

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

Press Release

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Southbank Centre announces appointment to new role of Creative Director

Southbank Centre's Chief Executive, Elaine Bedell, today announces the appointment of **Madani Younis** to the new role of Creative Director. He will take up the post in January 2019.

Madani joins the Southbank Centre following six critically acclaimed years at the helm of London's Bush Theatre, where he has been Artistic Director and CEO since 2012. During his tenure he has delivered the largest capital project in the theatre's history tripling audience capacity, produced work that has toured both nationally and internationally and delivered the theatre's first West End transfer in over a decade.

As Creative Director, Madani will work closely alongside Southbank Centre's Director of the Hayward Gallery, Ralph Rugoff, and Director of Music, Gillian Moore CBE, creating collaborations and cross-commissioned work, and designing bold and ambitious new cross arts projects across Southbank Centre's 17-acre site to complement the existing artistic programme. The new role will be responsible for devising and delivering these as well as managing the Literature, Dance, Performance and free programmes along with senior programmers.

Elaine Bedell, Chief Executive of Southbank Centre said: *"I'm delighted to welcome Madani Younis to Southbank Centre as our new Creative Director. It's my priority to ensure we bring world class Arts and Performances to all audiences and I know that Madani will bring a new energy and vision to our site and iconic venues. We want to provide bold, diverse and ambitious artistic programming here and Madani's arrival signals that we are entering an exciting new era. Together with Ralph Rugoff and Gillian Moore, we now have an unrivalled and outstanding senior artistic team in place."*

Madani Younis said: *"I'm absolutely thrilled to be joining Southbank Centre and extremely excited about this new chapter in my life. I'm looking forward to joining Elaine, Ralph and Gillian to develop impactful, forward-looking cross-artform collaborations and, as part of the wider artistic team, bringing world-class art to audiences old and new"*.

Sir Nicholas Serota, Chair Arts Council England said: *"Madani's appointment to the role of Creative Director at the Southbank Centre is good news. I have no doubt that he will bring an*

energy and vision which will seek to both embrace old audiences and reach out to new ones. Madani has built up a strong reputation for innovation and experimentation at the Bush, and we look forward with excitement to seeing how this will bring benefits to the Southbank Centre programme.

Justine Simons, Deputy Mayor for Culture and the Creative Industries said: *“Madani Younis is an inspired choice and I have no doubt that he will bring terrific artistic vision and a fresh perspective to the Southbank Centre. Madani is a talented leader and passionate advocate for the arts, who has worked tirelessly to champion access and nurture new talent. The Southbank Centre is a vital part of the capital’s cultural scene and I can’t wait to see how it evolves under the direction of the new creative team”*

Susan Gilchrist, Chairwoman of Southbank Centre’s Board warmly welcomed the appointment: *“Southbank Centre’s Board is delighted that Madani will be taking on the new role of Creative Director. Throughout his career, he has demonstrated a commitment to attracting and working with a diverse roster of artists - bringing new voices and talent to new audiences. Madani is an exciting addition to Southbank Centre’s senior creative team and I know he, Gillian Moore and Ralph Rugoff will deliver a world class artistic programme under Elaine Bedell’s leadership as Chief Executive.”*

NOTES TO EDITORS

Madani Younis biography

Madani took over as Artistic Director of the Bush Theatre in 2012. He directed the revival of Winsome’s Pinnock’s classic play *Leave Taking* in 2018 and the critically acclaimed UK premiere of *The Royale* in 2015 which was revived in 2016. In 2013 he won the Groucho Club Maverick Award for the theatre, following the most successful season in the theatre’s history which played to 99% capacity. Also for the Bush Theatre he has directed *The Principles of Cartography* as part of *Black Lives, Black Words*, *Zaida* and *Aadam* as part of *This Place We Know*, *Perseverance Drive* and *Chalet Lines*.

Madani is currently working as a member of the Mayor of London’s Cultural Board.

Prior to his appointment at the Bush Theatre, he was Artistic Director of Freedom Studios in Bradford, Yorkshire where his work included the site-specific work, *The Mill – City of Dreams*. He has also worked nationally and internationally as a theatre director, writer and practitioner. He was previously Director of Red Ladder Theatre Company’s Asian Theatre School where he directed *Silent Cry*, *Free World* and *Streets of Rope*.

He originally trained in film, and his debut short film *Ellabellapumpanella*, commissioned by the UK Film Council, was screened at the Cannes Film Festival in May 2007. He was the recipient of the Decibel Award at the South Bank Awards show in 2006.

About the Role of Creative Director

Under the leadership of CEO Elaine Bedell, the new role of Creative Director will work alongside the Director of Music (Gillian Moore CBE) and The Hayward Gallery Director (Ralph Rugoff) to maximise the potential for impactful site-wide projects. The Creative Director will manage the Literature, Dance, Performance and free programmes and along with senior programmers will develop bold, ambitious cross-artform collaborations.

The detailed programme will continue to be developed by the relevant in-house teams, and the amazing roster of Resident and Associate partners and key promoters who also help make up our full programme.

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 National Poetry Library and the Arts Council Collection. For further information please visit www.southbankcentre.co.uk

The recruitment process was overseen by a Southbank Centre Board Appointments Committee. Odgers and Bernstein were engaged to lead the search.
