

**SOMERSET
HOUSE**

SOMERSET HOUSE RE-OPENING THURSDAY 16 JULY

PRESS RELEASE



Somerset House is delighted to announce that it will re-open part of the site to visitors on Thursday 16 July. This will include the critically acclaimed free exhibition *Mushrooms: The Art, Design and Future of Fungi* extended throughout the summer, and the magnificent courtyard.

ENHANCED, COVID-19 SECURE HEALTH & SAFETY MEASURES ON SITE

As Somerset House opens its doors and welcomes visitors back to the site, the number one priority is to ensure the health and wellbeing of visitors and staff. Re-opening plans meet all current COVID-19 secure guidelines, which will be reviewed and updated regularly. Further information on enhanced safety measures can be found below in Notes to Editors and on the Somerset House website.



MUSHROOMS: THE ART, DESIGN AND FUTURE OF FUNGI

Terrace Rooms, Somerset House

Free / Suggested Donation: pre-booking necessary

Open: Tuesday – Sunday, 12pm – 6pm

Somerset House is delighted to welcome both new and returning visitors to its critically acclaimed exhibition, *Mushrooms: The Art, Design and Future of Fungi*, re-opened for a specially extended run throughout the summer.

Curated by writer and curator **Francesca Gavin**, the exhibition delves into the fascinating fungi kingdom through the work of **35 artists, designers, and musicians**. Visitors are invited to explore the organism's incredible cultural legacy in a spectacular range of interdisciplinary works, and discover its powerful potential to transform society's relationship with the planet, as pioneering designers share

SOMERSET HOUSE RE-OPENING PRESS RELEASE

their innovative processes and products using bio-based materials across architecture, furniture and fashion. To ensure the safety of visitors and staff, **capacity will be limited so visitors must pre-book their timed ticket slot online at somersethouse.org.uk**

The popular exhibition shop also returns on-site and online with its **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**. This soothing lotion is **exclusively available** from Somerset House for the duration of the exhibition. Further highlights include an accompanying *Mushrooms* publication featuring an original essay from curator, Francesca Gavin.

The ***Mushrooms* virtual tour**, launched to mark International Museum Day in May, remains **accessible to all online**. The free digital experience offers people the opportunity to enjoy the original show from the comfort of their home. Audiences can even experiment with **displaying works from the exhibition in their own homes using augmented reality (AR)**. Available on Android & iOs devices, the Art Projector platform from Google Arts & Culture replicates the experience of seeing the real-size works on the gallery walls.

Mushrooms is the latest 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 the official Beauty and Wellness Partner.



EDMOND J. SAFRA FOUNTAIN COURT

Open: Daily, 10am – 7pm

Somerset House's magnificent, neo-classical courtyard will re-open to visitors from 10am – 7pm daily. Additional outdoor seating and tables will be distributed across the courtyard for visitors to sit and enjoy the historical surroundings in a spacious, yet intimate setting, away from the hustle and bustle of the Strand,

all whilst maintaining social distancing. The fountains will open at a later date once further safety guidance has been received and opening hours may be extended. Visitors are encouraged to check the Somerset House website and social media channels for updates.

SOMERSET HOUSE RE-OPENING PRESS RELEASE



ON-SITE CAFÉ: HEJ

Open: Daily (for takeaway only), 12pm – 6pm

Somerset House's on-site café **Hej** welcomes customers to enjoy their speciality, locally-sourced coffee alongside a range of freshly prepared salads, sandwiches and pastries, all using the best of British produce.

Jonathan Reekie, Director of Somerset House Trust says:

"We're so excited to finally be re-opening part of the site and welcome back visitors, as well as our resident artists, makers and designers. As London's working arts centre and home to the UK's largest creative community in the heart of London, we're keen to re-energise the building with people, after a 3-month closure. Our visitors will be able to reconnect with the hugely popular Mushrooms exhibition as well as enjoy our spacious, beautiful courtyard. In due course, we hope to re-open our fountains, further galleries with food and drink spaces."



DIGITAL PROGRAMME

For those unable to visit in person, Somerset House's online cultural programme entitled '**I Should Be Doing Something Else Right Now**', which launched in April, will continue across the summer, bringing innovative new commissions, live streams and revisits to Somerset House's vast archive.

