

SOMERSET
HOUSE



SOMERSET HOUSE

2019/20

Somerset House is 20 years old, a relatively young organisation in a historic setting with a mission to interrogate what a 21st century arts institution should be.

By embedding an extraordinary community of artists, makers and creative organisations inside Somerset House, we are establishing a radical new approach where our residents form part of our creative engine, driving and shaping our cultural programme and fueling interdisciplinary, intergenerational collaboration. This means that Somerset House is constantly overflowing with new ideas and fresh perspectives, forming a blueprint for today's changing world.

In 2019/20 we reached an important milestone as we completed the refurbishment and animation of the final part of our site. In October 2019 we opened Somerset House Exchange, a new shared workspace for freelancers and small businesses working across the creative sector and already have more than 200 members, including 44 through our bursary programme. Our Exchange members have added a further dimension to our creative community of over 450 resident organisations including 66 artists.

We had an exceptional year of strong programming with particular praise for our exhibitions: *Get Up Stand Up Now: Generations of Black Creative Pioneers*; *Kaleidoscope: Immigration and Modern Britain*; *24/7, A Wake-up Call for Our Non-Stop world*; and *Mushrooms: The Art, Design and Future of Fungi*. The breadth of our cultural programme and the new commissioning opportunities created for artists were only possible as a result of support from a wide variety of partners and collaborators.

As we approached the financial year-end, the landscape rapidly changed with the arrival of Covid-19. The months since then have been very different as we have grappled with site closure, a gradual reopening and the impact of the pandemic on every aspect of our operations and finances. This has meant that many of the plans and strategies that were underway have been delayed, altered or cancelled. This includes moving forward with our capital project West Street.

Despite the extreme challenge, there have been some upsides, especially in relation to the pace and efficacy with which the Trust has adapted to remote-working and the expansion of our digital programme. The latter has enabled us to extend our audience reach and it will now become a more significant, permanent pillar across all our programming.

Looking ahead to the next twelve months and beyond, our focus will be on protecting what we have created, reworking our business model and rebuilding our financial resilience for the world post-pandemic.

William Sieghart CBE
Chairman

Jonathan Reekie CBE
Director

Get Up, Stand Up Now (@PeterMacdiarmid) | Front cover image: Reduce Speed Now; by Justin Brice Guariglia (@JohnNguyen_PA_WF)



A NEW BLUEPRINT FOR ARTS & CULTURE

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

Our building	Our visitors	Our people
Over 590,000 sq ft of Grade 1 listed architecture	Over 2.6 MILLION visitors	103 CORE STAFF c. 100 CASUAL STAFF c. 120 VOLUNTEERS for Somerset House Trust

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

Over **450** resident organisations with over **2,500** people

Somerset House Studios	Creative Enterprise
66 Artists and their teams	Over 130 creative enterprises
Makerversity	Somerset House Exchange
Over 300 creative-tech and maker members	Over 200 members of our new creative co-working space

Our Neighbours

The Courtauld Gallery and Institute and King's College London

IN 2019/20 WE ACHIEVED...

393,910 visitors  to Somerset House's produced cultural programme. **17 free** and **8 paid exhibitions** and installations  across the year. A social media following of **over 617,000** . **69 new commissions**, 19 of which were for Somerset House Studios artists. **Over 200 events** across the site. Free exhibitions open to the public over **301 days of the year** . **14,866 people** participated in our Engagement & Skills programme through **176 talks** and events , including 95 gallery-based talks and introductions, and 15 Creative Careers Programme events and workshops. **66 Somerset House Studios** artists and their teams occupying **25 studios** over **15,000 sq ft**, includes **18 new** Somerset House Studios artist residents . **Over 300 creative-tech and maker members** at Makerversity which provides dedicated and shared workspaces and specialist workshops. **Over 200 members**  of the new creative co-working space Somerset House Exchange. **Over 130 creative enterprises** occupying 233 offices over 88,000 sq ft, 80% are creative SMEs and 25% are charities or social enterprises . **9,124 hours** of volunteer time , which included delivering 287 tours  to 3,438 participants.

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.



