

SOUTHBANK CENTRE

Press Release

Date: Wednesday 26 March 2025

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Images: [HERE](#)

The Duke of Edinburgh announced as new Patron of the Southbank Centre



Photos by Pete Woodhead for the Southbank Centre

The Southbank Centre has today announced that HRH The Duke of Edinburgh has become its new Patron. The Duke takes on the patronage previously held by his mother, Queen Elizabeth II.

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre and was opened by The Duke's Grandfather, King George VI in 1951, as part of the Festival of Britain. As an engine of creativity, the Southbank Centre exists to invest in the future of arts and culture, foster the next generation of creative talent and bring amazing cultural experiences to the widest audiences in London and across the UK, presenting more than 5,000 events a year, 40 per cent of which are free.

The Southbank Centre, the UK's 5th most visited attraction, brings millions of people together across its site by the River Thames. It offers a year-round programme of events, workshops and projects designed to engage and inspire children, families, young people and adults of all backgrounds, and build connections with, and through, the arts.

The Duke of Edinburgh takes a keen interest in the arts, and champions the opportunities the industry offers young people to develop their confidence and skills. His Royal Highness formerly worked in theatre and television production, before becoming a full-time working member of the Royal Family in 2002.

During a visit to the London venue on Tuesday 25th March, The Duke of Edinburgh was greeted by the Southbank Centre's CEO Elaine Bedell, Artistic Director Mark Ball, and Chair Misan Harriman.

His Royal Highness visited the Queen Elizabeth Hall, opened by Queen Elizabeth II in March 1967, where he met participants from The Technical Academy, a training programme for 18+ year olds offering hands-on behind the scenes training in live events - investing in the future of creative talent.

His Royal Highness met the staff at the Hayward Gallery - the Southbank Centre's contemporary arts space - to hear about the current exhibition *Linder: Danger Came Smiling* and *Mickalene Thomas: All About Love*. The Hayward Gallery welcomes over 1,500 schoolchildren to the gallery every year and Hayward Gallery Touring - the Southbank Centre's nationwide touring programme of contemporary art exhibitions, reaches almost half a million people annually in towns and cities across the UK.

The Duke's tour concluded with a special performance from the Lambeth Music Service by 800 local children from 24 South London schools, aged 7-11, on stage at the Royal Festival Hall.

Elaine Bedell, CEO of the Southbank Centre said: "The Southbank Centre belongs to the nation and offers a space for everyone, regardless of their background. Alongside our expansive arts programme, we invest in growing the skills and careers of emerging talent – especially from backgrounds that have historically been locked out of the arts, and offer a welcoming space for our local communities to engage with the arts.

"It has been wonderful to show The Duke of Edinburgh our work with young people, investing in the future of creative talent and showcasing the amazing impact arts can have on all young people's lives and wellbeing.

“Despite challenging times for the sector, we are determined to continue to bring people together through the arts. The Duke of Edinburgh's shared belief in the power of the arts, and his support means a great deal, and we are thrilled he has joined us as our new Patron.”

Misan Harriman, Chair of the Southbank Centre said: “In today's challenging times, we can rely on the arts to move culture forward and improve our collective wellbeing. At the Southbank Centre we believe in fostering creativity and changing people's lives for the better, and we are hugely grateful to have the support of The Duke of Edinburgh as our new Patron.”

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For further information please contact press@southbankcentre.co.uk

NOTES TO EDITORS

About the Southbank Centre

The Southbank Centre is the UK's largest arts centre, occupying 11 acres along the river and its 4 venues anchor 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. The site has an extraordinary creative and architectural history stretching back to the 1951 Festival of Britain. 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). www.southbankcentre.co.uk/

About The Technical Academy

The Southbank Centre's Technical Academy is a 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.

For more information please find the press release [here](#).



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