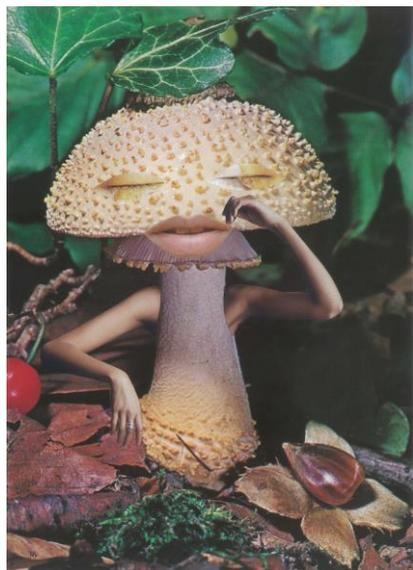


PRESS RELEASE

MUSHROOMS: THE ART, DESIGN AND FUTURE OF FUNGI

Friday 31 January – Sunday 26 April 2020



PART OF THE CHARLES RUSSELL SPEECHLYS TERRACE ROOMS SERIES
TERRACE ROOMS, SOMERSET HOUSE, LONDON
FREE

Launching its 2020 season, Somerset House invites visitors to explore the fascinating world of mushrooms in a new exhibition from curator and writer, Francesca Gavin. Through the work of over 40 artists, designers and musicians, **Mushrooms: The Art, Design and Future of Fungi** celebrates the rich legacy and incredible potential of the remarkable organism, the ideas it inspires in the poetic, spiritual and psychedelic, and the powerful promise it offers to reimagine society's relationship with the planet, inspiring new thinking around design and architecture. An extensive events programme from leading artists and experts accompanies the exhibition, spanning design, sustainability, health and beauty.

Exhibition highlights include:

- Seminal American artist, **Cy Twombly's** expressive portfolio *Natural History Part I, Mushrooms* explores the relation between the natural world and human history
- Watercolours from one of the world's best-selling children's authors, **Beatrix Potter**, whose **vast collection of mushroom illustrations** have formed a significant contribution to scientific understanding of the organism
- A **pioneering architectural project** using **upcycled agro-waste** to form new building materials from architectural technologist **Mae-ling Lokko**
- Ground-breaking designs using mycelium reimagines **a sustainable future for the fashion industry** from shoe designer **Kristel Peters** and textile designer, **Aniela Hoitink**

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Exhibition highlights (cont.):

- Insight into the mind of one of **the leading composers of the 20th century, John Cage**, and his passion for mushrooms in his limited-edition publication, **Mushroom Book**
- Inspiring works from **emerging contemporary artists** including **Seana Gavin, Adham Faramawy** and **Hamish Pearch** span a multitude of art forms from experimental video and collage to sculpture and textile
- Award-winning design firm **Pentagram** confirmed as *Mushrooms* exhibition designers, with a **new custom typeface commission** inspired by fungi

Events highlights include:

- **TABLE, a mushroom-inspired pop-up dining experience** at Somerset House from acclaimed chef and Spring restaurant founder **Skye Gyngell** with **specialty curated 3-course meals from prominent guest chefs**
- **Exclusive seminar** from integrative medicine pioneer **Dr Andrew Weil** on the **medicinal and health benefits of mushrooms**, presented by Beauty and Wellness Partner, Origins

Mushrooms brings together work from leading international artists and designers, renowned for their use of the mushroom motif, to explore three themes: **Mycophilia; Magic Mushrooms;** and **Fungal Futures**. Across three rooms, transformed by award-winning designers **Pentagram**, visitors encounter a spectacular range of interdisciplinary works, spanning large-scale sculpture, hand-cut collage, painting, drawing, photography and film, all featuring the magnificent fungi. The incredible versatility of mushrooms is further celebrated in new, conceptual pieces from designers working across architecture, furniture and fashion, all pushing the boundaries of design through the use of mycelium and bio-based materials in their work.