Get Up, Stand Up Now! Generations of Black Creative Pioneers

‘What distinguishes Zak (Ove, curator)’s show from others on Black artists is how he unifies the artists’ disparate messages without watering them down and, in turn, gives them their own agency’ – gal-dem



Kaleidoscope: Immigration & Modern Britain*

‘Ekow Eshun’s show reflects not just a breadth of cultures but the creative possibilities of photography and video’ – Evening Standard



Summer Series with American Express

‘There’s a distinct soul flavour to proceedings, with artists striving to push the genre forwards. Garage rock, jazz, disco and more weaves its way throughout 11 nights of music’ – Evening Standard



Film4 Summer Screen

‘The most anticipated outdoor cinema in London every year’ – Conde Nast Traveller

(T - B) Get Up, Stand Up Now @ Peter Macdormid | Kaleidoscope @ Tim Bowditch | Summer Series @ Somerset House | Film4 Summer Screen @ Somerset House

(T - B) Mary Sibande @ Anne Terzloff | 24/7 (Teko, Awoko) @ Stephen Chung | Skate @ Matthew Kahlenborn | Mushrooms @ Mark Blowe | Aida Muluneh @ Anne Terzloff



Mary Sibande: I Came Apart at the Seams*

‘A short, sharp shock from one of South Africa’s most talented contemporary artists’ – City AM



24/7: A Wake Up Call For Our Non-Stop World

‘A clever, thought-provoking show... sending us stimuli from all sides. It is important. Make time to see it’ – Financial Times



Skate with Fortnum & Mason

‘Somerset House holds the standard for dreamy winter nights that are straight out of a wonderland fantasy’ – Daily Telegraph



Mushrooms: The Art, Design & Future of Fungi*

‘The highlight of my London culture cram was a small and mushroom-shaped exhibition at Somerset House... simply fantastic’ – The Times



Aïda Muluneh: Water Life

‘The renowned Ethiopian artist has taken a series of striking images to depict the harsh life of many women in rural areas’ – BBC News

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS: In addition we proudly hosted **Photo London** and **1-54 contemporary African art fair** and we continued our support of **The Saturday Club** hosting their annual show. We worked with students from the Courtauld’s MA Curating the Art Museum course to develop **Generations: Connections Across Time and Place** which featured works from the Arts Council Collection and drew inspiration from the themes of **Get Up, Stand Up Now!**

***Part of the Charles Russell Speechlys Terrace Room Series**

LONDON'S WORKING ARTS CENTRE

Somerset House is home to a community of over 450 creative organisations and artist collectives, comprising over 2,500 individuals. Collectively, this unique creative ecology brings together all forms of artistic enterprise and disciplines in a complementary and collaborative environment that encourages engagement and facilitates creative exchange.

Last year we hosted over 60 free events exclusively for residents covering a wide range of topics including business support and mental health awareness, and providing opportunities to work together on sustainability, share best practice, socialise and network.



Thanks to support from the Mayor of London's Good Growth Fund, we were able to open **Somerset House Exchange**, a new shared workspace for freelancers and small creative enterprises in what was the final part of Somerset House to be restored and given a new creative purpose. By the end of March 2020, we had 213 active members. The top five sectors our members work within are Art Production, Art Consultancy, Marketing & Advertising, Film & TV, and Creative Technologies.

We have committed to building an inclusive community reflecting the diversity of our society by offering bursary placements for emerging talent and underrepresented groups. We gave 44 bursary placements in January 2020, with membership prices at an 80% discount, allowing many individuals the ability to work away from their home and to benefit from being part of an active, creative community.



BACKING PROGRESS, NURTURING CREATIVITY

The third anniversary of **Somerset House Studios** saw a gear-change in the impact of resident artists on our wider resident community and cultural programme. Highlights included a vibrant programme of performances and events exploring key themes from Get Up, Stand Up Now, over **ten new commissions** for Studios artists as part of our 24/7 exhibition and the second edition of our experimental music festival **Assembly**, this year curated by Christian Marclay. We also opened **Gallery 31**, a new permanent exhibition space in the New Wing dedicated to profiling the Studios community and work developed through our residencies.

With support from the Rothschild Foundation and Westminster City Council, we were able to open three more studios, bringing the total number of studios to 25. By the end of March 2020, Somerset House Studios was home to **66 artists** and their teams, made up of **153 individuals**.

