

# SOUTHBANK CENTRE

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## Press release

**Date:** Tuesday 6 February 2018, 9am

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## Robert Smith to curate the 25th year of Southbank Centre's Meltdown



© Andy Vella

Southbank Centre today announces the curator of its 25th Meltdown festival: The Cure's Robert Smith, promising a line-up of unique performances in the intimate and iconic Southbank Centre settings from 15-24 June 2018.

He will follow in the footsteps of 24 legendary artists selected to share their vision as curators of Meltdown - from the very first curator, British composer George Benjamin in 1993, through other luminaries such as John Peel, David Bowie, Nick Cave, Patti Smith, Massive Attack, Ray Davies, Yoko Ono and David Byrne to the most recent curator, M.I.A in 2017.

Robert Smith is the lead singer, guitarist, lyricist and principal songwriter of The Cure, and its only constant member since the group's formation in 1978. One of popular music's defining bands and an international phenomenon, The Cure's path to commercial success took the Alternative Rock genre mainstream around the world. The band has influenced the history of music and wider popular culture over a staggeringly successful 40-year career, releasing 13 studio albums, more than 40 singles and performing around 1,500 concerts to date, garnering numerous awards along the way including a Brit for Best British Band, an MTV Icon Award, a Q Inspiration Award and NME's Godlike Genius Award. Smith himself has also been presented with an Ivor Novello Award for International Achievement.

As well as leading The Cure, Smith is an iconic figure in his own right, with an influence reaching across popular culture, film, art, and fashion. Amongst his countless collaborations, he has appeared in Comedy Central's *South Park*, played guitar with Siouxsie and the Banshees and worked with Steve Severin to create The Glove's *Blue Sunshine* project, as well as performing and recording with artists as varied as David Bowie, Billy Corgan, Blink 182, The Stranglers, Placebo, Crystal Castles, Earl Slick, Chris Vrenna, Junkie XL, Faithless, Korn, Blank & Jones, 65daysofstatic and Cult Hero.

Southbank Centre's Meltdown is the longest running artist-curated music festival in the UK. It has an unparalleled reputation among artists and is famed for providing a stage for exclusive collaborations and intimate, once-in-a-lifetime musical experiences for diverse audiences. Jeff Buckley played his final UK show at Elvis Costello's *Meltdown*; The New York Dolls reunited for Morrissey's curation; and an all-star line up including Nick Cave, Grace Jones and Pete Doherty sang Disney songs with Jarvis Cocker in his 2007 *Meltdown*.

Robert Smith's Meltdown will be the first major festival to take place across the whole Southbank Centre site, making use of the newly re-opened Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room after two years of detailed re-design and refurbishment. Along with the iconic Royal Festival Hall, these intimate and iconic venues will provide yet more creative platforms for the next generation of bands, and provide a unique and unmissable Meltdown.

**Robert Smith** said: *"I am honoured and excited to be curating the 25th Meltdown Festival. More than 30 of my all time favourite artists - some of the most exciting, inspirational, intense and influential performers of the last 40 years - will make sure this ten-night extravaganza at London's Southbank Centre is the 'must see' event of the summer!"*

**Bengi Unsal, Senior Contemporary Music Programmer at Southbank Centre**, said: *"Robert Smith is the perfect artist to help us celebrate our silver jubilee Meltdown. Over a career spanning four decades, he has achieved globally-recognised excellence, paving the way for the alternative and the uncategorisable. This year's festival will be a celebration of that influence and that legacy. We also celebrate the legacy of Meltdown, where the legendary and the contemporary meet, where icons perform in an iconic setting, and where both artists and audiences enjoy once-in-a-lifetime experiences."*

# ENDS #

## **FIRST LINE-UP DETAILS TO BE ANNOUNCED IN MARCH**

Tickets will go on sale to Southbank Centre members on **13 March** and to everyone else on **15 March**. [www.southbankcentre.co.uk](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk) / 0203 879 9555

**For more information about Meltdown visit** [www.southbankcentre.co.uk/meltdown](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/meltdown)

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Press images can be downloaded here:

<https://bynder.southbankcentre.co.uk/m/6d57af6617f2f640/original/Robert-Smith.jpg>

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

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

### Meltdown festival, 1993 – present

Southbank Centre's annual Meltdown festival has been running since 1993, and each year invites a different cultural figure to act as director of the event and pick the performers of their choosing. Previous directors include David Bowie, Patti Smith, David Byrne, Elvis Costello, Lee Scratch-Perry, Massive Attack, Jarvis Cocker, Nick Cave, Scott Walker, John Peel, Ornette Coleman, Richard Thomson, Laurie Anderson, Yoko Ono, Ray Davies, Robert Wyatt, George Benjamin, Louis Andriessen, Magnus Lindberg, James Lavelle, Morrissey, Anohni, Guy Garvey and MIA. 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 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.

### About Southbank Centre

Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre, occupying a 17 acre site that sits in the midst of London's most vibrant cultural quarter on the South Bank of the Thames. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. Southbank Centre is home to the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room and Hayward Gallery as well as The National Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. For further information please visit [www.southbankcentre.co.uk](http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk). Southbank Centre is carrying out vital restoration work on the Hayward Gallery, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room to make the buildings fit for future generations to enjoy, more information can be found here:

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