

**SOMERSET  
HOUSE**



# **SOMERSET HOUSE**

**2018/19**

## Somerset House is London's working arts centre and home to the UK's largest creative community.

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 as has been seen consistently across our multi-faceted programme over the last year.

2018/19 highlights included our autumn/winter exhibition **Good Grief, Charlie Brown!** in the Embankment Galleries, which attracted our second highest ever visitor numbers and delighted Peanuts fans, as well as introducing a new generation to Charles Schulz's work, which felt as fresh and resonant as ever. Our programme frequently engages with the key issues of our time and once again we presented a very successful programme around World Earth Day.

The year saw a gear-change in terms of the impact of **Somerset House Studios** with us commissioning more new work from Studios artists as part of our cultural programme. The reputation of Somerset House Studios has also grown internationally, with staff and artists presenting work at festivals and seminars from Lima to Barcelona.

We have celebrated the first full year of our **Creative Careers Programme**, an important initiative aimed at diversifying the workforce of the arts and creative industries and an important cornerstone of our commitment to equality and inclusion.

Thanks to Westminster City Council and the Rothschild Foundation, we have also begun the work to complete the final three studio spaces within the Somerset House Studios footprint. We are also in the process of building **Somerset House Exchange**, a new shared workspace for freelance creative practitioners and micro-businesses, supported by the Mayor of London's Good Growth Fund. Once this opens in autumn 2019, we will have completed the refurbishment of the whole site, something that has taken nearly 20 years. We also signed a new long-term lease for the Courtauld Institute of Art to remain in North Wing and allow them to undertake a £40m development to open up to a much wider audience.

This constant evolution is very much in line with our desire to continue to break boundaries, especially our own.

**William Sieghart CBE**  
Director

**Jonathan Reekie CBE**  
Director

Good Grief, Charlie Brown (photo Peter Macdonald) | Cover Image: Hala (photo by Seoyong Lee)



## A NEW BLUEPRINT FOR ARTS & CULTURE

Built on historic foundations, we have a footprint bigger than our floor plan

### Our building

Over  
**590,000**  
sq ft of Grade 1 listed  
architecture

### Our visitors

Over  
**3.1 MILLION**  
visitors

### Our people

**80 STAFF**  
**100+ VOLUNTEERS**  
for Somerset House Trust

We are home to the UK's largest creative community, dedicated to powering the creative industries

**527** resident organisations  
With **2,578** people

### Somerset House Studios

**73** Artists and their teams  
**177** People

### Creative Enterprise

**153** Companies  
**194** Micro-businesses  
**2,079** People

### Makerversity

**322** Members

### Our Neighbours

The Courtauld Gallery and Institute and King's College London

## IN 2018/19 WE ACHIEVED...

**3.16 million** visitors . **445k** audiences for tickets events. **33** exhibitions , **26** of which were free. **265** days of free exhibitions on site. **11** nights of live music , **14** nights of outdoor cinema, including 2 premieres and one new artist film commission . **9** weeks of ice skating  with over **131,000** visitors. **4,626** visitors attended Somerset House tours . **17** new businesses joined our creative community , with **56** networking and skill-sharing events  organised for residents. Somerset House Studios welcomed **18** new artists , took part in **3** international showcases  and produced over **70** projects and events, including **22** new commissions. **157** Learning talks  and events for **5,777** people, including **52** gallery-based talks and tours , **16** Creative Careers events reaching **838** young people . **100+** volunteers . **2,578** people working as residents across the site .

# AN INVITATION TO ALL

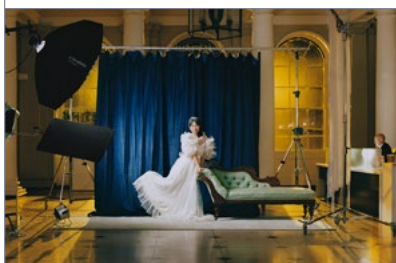
Somerset House believes in seeing things differently and inspiring others to do the same. This is reflected across our cultural programme.