Immersing visitors in the incredible kingdom of fungi, the exhibition opens with a celebration of mushrooms exploring the theme of **Mycophilia**, with mushroom-inspired works that both inform current scientific understanding of the organism and capture artistic responses to it. Highlights include selected watercolours from the renowned author **Beatrix Potter**, whose collection of over 300 scientific illustrations of mushrooms and fungi, lesser known by her readers, form a significant contribution to the study of natural history and is still used by mycologists today. The seminal American artist **Cy Twombly** explores the relation between the natural world and human history in his quasi-scientific portfolio *Natural History Part I, Mushrooms (1974)*. Formed of lithographic prints with collaged sheets of paper and photographs, the series captures Twombly's characteristic expressive, graphic style, uniting logic and chaos in the human quest for knowledge.

Alex Morrison's colourful oil painting on canvas *Mushroom Motif* pays homage to William Morris' approach to textile and graphics, **Graham Little's** *Untitled (Wood) 2019* transports audiences to a quiet autumnal woodland, whilst RA graduate **Hamish Pearch's** realistic sculptures of sprouting fungi reflect on the continuous lifecycle of decay and re-invention. Antique copies of **Alice in Wonderland** display various interpretations of the notorious caterpillar seated atop a

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mushroom from illustrators such as **Arthur Rackham** and **John Tenniel**, in a scene now widely recognised as a key depiction of the mushroom as a door to another world.

This mysticism that surrounds the mushroom is further explored in **Magic Mushrooms** as artists delve into the themes of psychedelia, poetry and spirituality. Hailed as one of the great music pioneers of the 20th century, **John Cage** was also fascinated with fungi, co-founding the New York Mycological Society. Cage's long-term interest in the subject resulted in *Mushroom Book*, a limited-edition publication which offers deep insight into his passion for mushrooms, published in collaboration with mycologist **Alexander H Smith** and artist **Lois Long**. Visitors can delve into the book's framed pages, featuring Cage's poetry and hand-written notes alongside Long's beautiful mushroom illustrations.

Fellow mushroom devotees include **Amanda Cobbett**, who following the launch of her latest collection at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show 2019, captures the mesmerising beauty of the mushroom in her three-dimensional, papier-mâché and machine-embroidered sculptures, each one completely unique. **Adham Faramawy**'s experimental piece *My fingers distended as honey dripped from your lips and we danced in a circular motion* is similarly hypnotic as it captures dancers in 360° video, whilst animations of a fungus emerge and ultimately metabolise the work. Further highlights include hand-cut collage from **Seana Gavin**, whose imaginative anthropomorphic mushroom characters and architectural structures transport visitors to a fungi-filled world, whilst cult Australian art and fashion label **Perks & Mini** similarly bring a feeling of playfulness in an irreverent, graphic handmade hanging textile.

Designers working across architecture, furniture and fashion explore the powerful potential of the mushroom in the final theme, **Fungal Futures**, pushing the boundaries of design in their use of bio-based materials to create pioneering processes and products. Architectural historian and building-material technologist, **Mae-ling Lokko**, demonstrates the incredible versatility of mushrooms in her ground-breaking project which **upcycles agro-waste into new building-materials**. The potential of mushroom-based materials is also evident in the use of mycelium, the mass of fine branching tubes (called hyphae) that form the main structure of a fungus, which is moulded into furniture pieces including **ceiling pendant lights** from **Sebastian Cox and Ninela Ivanova**. Formed of mycelium and green wood waste harvested from their woodland in Kent, each light shade is grown in the Sebastian Cox Studio's laboratory in south east London, to create beautiful and environmentally friendly pieces for the home.

This experimental design approach is also used to develop sustainable materials through the work of textile designer, **Aniela Hoitink** who offers a unique insight into her practice through the display of experimental materials and alternative clothing prototypes, and Belgian shoe designer **Kristel Peters** who explores possibilities for the development of sustainable shoe design using mycelium.

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Visitors to the Somerset House Shop will find **a bespoke collection of products inspired by the world of mushrooms** available for purchase, including a **Limited Edition Dr. Andrew Weil for Origins Mega-Mushroom Treatment Lotion** presented in a beautiful bottle and box designed by exhibiting artist **Alex Morrison**. The soothing lotion will be **exclusively available from Somerset House** for the duration of the exhibition. Further highlights include an accompanying ***Mushrooms* publication** featuring a new essay from curator, Francesca Gavin.

