

# SOUTHBANK CENTRE

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## Press Release

**Date:** 15 March, 2024

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**Images:** available to download [here](#)

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## Southbank Centre launches Technical Academy to address skills shortage and diversify the creative production sector



Image credit (L-R) Emily Roberts, 6ft From The Spotlight; Graham Moir, Head of Technical Production, Southbank Centre and Technical Academy Participants. Photo © Roger Hennigan

The Southbank Centre is proud to announce the launch of its Technical Academy, a pilot training programme which aims to create new pathways into careers in Technical Production, attract new talent and improve the diversity of the workforce. The Technical Academy is open to anyone 18+ with no previous experience or qualifications in Technical Production, and offers participants the chance to learn the basics, see how technicians work, and discover the need-to-knows to find work in the industry.

The full-time training course, which launched this week, runs for three weeks and takes place at the Southbank Centre and partner venues. Selected from over 700 applications, the 25 participants taking

part in the Technical Academy are from London, 18-44 years old, 60% female or non-binary and 52% Black, Asian and Ethnically Diverse.

The Board of the Southbank Centre's Technical Academy is made up of leading institutions and businesses across the arts and creative sector including The Albany, Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG), Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT), Factory International, National Theatre, The Production House, RNSS, Roundhouse, Royal Albert Hall, and Omnii Collective. Along with the Southbank Centre, they have co-designed the Technical Academy programme and curriculum and are providing masterclasses, venues, potential freelance opportunities, paid work placements and help with the next steps in finding work.

While on the training course, the participants will gain a grounding in health and safety and build skills in the range of work that happens backstage in creative venues – from building stages, rigging lights and setting up drum kits, to operating sound, lighting and audio-visual effects. The course will introduce participants to the many and varied job opportunities within technical production. Each participant will be supported by a grant, travel expenses, lunch and all equipment will be provided. At the end of the training, there will be a careers day to build confidence in finding future opportunities and work placements. Each participant will also be invited to join the Southbank Centre's wider Emerging Artists and Creatives Alumni Community and will become ambassadors of the programme. The longer-term aim is that the programme will run several times a year, increasing the number of participants to 100.

The Southbank Centre has also launched a series of six monthly Technical Skills Symposium events, leading a joined-up approach to solving the technical skills and talent pipeline crisis in the sector by convening support from the sector to share best practice and develop opportunities.

**Alexandra Brierley, Director of Creative Engagement at the Southbank Centre**, said: *"The Technical Academy is a significant opportunity to develop employer-led, pre-employment training for diverse talent and match them with future job opportunities. There is a lack of understanding about the career opportunities in technical production and we want to encourage new people into the sector - especially those from under-represented communities. We are delighted that so many key organisations in the arts and creative industry have joined the Board and wider Technical Skills Symposium series: to support this training academy, remove barriers and work together to broaden the talent pool entering the Technical Production workforce."*

**Nicola Cardillo-Zallo, Director of People and Culture at the Southbank Centre**, added: *"We're excited to launch the pilot of the Technical Academy, which has been developed in close collaboration with our partners. The aim is to remove the barriers that exist for diverse talent and ensure participants gain the grounding they need to identify and accelerate their careers in Technical Production. By being introduced to different peer organisations, gaining access to build relationships with industry experts, creating a community with their peers and contributing to building a programme that is fit for future cohorts, we are working towards tangible and measurable outcomes that will ensure this is a sustainable skills development programme for the long term."*

For more information on Southbank Centre's Technical Academy click on the link [here](#)

# ENDS #

Press images can be downloaded [here](#)

**For further press information please contact:**

press@southbankcentre.co.uk

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

### **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).

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

### **About The Albany**

The Albany is an arts centre committed to representing the extraordinary creativity and diversity of Deptford and Lewisham. Each year over 60,000 people attend their events, ranging from music to theatre, spoken word and family performances; and take part in their award-winning participatory projects for young people and adults over 60.

Alongside four performance spaces, a bar, café, garden and coworking hub, the Albany offers a range of low-cost rehearsal space, meeting rooms and private offices for community and creative businesses. They aim to foster a welcoming and inclusive space where everyone is inspired to get creative, and where artists are supported and developed, in part through programmes such as their Associate Artists and Creative Communities Membership schemes.

The Albany has 23 resident organisations, and manages Deptford Lounge on behalf of Lewisham Council. It is co-lead of the national Future Arts Centres network and lead partner of Fun Palaces. The Albany was Lead Delivery Partner for We Are Lewisham, the Mayor's London Borough of Culture 2022, which involved over 400,000 audience members attending over 600 events throughout the year. Also in 2022, they were appointed as Lewisham's Arts & Culture Anchor Organisation, responsible for leading sector support initiatives, facilitating networking and amplifying the creative work happening in the borough.

### **About Ambassador Theatre Group (ATG)**

Ambassador Theatre Group is the world's leading live entertainment company with the vision of helping great shows to find the largest audiences. ATG operates over 64 venues internationally; is an international leader in live theatre, music and comedy, and provides leading ticketing platforms and marketing services.

[atg.co.uk](http://atg.co.uk)

### **About the Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT)**

The ABTT is a charity and membership organisation setting and upholding standards in technical excellence, safety and compliance for theatre and live performance. A resource to support members, the ABTT provide technical advice including best practice, safe working and enforcement. Providing technical training, educational seminars and industry focused events, including the annual ABTT Theatre Show, the ABTT encourage networking and the exchange of information. The ABTT are also vital in creating Codes of Practice for the Theatre Industry including Technical Standards for Places of Entertainment, Guidance Notes, Safety Matters and the Theatre Green Book.

Twitter (X): @theabtt (<https://twitter.com/theabtt>)

Facebook: ABTT: Association of British Theatre Technicians (<https://www.facebook.com/TheABTT>)

Instagram: @theabtt (<https://www.instagram.com/theabtt/?hl=en>)

LinkedIn: ABTT: Association of British Theatre Technicians

(<https://uk.linkedin.com/company/association-of-british-theatre-technicians-the->)

ABTT Theatre Show:

Twitter (X): @abtttheatreshow (<https://twitter.com/abtttheatreshow>)

Facebook: ABTT Theatre Show (<https://www.facebook.com/abtttheatreshow>)

Instagram: @theabtttheatreshow (<https://www.instagram.com/theabtttheatreshow/?hl=en>)

### **About Factory International**

Factory International commissions, produces and presents a year-round programme of original creative work and special events at Aviva Studios, its landmark new home in Manchester, online, and internationally through its network of co-commissioners and partners. It also stages the city-wide Manchester International Festival every other year.

Factory International builds on the legacy of Manchester International Festival, one of the world's leading arts festivals, and the first to be entirely focused on the commissioning and producing of ambitious new work. Staged every two years in Manchester since 2007, world-renowned artists from different art forms and backgrounds create dynamic, innovative and forward-thinking new work reflecting the spectrum of performing arts, visual arts and popular culture, staged across Greater Manchester. Working closely with cultural organisations globally, whose financial and creative input helps to make many of these projects possible, much of the work also goes on to travel the world, reaching an audience of 1.8 million people in more than 30 countries to date.

A space for invention and discovery, the design of Factory International's new home, Aviva Studios, is led by Ellen van Loon of the world-leading practice Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA). Built with flexibility in mind, the building is based around large, open, adaptable spaces that can be constantly reconfigured, enabling artists to develop and create large-scale work of invention and ambition, of a kind not seen anywhere else in the world, and providing a canvas to make, explore and experiment. Audiences can enjoy the broadest range of art forms from major exhibitions and concerts to intimate performances and immersive experiences, while the venue's outside areas come alive with pop-up performances, events and markets, creating a thriving new riverside destination for all. This new cultural landmark strengthens the city's status as a national and international centre for culture, creativity and innovation, as well as a major visitor destination. Its economic impact 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 venue's development is led by Manchester City Council, with backing of £99.05m from HM Government and £7m National Lottery funding from Arts Council England.

Factory International plays an important role in the lives of Greater Manchester residents, bringing jobs, skills, training and creative opportunities for local people and artists. Its pioneering creative engagement and artist development programmes creates year-round opportunities for local people to

get involved, from participating in flagship commissions, co-designing programmes of activity, to shaping the organisation through involvement in its public forums. Through the Factory Academy, Factory International is training the creative workforce of the future, providing opportunities for careers in Manchester's ever-growing creative industries, while talent development programmes such as the Factory Fellowships see emerging artists placed alongside international creatives. Factory International is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

[factoryinternational.org](http://factoryinternational.org)

### **About the National Theatre**

The National Theatre makes theatre that entertains and inspires using its creativity, expertise and unique reach. The National Theatre shares unforgettable stories with millions of audience members across the UK and around the world – on its own stages, on tour, in schools, on cinema screens and streaming at home.

World-leading artists make their best work at the National Theatre with the widest possible audience and impact. The National Theatre invests in talent and innovation on stage and off, taking seriously its role as the nation's theatre. Of the new productions developed each year with a wide range of theatre companies, a third of that research and development resource is dedicated to shows staged at theatres outside London.

Through touring our work to local theatres and schools and nationwide education and community programmes, we are active in 71 of the 109 levelling up priority areas in the UK. A registered charity with deeply embedded social purpose, the National Theatre works with hundreds of schools and communities across the UK to fire imagination and inspire creativity, and to develop skills and pathways for careers in theatre.

For more information, please visit

[nationaltheatre.org.uk](http://nationaltheatre.org.uk)

@NationalTheatre

@NT\_PressOffice

### **About The Production House**

TPH is the one-stop-shop for all event essentials: from production management to stage crew; from audio and lighting technicians to catering staff. We are highly qualified to successfully organise and manage your concept or to assist your management team with the ultimate in professional technicians and crew.

We have been the most prominent provider of crew and technical staff for one of Europe's largest arts centres, London's Southbank Centre (SC), since 2002, including the provision of art-handling technicians for the Hayward Gallery. The diverse programming across the various venues of the SC has given us the opportunity to work on a host of prestigious events including the annual Meltdown Festival (past curators include David Bowie, Nick Cave, Richard Thompson, Massive Attack, Yoko Ono and Nile Rodgers to name a few), the Olympics and countless theatre, dance, classical and contemporary music productions. In fact, working for shows that push the boundaries of mind-blowing event production is what we do best!

Our technicians and production crew work in music and arts centres and all event and music venues from the largest to the smallest across Greater London including the Barbican Centre, Roundhouse, Royal Albert Hall, Brixton Academy, Cadogan Hall, Hammersmith Apollo and the Wembley and O2 arenas. Promoters who repeatedly require our expert skillset include AEG, Live Nation, CMP, Serious, SJM, Metropolis, Parallel Lines and Soundcrash. Our orchestral teams work regularly for the London Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the London Philharmonia, and in support of education in the arts we work closely with the Guildhall School of Music and Dance, Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance and Rambert Ballet.

We have worked with major UK festivals including BST Hyde Park, All Points East, Glastonbury, Reading and Leeds, Creamfields, T in the Park, London Jazz Festival, South Facing and The Mighty Hoopla. We have also worked with a number of European festivals including Roskilde, Novarock, Jammin, Hurricane, Southside and Belga Beach Festival.

Our corporate teams have travelled worldwide for conferences, fashion shows, weddings, film premieres and prestigious private events in such places as Dubai, Antibes, Morocco, San Tropez, Paris, Monaco, New York, Los Angeles, and Singapore.

<https://www.facebook.com/theproductionhouse.co.uk>  
<https://www.instagram.com/tphlive>

### **About RNSS**

RNSS Ltd has been established for over 35 years. During this time the company philosophy has remained the same- flexibility, willingness to help and enthusiasm for every project, whatever its size or complexity. We firmly believe that every audience member should perceive the same attention to details, whether as part of a crowd of five thousand, or a meeting for twenty.

Our willingness to help has led us down many paths other than pure audio - our primary speciality. Over the years our skills base and equipment stock has grown to include lighting, audio visual, staging and event production. We've worked hard to develop partnerships within the industry to ensure the answer to our clients is always 'yes'.

Our mission is to provide the best possible event solution for our client's needs, to deliver these solutions promptly, accurately and with good humour. We'd always aim to exceed your expectations.

### **About Roundhouse**

Roundhouse is an iconic music and arts venue in Camden. Since the 1960s we've opened up space for creativity to empower people and communities – day in, night out. We're on a mission to raise the creative potential of the UK so we give young people and artists the space to experiment, develop skills and be part of incredible moments that go down in history.

We host world-famous musicians, iconic events and we create and curate our own shows too, in a pioneering programme of live music, theatre, spoken word and circus. This includes our flagship arts festivals, Roundhouse Rising, The Last Word and In The Round.

Alongside live events, harnessing the creativity of young people and new artists is built into our DNA. Through our ambitious youth programme, 11-30 year-olds can take part in creative opportunities or use affordable studio space that can ignite a passion, develop skills or help them turn their creativity into a career. We also nurture freelancers and entrepreneurs that are changing the future of the creative industries.

### **About the Royal Albert Hall**

The Royal Albert Hall is the world's most famous stage. Throughout its 152-year history, it has welcomed a who's who of world-renowned figures: artists, athletes and activists. No other place on earth has played host to Winston Churchill, Albert Einstein and Muhammad Ali; Ella Fitzgerald, The Beatles and Adele. This was the Suffragettes' "temple of liberty" – the site of Votes for Women rallies that helped change the course of British history – the home of the Stonewall concerts, and a place of celebration during Nelson Mandela's state visit. But its eccentric history has also seen it used for a séance, an indoor marathon and the world's first bodybuilding contest (judged by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle).

In an ordinary year, the Hall's extraordinary auditorium presents around 400 world-class events: encompassing rock, pop and classical music, theatre, dance, films, Cirque du Soleil and sport. It typically welcomes 1.8 million

visitors a year, while its 1,000 events in secondary spaces help to attract a young, diverse audience. Its Engagement programme includes music therapy, concerts in the community, and workshops with A-list artists, often in collaboration with other charities, such as Nordoff Robbins and Music for Youth.

[www.instagram.com/royalalberthall](https://www.instagram.com/royalalberthall)

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### **About Omnii Collective**

Omnii is a collective based in London, aiming to inspire women, trans and non-binary sound enthusiasts to operate in all aspects of audio production. We run workshops to provide and supplement technical knowledge both in the studio and in live sound.

@omniicollective



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