Much of the programme has been created in collaboration with resident artists who would ordinarily be working from Somerset House Studios, and with Somerset House's long-standing partners, inspired by themes of connection and commonality. Visit www.somerset-house.org.uk for the most up-to-date programme. Further details for the autumn season will be released in August.



FIVE NEW TRUSTEES APPOINTED TO SOMERSET HOUSE TRUST BOARD

Somerset House is delighted to introduce five new trustees who have recently joined Somerset House Trust's Board:

Alix Burge, Martine d'Anglejan-Chatillon, Wol Kolade, Monica Monajem and Jonathan

Newhouse. Between them and the rest of the board, they have offered an immeasurable amount of support and broad-ranging insights during this unprecedented and challenging time. Full bios in Notes to Editors below.

SOMERSET HOUSE RE-OPENING PRESS RELEASE

FOR PRESS ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

press@somersetthouse.org.uk/0207 845 4624

NOTES TO EDITORS

The following areas of Somerset House will be open from 16 July

- The Edmond J Safra Fountain Court will be open daily from 10am – 7pm
- *Mushrooms: The Art, Design and Future of Fungi* exhibition in the Terrace Rooms will be open 12-6pm, Tuesday-Sunday. To ensure the safety of visitors and staff, and in accordance with government guidelines, capacity will be limited so visitors must pre-book their timed ticket slot online (with suggested donation) at somersetthouse.org.uk
- On-site café Hej Coffee will be open for takeaway only, 12pm-7pm daily. Outdoor seating will be available in the courtyard

On-site facilities

- Toilet facilities will be available in the South Wing. These toilets are self-contained cubicles and will be accessible via a one-way system to and from the toilets
- We will be operating cashless payments only across the site

Site access

- Members of the public can enter Somerset House via the Strand entrance only
- The Terrace Rooms, Hej Coffee and toilets are accessible via Seamen's Hall in the South Wing

Essential Safety Information for Visitors/Enhanced, COVID-19 secure safety precautions we have implemented

- We're following the official Working Safely during Covid-19 Government guidance to make sure the whole building is Covid-secure for staff and visitors
- Hand sanitiser will be available throughout the courtyard and building
- A one-way system will be in operation in interior areas of the site, including Mushrooms exhibition, Hej café and toilets to enable social distancing
- We have removed all interactive touch points and we kindly ask you not to touch any displays within the exhibition
- We have introduced PPE to staff in some of the closer proximity positions
- Regular additional cleaning will take place throughout the building
- Visitors will be reminded to respect social distancing with signage across site
- Our staff may also remind visitors about social distancing where necessary. We ask all visitors to be respectful of our staff and other visitors

SOMERSET HOUSE RE-OPENING PRESS RELEASE

NEW SOMERSET HOUSE BOARD TRUSTEES – BIOGS

Alix Burge (appointed March 2020) is an experienced telecoms executive who has worked within the mobile industry for 20 years for both operators and vendors including Vodafone, Ericsson, EE, 3 and BT before moving to Ori Industries as VP for Telco and simultaneously providing consultancy services. She has a strong track record of building high performing teams to deploy, integrate and operate mobile and IT networks, and extensive project, commercial and budget management experience.

Beginning her career in telecoms engineering (and holding a BA in Telecoms Engineering), her strong technical background and customer facing operational skills give her the ability to hold executive responsibilities while having the technical knowledge to make key strategic decisions and identify new business opportunities in retail, wholesale and global telecoms markets.

Having forged a successful career in what is traditionally a male-dominated industry, she is a strong advocate of women in STEM and is involved in supporting female colleagues to develop into management positions, actively promoting STEM careers amongst young women by providing careers advice and mentoring to schoolgirls.

