

# SOUTHBANK CENTRE

# MELTDOWN

## Press Release

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**Contact:** Jasper Watkins, [jasper.watkins@southbankcentre.co.uk](mailto:jasper.watkins@southbankcentre.co.uk) / 07974897119

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

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## Meltdown 2024: Chaka Khan announced as festival curator as icon celebrates 50 years of music



Chaka Khan pictured in the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall © Jo Metson Scott

The **Southbank Centre** today announces that iconic singer and musician **Chaka Khan** will be the 29th curator of its annual contemporary music festival, **Meltdown**.

**Chaka Khan's Meltdown** will take place **Friday 14 June until Sunday 23 June 2024** as Khan celebrates 50 years of a pioneering career, bringing her incredible voice and global influence to the Southbank Centre during the 10-day summer festival.

**Commenting on her curatorship, Chaka Khan** said: *"Get ready to experience the heart and soul of Meltdown 2024, where the magic of music meets the warmth of community. I'm*

*beyond excited to be a part of this legacy, bringing everyone together, young and old, for a summer celebration like no other. This festival isn't just about music, it's a feast for all your senses, a gathering of hearts and souls. The Southbank Centre's about to light up! We're going to funk it up, rock every crowd, and touch every soul. It's a community celebration, an all-ages bash. Join us and immerse yourself in a world that's vibrant, diverse, and absolutely unforgettable."*

**Adem Holness, Head of Contemporary Music, Southbank Centre** said: *"Whoever said 'never meet your heroes' clearly never met Chaka Khan. I've learnt how important community, activism, love and care are to her so these ideas, along with brilliant music, will be the foundation of Meltdown. I can't believe we get to celebrate 50 years of her legendary career together. Imagine ten nights of her fabulousness, wicked sense of humour and iconic genre-defying music spread across the Southbank Centre. I personally can't wait!"*

**Mark Ball, Artistic Director, Southbank Centre** added: *"The Southbank Centre was built for the nation's enjoyment and our aim is to be the most inclusive and expressive space for our audiences. Meltdown, which takes over all of our spaces across the site truly brings that ambition to life and holds a special place in our hearts. It's a privilege to welcome icon Chaka Khan to curate the 29th edition of the festival; as an artist, activist and change-maker, her musical legacy has impacted generations and we can't wait to work with her to create another unforgettable Meltdown."*

It is impossible to categorise the irresistible charisma of Chaka Khan's vast vocal range which has earned her 10 GRAMMY® Award wins, a 2023 induction into the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and music sales and downloads in excess of 100 million. With her eponymous solo debut, *Chaka*, in 1978, Khan captured the world with her unmistakable vocals on 'I'm Every Woman' and later supercharged her success with funk band Rufus on the platinum-selling single 'Ain't Nobody' in 1983.

Breaking out on her own after the dissolution of Rufus, Khan carved an impressive path: her diverse records range from the landmark *I Feel For You* and the jazz standards of *Classikhan* with the London Symphony Orchestra to the infectious joy of 2019's *Hello Happiness*. During her career, she has worked with some of the world's most influential artists including Prince, Joni Mitchell, Stevie Wonder, Mary J. Blige, Dizzy Gillespie, Quincy Jones, and Miles Davis. In 2023, she teamed up with British indie stalwarts Bombay Bicycle Club for a new single, 'Tekken 2', and was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame for her contribution to music.

Chaka Khan will be the 29th curator to take the helm of the Southbank Centre's Meltdown, the longest-running artist-curated festival in the world. Audiences can expect a festival as joyous and diverse as Khan's catalogue with dozens of concerts across ten days and two weekends of free events and activities. The first names for **Chaka Khan's Meltdown** will be revealed in the Spring.

**Watch Chaka Khan introduce her Meltdown as she visits the Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall:**



2023's edition of the festival saw French alt-pop star Christine and the Queens present an unforgettable celebration of identity, music and culture, enjoyed by over 30,000 people with performances from Sigur Rós, Yemi Alade, Johnny Jewel, Warpaint, Lynks and many more. Watch the highlights from Christine and the Queen's Meltdown [here](#).

**#ENDS#**

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

**Meltdown 2023 images:** available to download [here](#)

For further information, please contact:

Jasper Watkins - Music Press Manager  
[jasper.watkins@southbankcentre.co.uk](mailto:jasper.watkins@southbankcentre.co.uk)

Susannah Browning - Music Press Officer  
[susannah.browning@southbankcentre.co.uk](mailto:susannah.browning@southbankcentre.co.uk)

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### **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: Christine and the Queens, 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* and Grace Jones' 2022 *Meltdown* were both nominated for Music Week Awards Festival of the Year with Smith's also winning the AIM Independent Music Awards 'Act of Independence' Award.

### **About the Southbank Centre**

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest multi-arts centre and engages the most diverse audiences of any performing arts organisation in the UK. Our biggest venue, the Royal Festival Hall (2,700 seats) is the lasting legacy of the 1951 Festival of Britain and the ambition and values of that project – that arts, ideas, innovation and culture can heal communities and should be available and accessible to everyone – are still our guiding principles today. The Southbank Centre is uniquely able to offer a wide-ranging, inclusive and world-class artistic programme spanning contemporary visual arts, music, dance, performance, literature, comedy and spoken word across the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall, Purcell Room, the Hayward Gallery and our free spaces. We are also home to the National Poetry Library, the National Academy for Social Prescribing (NASP) and six resident orchestras (Aurora Orchestra, Chineke! Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra, London Sinfonietta, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and Philharmonia Orchestra).

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