Mushrooms will be the next exhibition in the Charles Russell Speechlys Terrace Room Series, an ongoing partnership with the leading law firm to present a wide range of free exhibitions reflecting the broad interests of both organisations. *Mushrooms* is also supported by Origins as Beauty and Wellness Partner. The *Mushrooms* public programme is kindly supported by the Gaia Art Foundation.



EVENTS

An extensive *Mushrooms* public programme, kindly supported by the Gaia Art Foundation, will feature an insightful series of talks and events exploring the impact of pioneering mycological research and experimentation on health, design and sustainability. Full details to be announced in November. Somerset House also presents two special events celebrating food and foraging, in association with Spring restaurant and Heckfield Place:

Skye Gyngell's Mushroom TABLE

Thursday 27 & Friday 28 February 2020

Ticket information in November

Lancaster Room, Somerset House

Hosted by one of Britain's most acclaimed chefs, **Skye Gyngell**, and the team from her renowned **Spring** restaurant at Somerset House, **TABLE**, a special mushroom-inspired pop-up, invites visitors to experience a new communal dining feast. Following the success of the first TABLE pop-up during Photo London, the pioneering restaurateur returns to Somerset House's Lancaster Room with a fungi-filled spread, curated especially for the *Mushrooms* exhibition. Each evening, Gyngell will be joined by one of her celebrated peers to create a biodynamic three-course meal, using ingredients donated by Heckfield Place where Gyngell is Culinary Director, with the magnificent mushroom at its heart.

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Heckfield Place

[***How Forests Talk: Mushrooms' Woodwide Web***](#)

Tuesday 22 October 2019

19.00 – 20.15 £25

[***Workshop: Forage for mushroom and other wild food***](#)

Wednesday 23 October 2019

10.00 – 12.30 £38

[***Workshop: Mushroom paper-making***](#)

Wednesday 23 October 2019

14.00-17.30 £65

Heckfield Place, Heckfield, Hook RG27 0LD

Ahead of the exhibition opening and to mark the height of the mushroom season in the UK, curator Francesca Gavin joins the team at Hampshire's renowned Heckfield Place hotel for a special event inspired by mycelium. Forming part of The Assembly's Value of Curiosity Month, Gavin invites guests to discover the fungi kingdom, chairing a panel discussion with Kew Gardens' Community Fungal Survey Technician **Dr Oliver Ellingham**, forager **Fergus Drennan** and Heckfield Place's Head of Forestry & Arboriculture **Sam Crosse**. On 23 October, residents and outside guests can also try their hand at foraging in the magnificent grounds of Heckfield Place, followed by a separate mycelium paper-making workshop.

Further event highlights include:

Curator talk

Friday 31 January 2020

19.00 – 20.30

Lancaster Room, Somerset House

Join *Mushrooms* curator Francesca Gavin as she delves into the fungi kingdom, interrogating the themes of the exhibition, and offering her unique insight into artistic responses to the powerful organism.

Kindly supported by the Gaia Art Foundation.

Seminar: Mega Mushrooms with Dr Andrew Weil

Thursday 6 February 2020

19.00 – 21.00

Ticket information in November

Portico Rooms, Somerset House

Dr Andrew Weil joins Somerset House and beauty brand, Origins, for a special seminar exploring the power of mushrooms in the field of integrative medicine, a healing-oriented approach to health care which encompasses body, mind, and spirit. The exclusive event features insights from Dr Weil on the **medicinal and health benefits of mushrooms**. It was under Dr Weil's tutelage that Origins became one of the first brands to recognise the

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highly functional value of integrating mushrooms into skincare. Guests can also experience the superfood-infused Mega-Mushroom range first-hand with **complimentary Feel Good Facials** while receiving **personalised skincare advice** from Origins experts.

Kindly supported by Origins.

