



SOMERSET HOUSE'S SEPTEMBER 2023 – JANUARY 2024 PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS ANNOUNCED PRESS RELEASE



Highlights include:

- **CUTE: An exhibition exploring the irresistible rise of cuteness** (25 Jan - 14 Apr 2024) - A major new exhibition showcasing how cuteness seeks to enhance, disrupt and re-imagine the world we live in today
- **Three Parent Child: Sonya Dyer** (28 Sep – 12 Nov 2023) - Somerset House Studios resident **Sonya Dyer** presents a new commission, marking the artist's first solo exhibition in London
- **Makerversity: Designing for the Real World** (1 Nov 2023 - 4 Feb 2024) - Somerset House celebrates the ten-year anniversary of one of its first creative residents **Makerversity**, with a brand-new exhibition showcasing innovative projects and the process behind disruptive design
- **London Battle** (7 Oct 2023) - The four corners of London battle against each other, in celebration of 50 years of hip hop culture. