

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

Press Release

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Southbank Centre and Apple to support Black and Black Mixed heritage creative talent through partnerships in Birmingham and Manchester



(Image credits L to R): Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall © Morley von Sternberg; Factory International © OMA 24; Midlands Arts Centre © Tom Bird; Birmingham City University's STEAMhouse © BCU

The Southbank Centre and Apple today announced national partners and further details of REFRAME, its pioneering new talent development programme to support emerging Black and Black Mixed heritage creatives in London, Manchester and Birmingham. This partnership between the Southbank Centre and Apple helps address and remove the systemic barriers to career development Black creatives face in the arts and creative industries.

The ambitious programme launches with a one-year pilot project between March and August 2023 in partnership with arts venues Factory International, Manchester, Midlands Arts Centre (MAC),

Birmingham and Birmingham City University's STEAMhouse. It will reach 80 emerging Black creatives from low-income backgrounds as well as hundreds of secondary school children in 21 schools in London, Greater Manchester and Birmingham, and aims to supercharge digital creative skills and help young people reach new heights in their creative careers.

The programme has two strands:

The Residency

The Residency programme is open to 80 talented Black and Black Mixed heritage creatives (18-30-year-olds) who have less than two years experience in their chosen field of film, photography or music. There are 30 places available at the Southbank Centre, 25 at STEAMhouse and 25 at Factory International. This free course runs for 14 days and consists of hands-on creative sessions as well as sessions led by Apple creative experts. Designed in consultation with leading employers, it will focus on equipping young creatives to use digital tools needed for the future and preparing them for the practicalities of a career in the arts.

During the course, participants will be invited to creatively respond to the climate emergency, to global issues of climate justice, and to the challenges it poses for theirs and future generations, including its impact on young people's mental health. Their work in film, audio and photography will be presented at the Southbank Centre in August as part of its summer season of multi-artform programming focussing on the climate emergency.

For more information on The Residency and how to register click on the link [here](#).

Inspire Schools

21 secondary schools based in communities that are historically underserved by cultural organisations in London, Greater Manchester and Birmingham, will work with artists, graphic designers, illustrators and climate experts to design their own response to the climate emergency and its effect on them and their communities.

Participating schools will be asked to create a zine, linking its content to one of the UN's Sustainability Goals. Each zine will feature poetry, illustration and creative writing and will be a classroom-based project, developing skills in literacy, design, IT and citizenship. Projects will take place in the Spring 2023 term and the zines will be showcased in an online exhibition at the Southbank Centre, Factory International and Midlands Arts Centre.

For more information on Inspire Schools and how to take part click on the link [here](#).

Registration for The Residency opens on Wednesday 1 February.

The ground-breaking programme is part of Apple's global Racial Equity and Justice Initiative (REJI) — and represents Apple's first REJI expansion into Europe. Through Apple's Racial Equity and Justice Initiative, this collaboration aims to inspire future generations to take part in building a cultural legacy for the UK. The project aligns with the Arts Council England's Let's Create Strategy and the UK Government's Levelling Up agenda, which strives to build sustainable cultural communities across the country.

Alisha Johnson Wilder, Director of Racial Justice Equity Initiative at Apple, said: *"We're thrilled that the Southbank Centre's REFRAME program continues to take shape with the selection of new partners in London, Manchester and Birmingham. We believe the opportunities for young Black talent are boundless. This new program aims to unlock their extraordinary creative potential and will help them develop new skills that will benefit them well into the future."*

Alexandra Brierley, Director of Creative Learning at the Southbank Centre, said: *"We're honoured that the Southbank Centre and its partners in Manchester and Birmingham will be the first Apple REJI funded partnership in Europe. We believe that everyone should have equal access to art and creativity. We'll track the onward journeys of the 80 participants in The Residency at the end of the project to ensure that at least 85% have been signposted into further education or employment opportunities, and we will build a network of relevant cultural and skills development partners who will support this legacy."*

Randel Bryan, Executive Director of Factory International, said: *"We're delighted to be part of this new cross-sector partnership with Apple and the Southbank Centre to support the next generation of Black creative talent in the UK. Through partnerships such as these, Factory International is committed to bringing new and diverse voices into the creative sector, supporting the talent of tomorrow to show exactly what they're made of."*

Sonya Russell-Saunders, Head of Creative Learning at MAC, added: *"MAC is delighted to be a delivery hub partner for Birmingham, offering children and young people in the city a chance to upskill with leading tech industry professionals, to empower the next generation of creative digital thinkers."*

Professor Julian Beer, Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, Innovation and Enterprise, added: *"As part of Birmingham City University's STEAMhouse we are thrilled to be a part of the REFRAME initiative which aligns perfectly with BCU values of inclusivity and diversity. This pioneering talent development programme will provide invaluable support and resources to emerging Black and Black Mixed heritage creatives from low-income backgrounds. This programme, in partnership with the Southbank Centre and Apple, will help local artists to reach new heights in their creative careers and make a meaningful impact on society."*

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

Information on REFRAME [here](#).

