



PRESS RELEASE

Tuesday 20 June, 2017

FUNDRAISER LAUNCHED FOR REDEVELOPMENT OF ICONIC SKATEBOARDING SPOT AND CREATION OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S HQ

In a new collaborative vision Southbank Centre and Long Live Southbank (LLSB) today launched a £790,000 joint crowdfunding campaign to help raise funds to enable the restoration of the Queen Elizabeth Hall Undercroft for skateboarding, graffiti and other free creative activities. The scheme will also see the creation of a new space for children and young people to engage in learning and creative activities organised by Southbank Centre.

Plans now approved by Lambeth Council will see the reconfiguration of the existing Undercroft space on the Southbank to allow for the extension of the internationally renowned skate space, including improvements to lighting and a restoration of some original 1960s banks and concrete paving.

The development will also see the creation of a new learning and education space for children and young people, enabling Southbank Centre to deliver its vision for even greater provision of educational arts and culture facilities for young people. The new HQ will be the go-to place for young people looking for opportunities in the arts and creative industries - hosting vibrant new learning and participation events and programmes that will welcome hundreds of schoolchildren and local people to creative projects every day.

The fundraising campaign, launched today, will feature a host of special events and collaborations and seeks to raise money from supporters including the international skateboarding community, general public, businesses and philanthropists for the opening of the space, scheduled for early 2018. The collaboration will benefit local residents and wider communities including visitors to London as well as London's cultural landscape as a whole.

To support the campaign and read more please visit www.llsbdonate.com

The Undercroft, adjacent to the Thames in London, is the longest continually used skateboarding spot in the world, initially used in 1973 by some of the UK's first skateboarders. The section of the space which will be restored, last skated in 2004, is of

particular historical importance to skateboarders, with its original architectural layout the scene of a number of tricks which have gone down in skateboarding history.

The Undercroft is currently used by skateboarders, BMXers, graffiti writers, street artists, filmmakers, photographers and more, as well as being a tourist destination in the heart of London. The space has worldwide fame and attracts a large number of visiting skateboarders to London from across the globe. It is also an important space for local young people.

Louis Woodhead of Long Live Southbank said:

“This is a pioneering project, and it has been great to take our vision and develop something collaboratively with Southbank Centre. We want to create something with great positivity, both for our cities cultural heritage and the prospects of generations to come. If we all come together collectively to support this, a bright future for a space of worldwide importance can be realised.’

Elaine Bedell, Southbank Centre’s Chief Executive, said: “This development sees an important new offering for the various communities that regard Southbank Centre as their home. We’re delighted that our recent friendly collaboration with LLSB has led to the creation of this joint proposal which will allow us to create a new dynamic, fully accessible space for educational learning and participation for children, young people and local community groups whilst maintaining and expanding access to the space that is clearly much treasured by London’s skateboarding community.”

Professional Skateboarder, Chewy Cannon, of Long Live Southbank said: “Southbank is one of the most important skateboarding spots in the world, and this section has gained a legendary status. Restoring it would bring a big range of opportunities for generations to come.”

Duncan Wilson, Chief Executive of Historic England, said: “The Undercroft at Southbank Centre has become a very significant place for the local and global skateboarding community. ‘Reclamation’ is an interesting new word which sums up what Long Live Southbank wants to achieve: reclaiming and restoring a space with the cultural vibrancy that skateboarding contributes to the South Bank . We wish them every success in their fundraising campaign.”

Legendary skateboarders Tony Hawk and Mark ‘Gonz’ Gonzales added their support to the campaign:

Tony Hawk said: “Southbank is an iconic skate area, and can be beneficial in the development of skateboarding worldwide. I support this restoration so that future generations have access to a globally important creative space in the heart of London”.

Mark ‘Gonz’ Gonzales, referenced London slang by adding: “Southbank: It’s a safe place!”.