100% of artists said their residency has had an impact on their practice and development with 81% saying the impact on their practice and development was significant. 97% of artists said their studio residency represented good value in terms of the rent they pay.

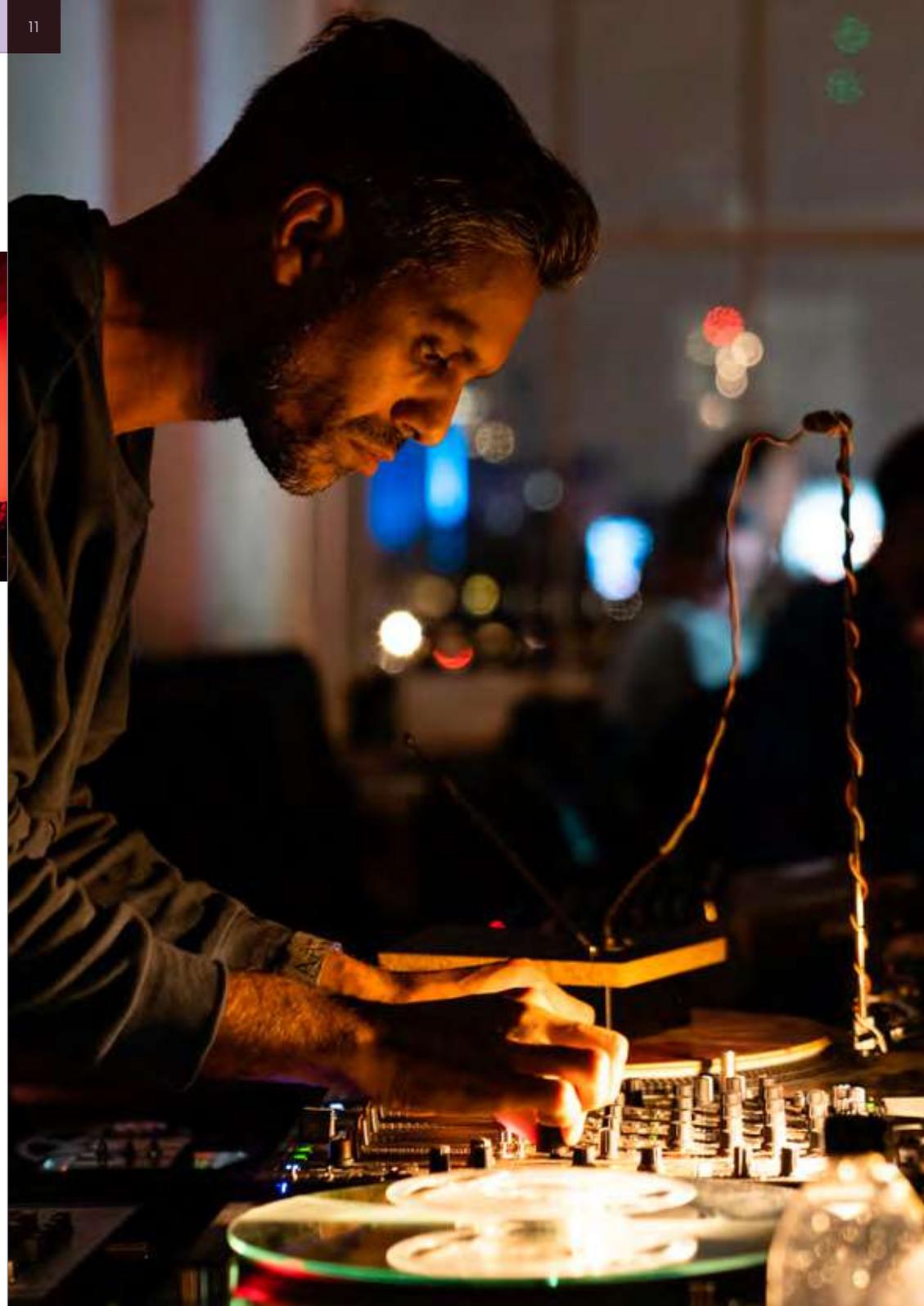
“I feel invigorated by the experience of working here, as if I’m suddenly tuning into a circuit of live currents”

- Laura Grace Ford, resident artist



The reach of Somerset House Studios was felt well beyond the Somerset House site. We hosted 10 female identifying international artists working with electronic music and digital art in residence as part of **Amplify**, our partnership with Mutek festivals and the British Council, focused on creating an international platform for dialogue on access, inclusion and gender equality. Closer to home, our Studios team also co-curated **Wysing Polyphonic** in Cambridgeshire, which was shortlisted for Best Boutique Festival by DJ Mag in their Best Of British 2019 roundup.