Edible Utopia

Ticket information in November

For the duration of the exhibition, Edible Utopia's **Mycologist in Residence Darren Springer** leads a series of special workshops to equip participants with the tools and skills needed to start their own mini mushroom farm. The hands-on, family-friendly sessions celebrate the magic of mushrooms, the integral role they play in the world's eco-system, and give attendees the chance to take away their own fledgling fungi to nurture at home. Visitors will also learn more about the mushroom kingdom and tour the mushroom growing chambers in Somerset House's historic coal-holes.

Edible Utopia is an educational food-growing project which looks at growing food in the underused and hidden parts of Somerset House and explores creative responses to sustainability. Homegrown mushrooms will be on the menu at Somerset House's Bryn Williams restaurant. *Edible Utopia* is kindly supported by City Bridge Trust, with initial support from Systemiq.

Artist List:

Adham Faramawy, Alex Morrison, Amanda Cobbett, Andrea Zucchini, Aniela Hoitink, Annie Ratti, Beatrix Potter, Cody Hudson, Cy Twombly, Daniel David Freeman, David Fenster, Donlon Books, Graham Little, Hamish Peach, Hannah Collins, Haroon Mirza, Jason Evans, Jeremy Shaw, John Cage, Kristel Peters, Lara Ögel, Laurence Owen, Lois Long, Mae-ling Lokko, Perks and Mini, Salvatore Arancio, Seana Gavin, Sebastian Cox and Ninela Ivanova, Simon Popper, Stephan Doitschinoff, The Mycological Twist.

FOR PRESS ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

press@somersetshouse.org.uk/0207 845 4624

NOTES TO EDITORS

Dates: 31 January – 26 April 2020

Opening Hours: Sat – Tues, 10.00 – 18.00. Wed – Fri, 11.00 – 20.00

Tickets: Free

ADDITIONAL LISTINGS INFORMATION

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

Transport: Underground: Temple, Embankment / Rail: Charing Cross, Waterloo, Blackfriars

Website: www.somersetshouse.org.uk

Somerset House Facebook:

www.facebook.com/SomersetHouse

Somerset House Twitter: @SomersetHouse

Somerset House Instagram: @SomersetHouse

Hashtag: #theartofmushrooms

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SUSTAINABILITY AT SOMERSET HOUSE

Somerset House is actively responding to environmental issues both through the practical management of the Grade I listed historical site and thematically as part of our year-round cultural programme. By working together with visitors and the 2500+ resident creative community, we are committed to collectively reducing our impact on the planet. Somerset House has been awarded a 4-star rating in recognition for its environmental commitment, understanding and improvement in the Julie's Bicycle Creative Green Awards. For more information visit somersethouse.org.uk/sustainability

ABOUT SOMERSET HOUSE

London's working arts centre

Somerset House is London's working arts centre and home to the UK's largest creative community. Built on historic foundations, we are situated in the very heart of the capital.

Dedicated to backing progress, championing openness, nurturing creativity and empowering ideas, our cultural programme is ambitious in scope. We insist on relevance, but aren't afraid of irreverence, and are as keen on entertainment as enrichment. We embrace the biggest issues of our times and are committed to oxygenating new work by emerging artists. Where else can you spend an hour ice-skating while listening to a specially commissioned sound piece by a cutting edge artist?

It is this creative tension – the way we harness our heritage, put the too-often overlooked on our central stage and use our neo-classical backdrop to showcase ground-breaking contemporary culture – that inspires our programme. Old and new, history and disruption, art and entertainment, high-tech and homemade, combined with the fact that we are home to a constantly shape-shifting working creative community: this is our point of difference. It is what we are proud of. And it is what makes the experience of visiting or working in Somerset House inspiring and energizing, urgent and exciting.

somersethouse.org.uk

ABOUT FRANCESCA GAVIN

Francesca Gavin is a curator and writer based in London. She is an editor-at-large at *Kaleidoscope*, Art Editor of *Twin* and contributing editor at *Good Trouble*, *Beauty Papers* and *Semaine.com*. She was the co-curator of the Historical Exhibition of Manifesta11 and has curated exhibitions internationally including at the Palais de Tokyo, Site Sheffield and Mu. Gavin has written six books including *Watch This Space*, *The Book of Hearts*, *100 New Artists* and *Hell Bound: New Gothic Art*, and contributes to numerous publications including *The Financial Times*, *Dazed*, *wallpaper**, *Mousse*, *AnOther* and *Newsweek*. She has a monthly radio show *Rough Version* on NTS Radio on art and music. francescagavin.com
@roughversion