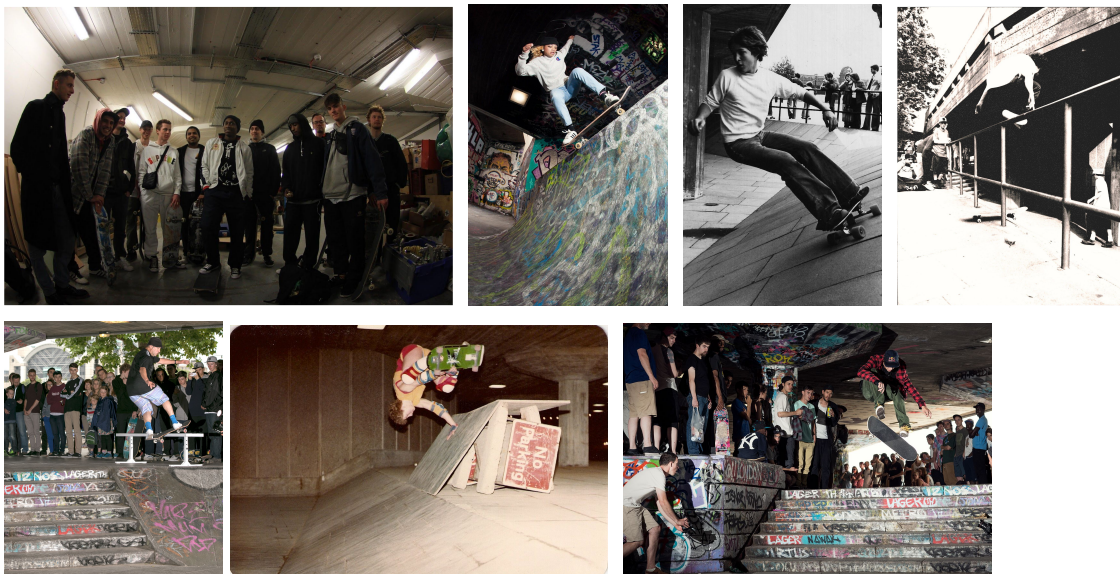
Skater of the Year 2016, Kyle Walker, said: “Everybody needs to come together and make it happen, we’re a family, we skateboard, everybody come together!”.”

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For further press information, interviews and images please contact:
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Social media:
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Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/longlivesouthbank/>
YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/savesouthbank>

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/southbankcentre/>
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YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/SouthbankCentre>

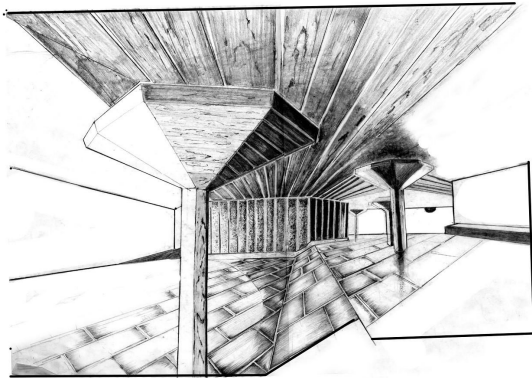
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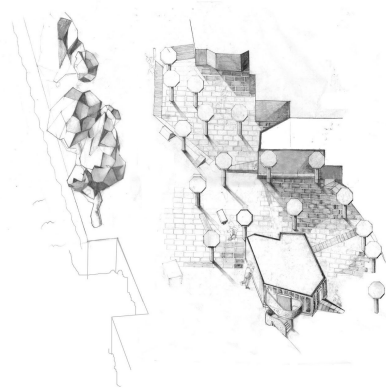
1. Southbank skaters discuss plans to restore the Undercroft. Photo by Fionn Hutton 2017
2. LLSB Member and Southbank Skater, Savannah Keenan. Photo by Jenna Selby 2016
3. Photo by Stéphane Decool 1978
4. Mark ‘Gonz’ Gonzales, hippy jump at Southbank. Photo by Skin Phillips 1994.
5. Mark ‘Gonz’ Gonzales. Photo by Andrew Horsley 2016.
6. 1980s Southbank Photo by Rob Ashby
7. Photo of Ryan Decenzo taken by Lee Kirby 2016

Please contact the sender for high resolution images.

Available visualisations:



View from the small banks



A view from above.

Illustration by Louis Koseda

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Long Live Southbank (LLSB)

Long Live Southbank (LLSB) is a non-profit grassroots organisation created by the Southbank Undercroft community in order to maintain and enhance the world's longest continually used skate spot and promote the benefits of skateboarding and creative practices.

