

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

MELTDOWN

Press Release

Date: Tuesday 22 November 14:00

Contact: Jasper Watkins, jasper.watkins@southbankcentre.co.uk / 07974897119

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

This press release is available in a range of accessible formats. Please email press@southbankcentre.co.uk

Christine and the Queens announced as 2023 Meltdown festival curator at the Southbank Centre



Christine and the Queens © Pierre-Ange Carlotti

The **Southbank Centre** has today announced that the next curator of its annual, award-winning **Meltdown** festival – the longest-running artist-curated festival in the world – will be French phenomenon **Christine and the Queens**. Announced ahead of his Southbank Centre debut this evening, Christine and the Queens will curate the next edition of the legendary festival, which will run **Friday 9 June until Sunday 18 June 2023**.

For his Meltdown, Christine and the Queens will transform the Southbank Centre and its venues into a ten-day celebration of music, arts and culture. Now in place as curator, Christine and the Queens will invite artists who have shaped his musical identity, and those who are shaping it today, to perform on the world-class stages of the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room. In addition to ticketed shows, two weekends of free outdoor gigs, performances and activities will celebrate Christine and the Queens' unique oeuvre and creative vision.

This evening, Christine and the Queens will make his debut at the Southbank Centre having sold out the Royal Festival Hall for a one-off special as his new, experimental persona, **Redcar**, the first instalment in a series of new projects slated for 2023. Performing his brilliant new album, *Redcar les adorables étoiles*, the show will be an enthralling, electric preview of the ambitious musical world-making and unrivalled creativity that Christine and the Queens will bring to his Meltdown next summer.

Christine and the Queens made his explosive UK debut in 2016 with *Chaleur humaine*, and, after a 'career-launching' performance at Glastonbury, the album became the best-selling debut record of the year. For his follow-up, the eponymous *Chris*, he continued to strike out as a solo creative powerhouse, resulting in further international critical acclaim and reaching No.3 in the UK chart. With each album, Christine and the Queens reached new heights and attention and, in 2020, he released *La vita nuova*, heralded by many as his best work to date, featuring the hit single 'People, I've been sad' – TIME magazine's song of the year. Entertaining rapturous audiences in concert halls and festivals around the world, Christine and the Queens has also embarked on hugely successful collaborations with artists such as Charli XCX, Caroline Poalchek and 070 Shake.

Earlier this month, Christine and the Queens presents Redcar released his new record *Redcar les adorables étoiles*, the beginning of angels. The self-produced 13-track album was mixed by US producer Mike Dean (Jay Z, Lana del Rey) and features singles 'Je te vois enfin', 'rien dire' and 'la chanson du chevalier'. It was deemed '*pop greatness*' by Rolling Stone and '*angelic*' by The Independent in a 4* review.

Christine and the Queens joins a truly historic cast of previous Meltdown curators. In 2022, Grace Jones battled through disruption and delay to host her edition of Meltdown, the second highest grossing edition in the festival's 27 year history after The Cure's Robert Smith in 2018. Other legendary artists to have curated the festival include David Bowie, Yoko Ono, Patti Smith, Nick Cave, Lee Scratch Perry and Jarvis Cocker.

The first names for Christine and the Queens' Meltdown will be announced in Spring 2023.

On curating 2023's Meltdown festival, Christine and the Queens said: " *What an honour to be picked by the fantastical teams of the Meltdown festival to be a curator this year ! It's a tough thing to be a curator. Art wise, recently, my curating was erratic. Visceral. Sometimes regressive, back to the music I listened to when I was a teenager. A life-saviour, music. One song to soothe them all. We expect from art to still save us yet we endanger it so much, everywhere. Thinking it should sell and clatter like jewels. Thinking it should be the catchiest shit in less than ten seconds when truly the birth of an emotion takes years in some people. We want it to heal it all but we deprive it of it's true strength, which is eternity, a cancellation*

of human time. Now it's fast, quick, a lot, and never about eternity. Cause eternity is death, too. It's a cycle of ashes and birth. Over and over again.

But I digress. Do I? I will actually pick musicians that have some gut-wrenching quality, and I wish for all of us to stroll around in those ten days being rejuvenated by artistic gestures. Discoveries. The time Meltdown takes is quite exquisite, the abundance feels appropriately generous too. We need this for ourselves, art in the city, art for the citizen, collective catharsis, a wonderful purge of the soul. I hope you'll enjoy this glorious edition and again, long live poetry that burns and musicians crazy and brave enough to keep going - they are shaping the emotions of the future. Let's thank them all!"

Adem Holness, Head of Contemporary Music at the Southbank Centre, commented: *"Chris will be the youngest-ever curator of Meltdown in its 27-year history, an incredible testament to his international pop prowess. We are incredibly excited to be working with such an ambitious artist who, I am sure, will show us all what more Meltdown can be as a festival and a celebration."*

Mark Ball, Artistic Director at the Southbank Centre, added, *"Meltdown not only allows us to understand the passions of an artist, but uniquely to see them come to life as a fully-formed festival across the Southbank. And to get inside Chris's imagination - an artist whose ideas and inspiration comes from his politics, his history and identity, his love of theatricality and of transgressive underground culture - will be an incredible musical treat for audiences."*

ENDS

For further press information, please contact:

Jasper Watkins - Music Press Manager
jasper.watkins@southbankcentre.co.uk / 07974897119

For further information on Christine and the Queens, please contact:

Adrian Read
adrian@insideout.agency

Sarina Clark
sarina@insideout.agency

Join the conversation

@southbankcentre
#meltdownfest

IMAGES

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

Meltdown 2022 images: available to download [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 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).

MEDIA PARTNER:

DAZED



Supported using public funding by

**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**