For further press information please contact:
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NOTES TO EDITOR

Apple's relationship with the Southbank Centre began in summer 2022 with support for the Southbank Centre's Photo-Fantastic accelerator programme for aspiring image makers. Fifteen emerging, London-based Black photographers took part, and their work was exhibited at the Southbank Centre in September 2022. Information [here](#).

The groundbreaking partnership to support Black and Black Mixed heritage creatives in the UK was announced by Apple's Tim Cook at the Southbank Centre in Autumn 2022. Information [here](#).

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).

<https://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/>

About Factory International

Factory International is a global destination for arts music and culture opening in the heart of Manchester in 2023. Programmed and operated by the team behind Manchester International Festival (MIF), Factory International will commission, produce and present an ambitious year-round programme of original creative work, music and special events by leading artists from across the globe at its landmark new venue, online and internationally. It will also stage the city-wide Festival every other year at Factory International and at venues and spaces across Greater Manchester. Driven by the same interests and ambitions that defines MIF, artists will be encouraged to create work in new ways, to collaborate across disciplines and blur the boundaries between art and popular culture.

Designed by Ellen van Loon of the world-leading practice Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA), the building is based around large, open, ultra-flexible spaces that can be constantly reconfigured, enabling large-scale artistic work of invention and ambition that isn't made anywhere else in the world. It will offer audiences the opportunity to enjoy year-round, in a new world-class facility, the broadest range of art forms - from major exhibitions and concerts, to intimate performances and immersive experiences – including over 80 gigs a year. Outside, its public areas will come alive with pop-up performances, events and markets, creating a thriving riverside destination for audiences to enjoy.

International in spirit and practice, Factory International will collaborate with venues, festivals and companies across the world to commission artists together. Working with local, national and international partners and co-producers, it will produce and premiere major new work, before it travels globally, and share ideas, projects and training with peers worldwide.

Through the Factory Academy, it will become a major training centre for local people, helping to build the technicians, producers and other creative talent that will bring the future alive, while its pioneering programmes of engagement and artist development will benefit local people and the next generation of creators.

Rooted in Manchester, Factory International will strengthen the city's status as a national and international centre for culture, creativity and innovation, as well as a major visitor destination. The economic impact of

Factory International will be considerable, creating or supporting up to 1,500 direct and indirect jobs and adding £1.1 billion to the city's economy over a decade.

The development of Factory International is being led by Manchester City Council, with backing from HM Government and Arts Council England.

About Midlands Arts Centre (MAC)

Midlands Arts Centre is a contemporary arts centre set in the magnificent surroundings of Cannon Hill Park, Birmingham. Voted No.1 Free Visitor Attraction in the West Midlands 2019 in a survey carried out by VisitEngland, MAC welcomes over one million visits a year. The arts centre offers creative opportunities for all ages across theatre, film, visual arts, practical courses, accessible programmes, and is a national leader in developing work for children and young people. MAC is a registered charity supported by Players of People's Postcode Lottery through the Postcode Culture Trust, Arts Council England and Birmingham City Council.

www.macbirmingham.co.uk

About STEAMhouse

STEAMhouse is an innovation centre, part of Birmingham City University (BCU), supporting start up, experimentation, and growth, enabling its participants to grow their innovation capacity.

Its mission is to drive innovation and research to create business solutions that fuel long-term economic growth.

STEAMhouse supports entrepreneurs, sole traders, and companies to build their businesses, develop new products and services and collaborate. It provided access to free business support, maker space workshops and co-working space, a business Incubator, Artists' Studio, teaching and learning spaces as well as a programme of STEAMlabs and events.

STEAMhouse is located on the main BCU city centre campus to support teaching, research, innovation, and enterprise. The £70m plan has seen the renovation of Birmingham's derelict Belmont Works, originally built in 1899, restored to its former glory as part of a major overhaul.

£14m of funding has been provided by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, with £1m Local Growth Funding from GBSLEP. It is anticipated STEAMhouse will help create up to 10,000 jobs across the West Midlands region and help support the growth of the Midlands Engine.

About BCU

Birmingham City University [BCU] is a large and diverse institution, with over 29,000 students from more than 100 countries, offering a wide range of contemporary, flexible courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level, with practice-based learning and international opportunities built into every stage.

Ranked 4th in the UK for social mobility, recognising how the University helps students from less advantaged backgrounds to succeed, BCU's superb courses, state-of-the-art facilities, first-rate staff, and focus on practical skills and professional relevance is producing some of the country's most employable graduates.

The University generates over £270 million for the regional economy each year and supports thousands of jobs in the area, investing £340 million in its estate, including a major expansion of our city centre campus at Eastside, providing students with an enviable range of facilities.



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