Support raised from our newly established Young Talent Fund was earmarked for new Studios bursaries, but we were thankfully able to redirect this to supporting existing Somerset House Studios artists, which helped to sustain this precious community during lockdown.



CHAMPIONING OPENNESS

The Somerset House Engagement & Skills programme sets out to nurture and develop the future leaders and creatives of our sector by platforming them in and with our creative community, our cultural programme and across our whole organisation. This enriching intergenerational, interdisciplinary knowledge exchange creates new communities and networks whilst shaping the culture and creatives of tomorrow.

Highlights include our **Creative Careers Programme** which engaged with 975 participants providing careers advice and support to young people embarking on careers in the creative sector. This included the second edition of the Creative Careers Academy, which involve nine-month London Living Wage paid placement opportunities.

Many different strands of our Engagement & Skills programme came together around the Get Up, Stand Up Now exhibition, around which we programmed our **Generation Get Up weekend**.

'I really just felt like there was a place where you could be heard and they were about developing your own opinions which was really amazing'

– Creative Careers Academy member

Activity over the last twelve months has provided the groundwork for connecting young people with our Somerset House Studios artists, and bringing young people further into the centre in terms of Somerset House's decision making and content development. This is reflected in our newly established **Young Producers** programme.



'Thank you so much for inviting us to such an incredible event, we were truly inspired and felt overwhelmed with how kind you were to us all. The day was really well organised and the children enjoyed every minute of it'

– Primary school teacher on Windrush Day schools event



A PLATFORM FOR ALL

Somerset House's digital output plays a central role in the delivery of our cultural programme and creative community ambitions, and engaging our digital audiences is more important than ever.

Alongside our 19/20 exhibitions, digital highlights included an extensive range of content for **Get Up, Stand Up Now**, including a documentary series, a creative collaboration with Google Arts and Culture, and 5 in-depth podcasts with Black creative pioneers featured in the show, which were nominated for the British Podcast Awards. A series of films accompanying **24/7** playfully expanded the themes in the exhibition alongside a podcast series profiling exhibition contributors. We brought together Black British women working in textiles to discuss their practice with **Mary Sibande** and later collaborated with NOWNESS on creative response to **Mushrooms**, followed by our first virtual tour of that exhibition.

Somerset House Studios' digital programme grew in scale, ambition and recognition, with the Somerset House Studios podcast winning a Silver Medal at the British Podcasts Awards in 2019. Other digital highlights included **The Feminist Internet** podcast aiming to diversify internet spaces, and the **Re:cognition** series from Studios artist **Nick Ryan**. We produced a documentary capturing



the **Somerset House Studios takeover of Wysing Polyphonic** and documented annual Studios events **AGM** and **Assembly**, curated in 2019 by Christian Marclay.

Across the year, our video content received over **half a million views** on our own platforms, with our podcasts receiving over **18k listens**.

The end of the year 19/20 saw the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, during which time our digital work expanded to form the backbone of our cultural output and Engagement & Skills programme. The success of this activity has laid the foundations for a more significant and ongoing digital programme and we are actively upskilling staff in this area.



BUILDING ON HISTORY FOR THE FUTURE

As well as opening up the remaining disused parts of the site and transforming them into Somerset House Exchange, Gallery 31 and the final three artist studios, we continued to keep up to date with major maintenance and repairs. Most significantly we began work on the stone cleaning and restoration of the South Wing’s river-facing façade and were grateful to receive a grant from Heritage of London towards part of this.

We continue to deliver on our commitment to reducing our environmental impact and aim to be a cultural leader on environmental sustainability. In 2019 we achieved a **4-star rating in the Creative Green Awards**.

