

**SOMERSET  
HOUSE**

# ASSEMBLY 2020

**PRESS RELEASE**

**23 – 27 September 2020**

**FREE**

**SOMERSET  
HOUSE  
STUDIOS**



**Available online at [assembly2020.co](https://assembly2020.co)**

- **First online edition** of Somerset House Studios' contemporary electronic and experimental music series
- Nightly **premieres of newly commissioned sound works** from critically-acclaimed experimental artists, musicians and producers **Lafawndah, Loraine James, Ben Vince, Zadie Xa** and **Kelman Duran**
- Live streamed talks programme featuring the artists in conversation with **Coby Sey, Shannen SP, Tamar Clarke-Brown** and more
- **Online and on-site introductory workshops** offering insight and advice on producing and arranging spatialised audio, hosted by resident spatial sound producers **Call & Response** and DIY music platform **Mutant Promise**

Somerset House Studios presents **a special digital edition** of its contemporary electronic and experimental music series **ASSEMBLY** to mark its third annual season this September.

Hosted via a new immersive listening platform developed specially for the series, *ASSEMBLY* presents **five nightly premieres of sound works** created by artists **Lafawndah, Loraine James, Ben Vince, Zadie Xa** and **Kelman Duran** during Somerset House Studios' four-month artist residency programme **Sonic Terrains**, in collaboration with resident spatial sound producers **Call & Response** and supported by **Jerwood Arts' Development Programme Fund**.

With each artist exploring the possibilities of spatial composition to create original 360° sound pieces, this year's programme invites audiences to listen, visualise and navigate sound in new ways through its interactive, three-dimensional online listening platform, as the artists share their creations with the public for the first time.

Ahead of each evening's performance, each artist will unpack the process and inspirations behind their

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new work in a programme of **live in conversation talks**. This year's series will also be accompanied by online and on-site **introductory workshops**, exploring the possibilities of spatialised composition.

### LINE-UP HIGHLIGHTS



**Zadie Xa: Moon Poetics 4 Courageous Earth Critters and Dangerous Day Dreamers**  
23 September, 19.00

**Artist Talk: Zadie Xa in conversation with Tamar Clarke-Brown**  
From 18.00

Visual artist and performer **Zadie Xa** presents a new six-part narrative sound piece for *ASSEMBLY*. **Moon Poetics 4 Courageous Earth Critters and Dangerous Day Dreamers** tells the story of animal kinship as a survival strategy to save an ailing planet. Loosely based on the Korean shamanic story of Princess Bari, the audience is taken on a guided journey through parallel dimensions, led by a host of creatures.

Xa is joined by writer, artist, and curator **Tamar Clarke-Brown** in conversation ahead of the evening's performance.



**Kelman Duran: A Last ... Cinema**  
24 September, 19.00

**Artist Talk: Kelman Duran in conversation with Tabitha Thorlu-Bangura**  
From 18.00

Dominican musician and visual artist **Kelman Duran** showcases a new three-part audio work, **A Last ... Cinema**.

Using sonic collage to map out sound across its three movements, the film score inspired *A Last ... Cinema* embeds references to the politics and history of Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, South Dakota.

One of the largest Native American reservations in the United States, Pine Ridge is a recurring presence in Duran's work; an area in which he lived and shot documentary film *To The North* amid the Lakota Tribe, in turn inspiring his 2018 album *13th Month* that followed. Continuing to

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undertake archival work at Pine Ridge, *A Last ... Cinema* embodies another extension and manifestation of Duran's relationship to the reservation in which he translates the ideas around sound that he has been exposed to whilst spending time within the South Dakota region.

Kelman Duran is joined by curator and Somerset House Studios resident **Tabitha Thorlu-Bangura** in conversation ahead of the evening's performance.



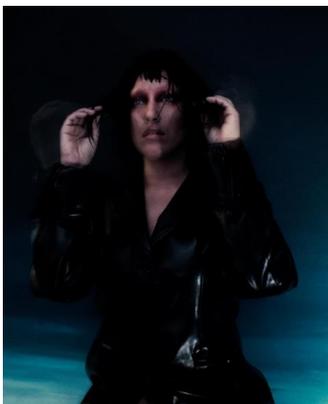
**Loraine James**  
**25 September, 19.00**

**Loraine James in conversation with  
Shannen SP**  
**From 18.00**

North London based electronic producer  
**Loraine James** premieres a new long-form

audio piece for *ASSEMBLY*. Comprising of songs that span the last few years, James' work brings together a variety of musical fragments, ranging from ambient to upbeat dance, to create a long-form audio piece in which original components are rearranged and re-imagined for spatialised immersive listening.

