The Bitten Peach** arrives on Saturday 17 June showcasing an eclectic mix of drag, burlesque, spoken-word and circus on the Riverside Terrace. As the first Queer Pan-Asian Cabaret production company in the UK, their mission is to amplify voices from the queer Asian community through powerful storytelling and disruptive art. Founded in 2019 by ShayShay, Lilly Snatchdragon & Evelyn Carnate, The Bitten Peach has taken the UK cabaret scene by storm for being bold and unafraid to tackle major socio-political issues in society. They reached critical acclaim in 2022 for their Netflix documentary *Peach Paradise* which placed them at the forefront of subversive queer South Asian cinema and for their riotous performance at Glastonbury last summer.

Head of Public Programming at the Southbank Centre, Ruth Hardie, commented: "*We are hugely excited to be working with Christine and the Queens as this year's Meltdown Curator. Together, we're presenting an expansive programme of free events, with exceptional artists who can in the words of our curator "rejuvenate and enliven our souls!" From DJ sets in summer sun, late night cabaret, dance battles and immersive multi-sensory experiences, there's something for everyone.*"

The latest additions to the Meltdown line-up include leading queer performance company **Milk Presents** in association with **Trans Creative** collective, who support Christine and the Queens with their acclaimed cabaret extravaganza, 'Trans Filth and Joy', in the Royal

Festival Hall. On 9 June, indie pop band **Girl Ray** support Django Django in the Royal Festival Hall, with Nigerian singer **Shaé Universe** supporting serpentwithfeet in the Queen Elizabeth Hall Foyer. on Sunday 11 June, **Metteson** open for Let's Eat Grandma while, the following day, R&B artist **Amie Blue** supports Warpaint in the Royal Festival Hall (12 June). In the Queen Elizabeth Hall, **Zola Jesus** shares her primal and experimental pop to support Johnny Jewel (14 June), while globally renowned DJ, **Avalon Emerson & The Charm** supports Bat for Lashes (15 June).

As previously announced, audiences are invited to take part in **BitterSuite's** mischievous and multisensory experience that challenges your curiosity and imagination in *Bodies Tilted*, which takes over the Clore Ballroom throughout the festival (Sunday 11, Monday 12, Wednesday 14 and Sunday 18 June). Ticketed audience members will be blindfolded and guided on a visceral journey that explores breath work, movement and touch while onlookers can take part of this exciting performance as onlookers in the free-but-ticketed *Witness Bodies Tilted*, exploring the choreography of each dancer and the participants' reaction. The experience will be accompanied by Chris's enriching soundscape that blends strings and mesmerising vocals.

ENDS

For further press information, please contact:

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IMAGES

Artist images: available to download [here](#)

Listings: available [here](#)

NOTES TO EDITORS

Meltdown, 1993 – present

The Southbank Centre's award-winning Meltdown festival has been running annually since 1993 and is the longest-running artist-curated festival in the world. Each year the Southbank Centre invites a different cultural figure to act as curator and select performers and events of their choosing. Previous curators are: Grace Jones, Nile Rodgers, Robert Smith, M.I.A., Guy Garvey, David Byrne, James Lavelle, Yoko Ono, Anohni, Ray Davies, Richard Thomson, Ornette Coleman, Massive Attack, Jarvis Cocker, Patti Smith, Morrissey, Lee Scratch-Perry, David Bowie, Robert Wyatt, Scott Walker, Nick Cave, John Peel, Laurie Anderson, Magnus Lindberg, Elvis Costello, Louis Andriessen and George Benjamin. 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*. Robert Smith's 2018 *Meltdown* was nominated for Music Week Awards Festival of the Year and won the AIM Independent Music Awards 'Act of Independence' Award.

About the Southbank Centre

The Southbank Centre is Europe's largest arts centre and engages the most diverse audiences of any performing arts organisation in the UK. The Royal Festival Hall is the lasting legacy of the 1951 Festival of Britain and the ambition and values of that project - that arts, ideas, innovation and culture should be available and accessible to everyone - remain its guiding principles today. It is uniquely able to offer a wide-ranging, inclusive and excellent artistic programme across our four venues and free outdoor spaces that covers visual arts, music of all kinds, dance, performance and spoken word. It's home to the National Poetry Library, the National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP) and six resident orchestras.

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