## PRINT: TEARING IT UP

“Captures the energy and eccentricity of British independent magazines and reminds us that there is a nuanced story to be told about the presumed death of print media”

– Times Literary Supplement



## ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

“Challenges ideas of otherness and injects much-needed, fresh perspectives into fashion’s landscape”

– Dazed



## HALO

“Invites audiences to look at this favourite public place through a magical lens”

– Culture Whisper



## FILM4 SUMMER SCREEN

“London’s grandest movie venue”

– Mail on Sunday

(T - B) Print (photo by Doug Peters) | English as a Second Language (photo by Hanna Moon) | Halo (photo by Sooyong Lee) | Film4 Summer Screen (photo by Dave Bennett)

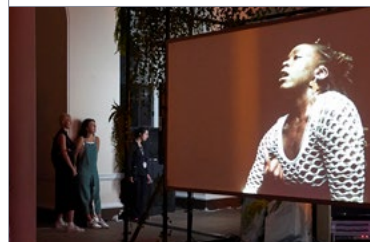
(T - B) London Design Biennale (photo by Scott Garth, Rex Shutterstock) | System by Gaika (photo by Anne Terzidat) | Athi Patra Ruga (photo by Tim Bowditch) | Good Grief, Charlie Brown (photo by Peter Mordtmann) | Skate (photo by Luke Dyson)



## LONDON DESIGN BIENNALE

“Showcases some of the brightest talents from around the world”

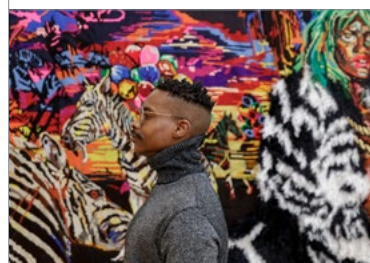
– Daily Telegraph



## SYSTEM BY GAIKA

“Anyone with any interest in soundsystem culture and how it has reshaped British culture would do well to check the show out”

– It’s Nice That



## ATHI PATRA RUGA: OF GODS RAINBOWS AND OMISSIONS

“Intricately-layered cleverness running throughout... Gloriously technicolour, they’re also tantalisingly tactile”

– Time Out



## GOOD GRIEF, CHARLIE BROWN

★★★★★ – Time Out

“One of the most talked about exhibitions in the UK”

– The Guardian



## SKATE WITH FORTNUM & MASON

“One of the most beautiful locations to skate in London”

– Vogue

## OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

Other highlights from our cultural programme included 11 nights of thrilling live music with the **Summer Series with American Express**, our annual festival of gaming, **Now Play This**, events and exhibitions from Somerset House Studios including **Complex Value\$, AGM, Assembly** and **TBCTV**, partnership projects such as **Photo London** and **1:54 African Art Fair**.

# LONDON'S WORKING ARTS CENTRE

Somerset House is home to the UK's largest concentration of artists, makers, creative enterprises and arts charities.

Our creative community is made up of **Somerset House Studios, Makerversity, Creative Enterprise** and this autumn our community will expand further when **Somerset House Exchange**, our new shared workspace, opens for freelancers and creative enterprises seeking flexible co-working space.

New residents in 18/19 included Acute Art, Akram Khan Company and Hofesh Shechter, who also contributed to our public programme for the first time, alongside other residents such as Photo London producers, Candlestar, 1-54 African Art Fair and Crying Out Loud.

Our 18/19 resident survey revealed that **70%** of participants agree that being a part of the Somerset House creative community is valuable to their business and **90%** of attendees at resident community events found them to be enjoyable or very enjoyable.