Loraine James is joined by DJ and curator **Shannen SP** in conversation ahead of the evening's performance.



**Lafawndah: Antinomy**  
**26 September, 19.00**

**Artist Talk: Lafawndah in conversation  
with Christelle Oyiri**  
**From 18.00**

To coincide with the launch of her highly anticipated forthcoming album *The Fifth*

*Season*, critically acclaimed vocalist and producer **Lafawndah** premieres a new sound piece, **Antinomy**.

Taking form as a radiophonic play, *Antinomy* acts as an extended narrative companion piece to the artist's upcoming album, which is inspired by N.K. Jemisin's science fiction novel of the

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same title. Adopting a composition influenced by audio-essays, radio documentaries and the dramatic tradition of the Greek chorus, *Antinomy* sees Lafawndah using newly recorded elements with live and improvised takes that make up *The Fifth Season* to explore sonics as a tool for vivid world-building.

Lafawndah is joined by DJ, producer and critic **Christelle Oyiri** in conversation ahead of the evening's performance.



### **Ben Vince: Falling into Time** **27 September, 19.00**

**Artist Talk: Ben Vince in conversation  
with Coby Sey**  
**From 18.00**

Dynamic saxophonist and composer **Ben Vince** shares his new work, **Falling into Time**.

With recent collaborators including Joy Orbison and Mica Levi, Vince's immersive new work seeks to create a space in which listeners can transcend.

Through a focus on texture and energy, *Falling into Time* sees Vince experimenting with the intricacies of spatialised audio and the visual elements of sound, using a collage approach to arrangement to create a piece which evokes the concentration of feelings and emotions felt during the current times of global uncertainty and tension.

Drawing upon his interest in time, and our relationship to it, *Falling into Time* encourages listeners to submit themselves into feeling the energy of the current moment.

Vince is joined by vocalist and musician **Coby Sey** in conversation ahead of the evening's performance.

### **WORKSHOP PROGRAMME & LISTINGS:**

DIY music platform and Somerset House Studios residents **Mutant Promise** join immersive sound agency **Call & Response** to deliver introductory online and in-person spatial sound production workshops, offering a behind the scenes look into the specialist processes, and state of the art spatial sound technology, behind this year's *ASSEMBLY* commissions.

### **Online Class: Introduction to 3D audio for online platforms**

Thursday 8 October, 2 hrs, £15

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### In-Person Workshops: Music production with spatial sound

Saturday 10 October & Sunday 11 October, 4 hrs, £40

For more information and tickets please visit: [somersethouse.org.uk/assembly](http://somersethouse.org.uk/assembly)

Following ASSEMBLY, Somerset House Studios will celebrate its past four years with AGM 2020 on 6 November, which this year will be an artist-led hybrid event of live and pre-recorded works all streamed online. Centred around generosity and collaboration, the programme will feature a number of new commissions and will focus on community and new methodologies for working with resident artists, with an ethos of lifting others up, sharing resources, decision making and maximising our impact by working together.

### FOR PRESS ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

[press@somersethouse.org.uk](mailto:press@somersethouse.org.uk)/0207 845 4624

#### ADDITIONAL LISTINGS INFORMATION

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

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

**Website:** [www.somersethouse.org.uk](http://www.somersethouse.org.uk)

**Somerset House Facebook:**

[www.facebook.com/SomersetHouse](http://www.facebook.com/SomersetHouse)

**Somerset House Twitter:** @SomersetHouse

**Somerset House Instagram:** @SomersetHouse

#### 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](http://somersethouse.org.uk)

#### ABOUT JERWOOD ARTS

Jerwood Arts is the leading independent funder dedicated to supporting UK artists, curators and producers to develop and thrive. We enable transformative opportunities for individuals across art forms, supporting imaginative awards, fellowships, programmes, commissions and collaborations. We present new work and bring people from across the arts together in the galleries at Jerwood Space, London, as well as across the UK. [jerwoodarts.org](http://jerwoodarts.org)