ABOUT THE CHARLES RUSSELL SPEECHLYS TERRACE ROOM SERIES

The Charles Russell Speechlys Terrace Room Series of free exhibitions profiles the work of living artists in one of the most accessible spaces at Somerset House, bringing the public into contact with a diverse and engaging range of creative thinkers. The series provides a platform for artists to develop and amplify the messages within their practice and engage openly with Somerset House's visitors. Every exhibition in the Charles Russell Speechlys Terrace Room series is free and contributes to our on-going commitment to public access and engagement with arts and culture.

ABOUT CHARLES RUSSELL SPEECHLYS

Charles Russell Speechlys works with clients in the UK and throughout the world. Our lawyers are based in 11 locations across the UK, Europe, Asia and the Middle East and through each of these locations clients are able to access the full range of the firm's skills and expertise.

We have a broad range of skills and experience across the full spectrum of business and personal needs. This gives us a wider perspective, clear insight and a strongly commercial long-term view.

It has made us a leader in the world of dynamic growth and family businesses, and among the world's leading creators and owners of private wealth and their families. Major corporates and institutions find our more considered and personal approach a refreshing alternative to conventional business law firms. www.charlesrussellspeechlys.com

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ABOUT ORIGINS

Powered by nature and proven by science – Origins combines the highest-quality plant, earth and sea-based ingredients with non-toxic-to-skin alternatives and advanced science to create safe, high-performance skincare, bath & body and makeup products that deliver visible results. Since its inception in 1990, Origins has travelled the world to discover nature's most potent ingredients and unleashed their unique powers to deliver transformative products and experiences for the consumer.

Origins believes it's the brand's responsibility to give back to nature and strives to make choices that help reduce our overall impact on the planet. Learn more at origins.co.uk and join the conversation @OriginsUK

ABOUT DR ANDREW WEIL

Andrew Weil, M.D., is a world-renowned leader and pioneer in the field of integrative medicine, a healing-oriented approach to health care which encompasses body, mind, and spirit. Combining a Harvard education and a lifetime of practicing natural and preventive medicine, Dr Weil is the founder and director of the Andrew Weil Center for Integrative Medicine at the University of Arizona, where he also holds the Lovell-Jones Professor of Integrative Medicine. The Center is the leading effort in the world to develop a comprehensive curriculum in integrative medicine.

Dr Weil is a *New York Times* bestselling author, editorial director of DrWeil.com and an internationally recognized expert for his views on leading a healthy lifestyle, his philosophy of healthy aging, and more. Dr Weil partnered on the Dr Andrew Weil for Origins™ Mega-Mushroom Relief & Resilience franchise—a skincare line infused with skin soothing medicinal mushrooms—with beauty brand, Origins.

ABOUT THE GAIA ART FOUNDATION

Gaia Art Foundation is an independent non-profit organization dedicated to support and nurture diverse cultural initiatives and to build a platform to encourage interdisciplinary dialogue through visionary artistic practices and partnerships.

ABOUT SPRING

In October 2014, Skye Gyngell opened her much-anticipated London restaurant Spring, which brings warmth and elegance within a beautiful dining space set in the New Wing of the iconic Somerset House, in the arts and cultural heart of London. At Spring food is celebrated for its conviviality and the joyfulness of sharing seasonal produce. Skye's menu is heartfelt, wholesome, produce driven and cooked by a team of people who are passionate about what they do and who feel truly privileged to work with beautiful ingredients. springrestaurant.co.uk

ABOUT HECKFIELD PLACE

A beautiful Georgian family home lovingly restored to its historic origins, Heckfield Place is at the heart of a bountiful 400-acre estate. Less than an hour from London the estate has been rewoven, connecting house and grounds in this secluded corner of Hampshire. heckfieldplace.com