**“When we first moved into Somerset House, it felt like we were let into a secret lair in the heart of London where we had space to explore and develop from being a 3-person collective to become a 35-person fashion software platform. We are now part of a vibrant community that represents some of the most innovative creative people in London, the UK, and maybe the world.”**

– Ben Alun-Jones, Co-Founder and Chief Product Officer, Unmade

(T - B) Creative community (photos by Somerset House) | Shechher Underground (photo by Helen Murray) | Right image: Makerversity



## BACKING PROGRESS, NURTURING CREATIVITY

**Somerset House Studios** is now an established incubator of creative talent with 73 artists and their teams based here.

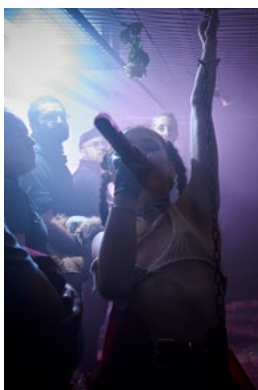
Support from a range of sources has enabled us to be more ambitious with our commissioning programme, with larger scale projects and over **20 newly commissioned works**. Highlights include TBCTV, a collaboration from Mel Brimfield, Chloe Lamford and Ewan Jones Morris, and Jenna Sutela's short-term residency alongside Memo Akten and Google Arts & Cultural Lab, using machine learning to generate new language.

With the support of the PRS Foundation's Open Fund, the Studios hosted two composers in residence, Vessel and Lucy Railton, both creating new works as part of the inaugural ASSEMBLY experimental music season. The programme also included two other commissions supported by the Case Foundation - Jennifer Walshe and Memo Akten's ULTRACHUNK and a new collaboration between residents Imran Perretta and Paul Purgas.

Programme highlights from Somerset House Studios included Gaika's SYSTEM installation and club nights, produced in partnership with Boiler Room, and the inaugural Annual General Meeting (AGM) taking over 3 floors of the New Wing, celebrating 2 years of the Studios, featuring performances from Kode9 and Beatrice Dillon.

Our work has been shared at festivals and seminars internationally, including Internet Age Media in Barcelona, as part of Sonar+Ds annual London launch, and at the Mutek festivals in Argentina, Montreal and Spain.

We have introduced a new professional development programme for resident artists and completed our first annual artist survey. **98%** felt their residency rent represented good value, **91%** felt the facilities were excellent and **88%** have attended events in the community programme.



**“I’m proud to be an artist at Somerset House Studios. There’s somehow a quiet rebelliousness... it’s a rare and vital space for experimentation in a city where the establishment is often at odds with the people”**

– Gaika, Somerset House Studios resident

(T - B) TBCTV | Naked (photo by Anne Terzic) | Right image Hannah Perry GUSH (photo by Tim Bowditch)



## CHAMPIONING OPENNESS

Harnessing the unique communities on site, the purpose of the **Learning & Skills Programme** at Somerset House is to inspire, engage and equip an increasingly diverse range of participants with practical skills, creative insight and fresh perspectives.

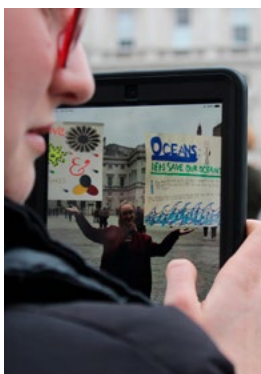
The 2018/19 programme focussed on three main areas:

**Creative Careers** - In June 2018 the Creative Careers Academy launched, offering five London Living Wage work placements to people aged 25 or under, who are under-represented and seeking their first significant employment opportunity in the creative and cultural sector. The wider Creative Careers Programme also provided early professional development and facilitated networking through monthly Creative Job Studios. This strand of work directly engaged over 800 participants and reached an extended network of active followers.

**Public Learning** - interpretation of the cultural programme through deeper engagement and access to authentic artistic voices for young adult participants and intergenerational audiences - this includes talks, workshops, gallery 'Lates' and participatory projects.

**Learner-artist Collaborations** - working with Somerset House Studios artists to support new voices to express creative responses to the issues of our times, including a new participatory project led by Matthew Plummer Fernandez, as part of Good Grief, Charlie Brown!.

