

SOMERSET HOUSE PRESS RELEASE

BJÖRK DIGITAL

1 September – 23 October 2016

New Wing, Somerset House, London

£15/£12.50 (concessions)

Tickets available from: www.somersethouse.org.uk



An immersive virtual reality exhibition from the Icelandic icon Björk

Somerset House is thrilled to announce the **European premiere of *Björk Digital***, an exhibition of digital and video works, resulting from Björk's **collaborations with some** of the finest visual artists and programmers in the world and coinciding with special performances at the Royal Albert Hall and the Eventim Apollo in Hammersmith.

Björk constantly and consistently challenges the status quo, pushing the boundaries of what is possible in music, art and technology. The exhibition at Somerset House invites visitors to engage **with Björk's work** through the latest in virtual reality (VR) technology. Björk believes that by offering a private theatrical experience, VR provides a unique way to connect with her audiences.

The exhibition will include *Black Lake*, **Björk's groundbreaking immersive film** commissioned by the **New York's Museum of Modern Art** where the audience is treated to panoramic visuals and enveloped by a bespoke, cutting edge surround-sound system. Filmed in the highlands of Iceland, the work was directed by the Los Angeles-based filmmaker Andrew Thomas Huang. Huang also collaborated with Björk on *Stonemilker VR*, a project that transports the viewer to a private performance of the first track from Björk's **critically acclaimed Vulnicura album**. Shot on location on a remote, windswept beach in Iceland and viewable in full 360-degree VR, the viewer will be able to experience a one-to-one recital.

In *Mouthmantra VR*, Björk worked with director Jesse Kanda to capture intense footage from inside her mouth whilst she sings the title track, her teeth and tongue twisting and seemingly taking on a life of their own. Meanwhile, *Notget VR*, directed by Warren Du Preez and Nick Thornton Jones, presents Björk as a digital moth giantess transformed by stunning masks created by artist James Merry.

As part of the European premiere of *Björk Digital*, Björk will hold rare set of performances at the Royal Albert Hall on 21 September and Eventim Apollo on 24 September. These are her only UK dates this year and her first since her acclaimed sold out Biophilia show in the round at Alexandra Palace in 2013.

Somerset **House's** edition of the *Björk Digital* exhibition will include never-before-seen work by Björk. There will also be an interactive educational space which showcases the innovative apps and custom-made musical instruments from Biophilia, an app created by Björk that explores music, nature and technology. **A programme of Björk's extensive video work** will run alongside the exhibition, spanning **the artist's 24-year career** during which she has collaborated with film directors including the award winning Spike Jonze, Michel Gondry, Nick Knight and Stephane Sedanaoui.

Björk has said:

i am so excited to invite you all to björk digital exhibition at somerset house . we are showing the virtual reality videos from vulnicura on dozens of headsets and premiering in london some pleasant surprises this is a further step into completing the full vulnicura vr album which will come out soon .

i feel the chronological narrative of the album is ideal for the private circus virtual reality is . a theatre able to capture the emotional landscape of it

ive put importance in the exhibition on the interactive element , that folks can watch vulnicura on vr and try biophilia w ipads

and a cinema room with all my videos in 5.1

hope you come

fertility

björk

*Björk Digital Exhibition at Somerset House is supported by:
Intel. AMD. HTC. Bowers and Wilkins. Barco Iosono.*

Ends

For press enquiries and images, please contact Francesca Hughes, Press Officer:
press@somerset-house.org.uk / 0207 845 4624.

For Björk enquiries, contact Anna Meacham at Purple PR: Anna.meacham@purplepr.com / 0207 434 7090

Notes to Editors

Dates: 1 September – 23 October 2016

Open Daily: 11-8pm weekdays, 11-6pm weekends

Address: New Wing, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 1LA

Admission: £15 / £12.50 concessions *over14s only

Transport: London Underground: Temple, Embankment, Covent Garden; Network Rail: Charing Cross, Waterloo, Blackfriars

Somerset House public enquiries: 020 7845 4600 | www.somerset-house.org.uk

Somerset House Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/SomersetHouse>

Somerset House Twitter: [@SomersetHouse](https://twitter.com/SomersetHouse)

Somerset House Instagram: [@SomersetHouseLondon](https://www.instagram.com/SomersetHouseLondon)

Hashtag: #BjorkDigital

About Somerset House

A unique part of the London cultural scene, Somerset House is an historic building where surprising and original work comes to life. From its 18th century origins, Somerset House has been a centre for debate and discussion – an intellectual powerhouse for the nation. Somerset House is today a key cultural destination in London in which to experience a broad range of artistic activity, engage with artists, designers and makers and be a part of a major creative forum – an environment that is relaxed, welcoming to all and inspirational to visit while providing a stimulating workplace for the cultural and creative industries. Since its opening in 2000, Somerset House has built up a distinctive outdoor public programme including Skate, concerts, an open-air film season and a diverse range of temporary exhibitions throughout the site focusing on contemporary culture, with an extensive learning programme attached. It is one of the biggest community of creative organisations in London including The Courtauld Gallery and Institute of Art, King's College London Cultural Institute and over 100 other creative businesses. It currently attracts approximately 3.2 million visitors every year. www.somerset-house.org.uk

About Bowers & Wilkins

BOWERS & WILKINS is a British speaker manufacturer and innovator whose products can be found in the world's best recording studios. Founded in 1966 by John Bowers, the company, to this day, serves a single purpose - to reproduce sound exactly as the artist intended. This mission has seen the company create a series of award-winning products - from the reference quality 800 Series to a range of acclaimed headphone and wireless speaker products. In addition, Bowers & Wilkins is affiliated with a number of cultural partners who share its values, including Somerset House. Bowers & Wilkins and Somerset House first worked together on PJ Harvey's *Recording In Progress* and more recently on *Daydreaming with Stanley Kubrick*. www.bowers-wilkins.co.uk

About the Björk Digital technology

The Björk Digital exhibition at Somerset House is the largest ever installation of 'room scale' virtual reality, made possible with partners HTC (HTC Vive head mounted display), Intel (i7 processors) and AMD (Graphics processors) and Bowers and Wilkins (Headphones). It also includes the largest 360 virtual reality video installation using 90 Samsung Gear VR units. Inside the exhibition, there will be state of the art 'wavefield synthesis' audio software from Barco Iosono to power the 50 speaker (Bowers & Wilkins) audio installation for *Black Lake*, the first of its kind at this scale. For *Stonemilker*, Vrse Works experimental camera technology was used to capture Björk on Grotta Beach in Iceland where she wrote the song. The piece was one of the first to present true 'spatial' sound that dynamically tracks the user's head movement based on the physical position of the sound source. On *Mouth Mantra* we worked with Sony to create a special camera system for the director Jesse Kanda that allowed the team to shoot from inside Björk's mouth. For *Quicksand*, Björk worked with Rhizomatics and Dentsu in Tokyo to create a real time augmented reality piece that included motion capture and projection mapping.