‘If the last week represents a paradigm shift in climate-change awareness in the UK thanks to Extinction Rebellion, then its artistic heart in London is Somerset House, which is hosting an Earth Day season’

– Evening Standard

Our commitment to sustainability and ability to take meaningful action is boosted by the active Sustain network made up of a wide variety of Somerset House residents.

Through our cultural programme we create a platform for inspiring audiences and visitors to think differently about sustainability, most notably through our annual Earth Day Season, which last year included presenting Justin Brice Guariglia’s Reduce Speed Now! in the Edmond J Safra Fountain Court.

FINANCIAL BREAKDOWN 2019/20

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

The Trust and the trading subsidiary had a strong year financially although Covid-19 did impact revenues in March 2020. Total income in the year to 31 March 20 was £20.1m, £9.7m 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.

Income from trading activities (including corporate venue hire, sponsorship and retail activity) accounts for approximately 20% of total income at £3.8m and the Trust had grants and donations of £2.2m.

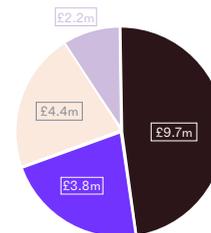
Ticket income from the cultural programme represents 22% of total income at £4.4m and expenditure on the cultural programme totalled £6.6m, with two major exhibitions this year.

We ended the year with reserves of £1.7m. This was ahead of the target set by our Trustees’ which seeks to ring-fence £0.75m of free reserves. The higher reserves level has helped to mitigate some of the impacts of Covid-19 in financial year 2020/21.

The summary income and expenditure figures for the year ending 31 March 2020 are extracted from our full audited financial statements which will be filed with Companies House before 31 December 2020 and published on our website shortly.

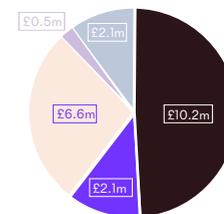
Our financial results for 2020/21 will be very different as a result of Covid-19, and we are grateful for the support received from the Government’s Cultural Recovery Fund.

Total income £20.1m (2018/19: £19.7m)



0.2% other income below:
 £18k in Bank interest
 £27k in Public education and communication

Total expenditure including depreciation £21.5m (2018/19: £19.5m)



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

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.

Somerset House Supporters' Court Members

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Edward Bell	Paul Goswell	Susana & Nick Leith-Smith
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Cultural Programme and Capital Supporters

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Art Fund	Google Arts & Culture	Charitable Trust
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Canada House	Mayor of London	Therme Group
Christian Levett	- Good Growth Fund	Universal Music Group
John S Cohen Charitable Trust	Mbili Charitable Trust	Westminster City Council
City Bridge Trust	Peter Wheeler & Pascale Revert Wheeler	
Sir Damon & Lady Buffini		<i>As well as those who wish to remain anonymous</i>
Emma Menell	PRS Foundation	
Freelands Foundation	Quebec Government Office	

Back cover image: Get Up, Stand Up Now (@PeterMacdonald)

Young Talent Fund Supporters include

Maria Adonyeva	Ashley Hayes	Julian & Brooke Metcalfe
Nadya Abela	Julian & Pat Heslop	Monica Monajem
Tarek & Basma AbuZayyed	Guy Higgins	Jonathan Newhouse
Rupert Adams	Philippe Jaccard	Simons Muirhead & Burton
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Trustees

William Sieghart CBE (Chair)	Jon Higgins (to 18 Mar 20)
Judy Gibbons (Deputy Chair)	Wol Kolade (from 12 Jun 19)
Alix Burge (from 18 March 20)	James Lambert OBE
Martine D'Anglejan-Chatillon (from 12 Jun 19)	Marcus Lyon (to 25 Sep 19)
Brian Eno	Caroline Michel (to 25 Sep 19)
Carol Fairweather	Monica Monajem (from 18 Mar 20)
Paul Goswell	Nader Mousavizadeh (to 31 Jan 20)
Sir Malcolm Grant (to 9 Dec 19)	Jonathan Newhouse (from 18 Mar 20)
Melanie Hall QC	Julien Sevaux

For more information on how you can make a difference to our work, please contact:

supportus@somersetshouse.org.uk Or visit: [somersetshouse.org.uk/support-us](https://www.somersetshouse.org.uk/support-us)



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