Highlights of 2018-19 public programme include the Process festival staged with Studios artists OOMK in conjunction with the Print! exhibition, offering 100 independent artists the chance to exhibit and exchange publications including zines.



(T - B) Good Grief, Charlie Brown (photo by Thomas Skovsvede) | Ahn, Patra Raga (photo by Thomas Skovsvede) | Process festival (photo by Tim Bowditch) | Matthew Plummer Fernandez (photo by Somerset House)

## BUILDING ON HISTORY FOR THE FUTURE

Looking after our historic site is a process of constant renewal. Building projects over the last year have included renovations in the Lancaster Rooms and preliminary work to complete the final Somerset House Studios spaces. We have also begun the construction phase for our new shared workspace, **Somerset House Exchange**, across the final 6,558 sq ft of disused space in the New Wing.

We also secured the future of the Courtauld at Somerset House by signing a new long lease, completed the cleaning and restoration of the courtyard-facing South Wing façade and fitted new wired technology across the entire estate.

Importantly we aim to be cultural leaders in championing sustainability across the organisation through both our own internal ways of working and through our cultural programme. 51% of our energy was generated on site, our highest ever percentage, thanks to our combined cooling and heating plant, and our Earth Day Season is now a keenly anticipated highlight of our cultural calendar.

In partnership with the Northbank and TfL, we reduced deliveries by 12% to minimise pollution in the local area, and we improved our Creative Green certification, through Julie's Bicycle, from 3\* to 4\* in recognition of our dedication to sustainability and green initiatives.



Pollution Pods by Michael Pinsky (photo by Peter Macdonald)

# FINANCIAL BREAKDOWN 2018/19

Somerset House Trust aims to generate surpluses to fund both the ongoing restoration and maintenance of the site and a vibrant and expanding cultural programme. We strive to operate efficiently, investing our resources to optimise the delivery of our charitable purposes over the short and long term.

Total income in the year to 31 March 2019 was **£19.7m**, **£9.4m** of which was generated through the Trust's community of tenants in rent and service charges and this was then re-invested back into property management and conservation.

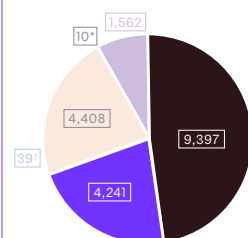
Ticket income from the cultural programme represents just under a quarter of the total income at £4.4m, and we invested £5.5m of expenditure in the cultural programme.

Income from trading activities (including corporate venue hire, sponsorship and retail activity) accounts for over a quarter of total income at £5m, plus grants and donations of £794k.

Our unrestricted free reserves increased in line with our Trustees' amended Reserves Policy, which seeks to ring-fence **£750,000** of free reserves.

The summary income and expenditure figures for the year ending 31 March 2019 are extracted from our full audited financial statements, which can be found at [somersethouse.org.uk/about-somerset-house](http://somersethouse.org.uk/about-somerset-house).

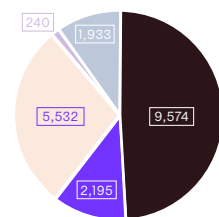
## Total income £19.7m (2017/18: £15.9m)



Figures shown as £,000s

\*£10k in Bank interest  
†£39k in Public education and communication

## Total expenditure including depreciation £19.5m (2017/18: £17.2m)



Figures shown as £,000s

- Grants, donations and sponsorship
- Bank interest
- Property rental, management and conservation
- Cultural and public events
- Public education and communication
- Trading activities

Back cover image: AGM (photo by Anne Teitzlaff)

# THANK YOU

Somerset House is an entirely self-funded charity, receiving no regular public funding. We are very grateful to everyone who has supported all aspects of our programme as Supporters' Court patrons, corporate members, sponsors and grant-giving bodies.

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Or visit: [somersethouse.org.uk/support-us](http://somersethouse.org.uk/support-us)





[somersethouse.org.uk](https://www.somersethouse.org.uk)

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