Martine d'Anglejan-Chatillon (appointed June 2019) is a leading figure in international cultural production. She has worked to pioneer new models of large-scale private and corporate philanthropy in the UK, as founding member of the National Gallery Trust Office, London abroad, via her work managing monumental projects with the Rothschild Foundation in the UK, Albania and Israel. She has served as Head of Development at the Whitechapel Gallery, London, and has served on the board for the Felix Trust for Art, and the Film & Video Umbrella, and the development boards of The Showroom London and The ICA.

d'Anglejan-Chatillon co-founded Thomas Dane Gallery, London, where as Partner for 14 years she collaborated with celebrated international artists, museums, collectors and biennales working to cement the gallery as one of Europe's most respected. She later served as the Executive Producer at Phenomen Films UK to oversee the release of DAU, one of the most ambitious projects in film ever undertaken. Today, d'Anglejan-Chatillon is founder and CEO of MDAC Productions, which is proposing a new agency model to engineer the production of world class works in hybrid media and to enable artists' meaningful participation in activities beyond the parameters of the traditional art world.

Wol Kolade (appointed June 2019) has led Livingbridge since 1998 with his role encompassing overall responsibility for the leadership and strategic development of the business, senior-level involvement in winning deals and active involvement in selective key investments.

SOMERSET HOUSE RE-OPENING PRESS RELEASE

Wol initially trained as an engineer, having studied civil and structural engineering at Kings College, London. After obtaining an MBA from Exeter University, he spent three years with Barclays before joining Livingbridge. Wol takes an active role in private equity industry initiatives and issues. He was previously a Chairman of the British Private Equity and Venture Capital Association in 2007/2008, a Council Member from 2002 - 2009 and Chairman of the Responsible Investment Advisory Board from 2009 - 2010.

Wol is Chairman of the Guys and St Thomas' Charity, which has assets in excess of £800 million, making it one of the largest medical charities in the UK. The charity awards grants to facilitate improvements to healthcare services in the London Boroughs of Lambeth and Southwark. In 2018 he was also appointed as a Non-Executive Director to the NHS Improvement Board.

Wol received an honorary doctorate from the University of Exeter in 2014.

Monica Monajem (appointed March 2020, also Chair of the Development Board) is the founder and CEO of Amitis Partners, an international full-service family office advisor & administrator. Amitis manages and oversees its own investments and assets as well as those of its clients. The firm provides bespoke financial, legal, tax and lifestyle advisory services to UHNW individuals and families. It covers their routine family office requirements through to long-term wealth planning and succession, investment management, corporate services, investment origination and due diligence, property advisory, art management & philanthropy. The firm is committed to a sustainable, ethical and green approach across all aspects of its business.

Monica is passionate about supporting young entrepreneurs and is an investor in a number of early stage tech companies. Philanthropically her interests are children, education and giving young people support to move ahead in life. She is a patron of The Centre for Entrepreneurs and Somerset House, among others.

From an early age, Monica worked at her family's trust corporation. Her career in the corporate world started as an M&A and restructuring specialist. She holds degrees in Law and Statistics & Economics, a dual Masters in Corporate Law and Corporate Finance and is a qualified Chartered Accountant.

Jonathan Newhouse (appointed March 2020) is the Chairman of the Board of Condé Nast, a global media company which publishes Vogue, Vanity Fair, Gentlemen's Quarterly, The New York and many other magazines around the world in addition to producing more than 100 websites.

Newhouse was appointed Condé Nast Chairman of the Board in April 2019 following a career of nearly 30 years as Chairman and Chief Executive of Condé Nast International, the arm of the media company responsible for its activities outside the US. He grew Condé Nast's footprint from 7 markets, centred in Western Europe, to 31 markets around the globe. Under his direction, Condé Nast launched editions of Vogue in China, Russia, Japan, India, Korea, Mexico, Turkey, Holland, the Middle East and Ukraine, among other countries, and established Gentlemen's Quarterly (GQ),

SOMERSET HOUSE RE-OPENING PRESS RELEASE

Vanity Fair, Glamour, Wired, Tatler and Condé Nast Traveller as global brands. He expanded the company's activities into websites, social media, video, restaurants, events and education.

Newhouse was born March 1952 in the US. He has lived in London since 1994 and added British citizenship in 2004.

He began his career in the 1970s in the newspaper industry. His first job was newspaper press operator. He worked as a reporter and editor before moving to the magazine industry in 1980. He served as Executive Vice President of The New Yorker and publisher of Details prior to taking on an international position for Condé Nast.

Newhouse was decorated as an Officer in the Order of Arts and Letters of France in 2008

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