Set up in 2013, LLSB has been recognised for its award-winning work by key figures from across the fields of art, culture, politics and architecture.

Southbank has been skated for over 5 decades and is one of the world's most iconic skate spots, drawing skateboarders, BMXers and street artists from across the globe, as well as being a springboard of creativity.

LLSB is made of a pan-generational group from the Southbank community who represent the broad age ranges, social backgrounds and life experiences of the Undercroft.

Since its inception LLSB has assisted skateboarding campaigns in the UK and worldwide and continue to promote the benefits and positivity of skateboarding. More information available at www.llsb.com

Crowdfunding site for the project: www.llsbdonate.com

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 Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. For further information please visit www.southbankcentre.co.uk. Southbank Centre is carrying out vital restoration work on the Hayward Gallery, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room.

Additional quotes:

"Southbank for me was like a paradise when I discovered it when I was 17 years old."
Stéphane Decool, Photographer.

"Southbank is the place that any skater who visits London from the UK or abroad wants to visit - it is that iconic - even if it is just to take a photograph of the space or to feel that they have experienced it. Skateboarding and Southbank are synonymous; they both represent an individual creativity." Jenna Selby, Skater and Photographer

"The Open Spaces Society strongly supports this important initiative to restore the Undercroft for people to enjoy: it is a modern-day town green, a hub where the community can meet and socialise. The society has campaigned since 1865 to save spaces for people and the Undercroft is a big success-story."
Kate Ashbrook, General Secretary, Open Spaces Society

"The construction of the South Bank was underpinned by a strong sense of public-spiritedness, and the growth of diverse and vibrant communities in the area demonstrate how successful the complex has been. Skateboarding in the undercroft brings a unique vitality to this part of the South Bank, and we are delighted that this important space will be restored in a way that will help a wider audience engage with modern architecture."
Catherine Croft, Director, C20 Society

"Public space can take many forms. New generations are seeking places to meet and practice which are in some instances very different from those sought by earlier generations. This is exciting and we must embrace this diversity. The Undercroft absolutely represents this shift. Historically a space seen as difficult is now embraced and enjoyed. It deserves our support."
Peter Buchan, Regional Chair of RIBA

"Reclaiming the Undercroft and building a new children's and young people's centre, at the heart of Southbank, will bring together skaters and creatives from many different backgrounds who are the fabric of this fantastically unique place. It is so essential to have free creative spaces for young people at the heart of our capital city."
Ruth O'Brien, Director of Operations, National Youth Arts Trust

"As many world cities squeeze out public places in favor of commerce and consumerism, it's great to see London making space for creativity and culture... and skateboarding! The continued vitality of Southbank skate spot—Europe's original magnet for skating and

skaters—reminds us how neighborhoods sustain their social value by preserving both their history and their people.”

Jeff Speck, City Planner, Architectural Designer, Lecturer and Author of ‘Walkable City’.

“There are few places in the world like Southbank, the birthplace of British street skating and undoubtedly the most iconic skate spot in Europe. Every day, in cities around the globe, planners, developers, and designers do their best – often failing miserably – to create spaces that come close to having the vitality and energy that Southbank does. It is critical to preserve and maintain this unique space that is so much more than a skate spot: Southbank is a creative hub, meeting place, and performance space, all rolled into one. Long Live Southbank.”

Jeremy Németh, Associate Professor of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Colorado Denver

“Architecture is not just a matter of structures, however beautiful or striking. People’s uses of buildings are essential, even when unintended or transgressive. The Undercroft is a wonderful example of this, animated both by skateboarding and its ever-changing graffiti. As the housing market increasingly excludes so many from participating in London’s culture the resurrection of the Undercroft has become ever more important.”

Professor Jules Lubbock, Emeritus Professor of Art History, University of Essex and Author on post war British architecture

“Over the last four years, people have come together to remember why the Southbank Undercroft is important and have put co-operation, inclusivity, and artistic expression at the heart of their story. There is now a need to ensure these principles continue to drive the future of the Undercroft. Designing a newly restored space will be a huge challenge, but what we learn from this process will be of immense importance, not just for Londoners but for us all.”

Dr Pollyanna Ruiz, Dr Rebecca Magdin, Dr Tim Sneslon and Dr David Webb, producers of award-winning film ‘You Can’t Move History’.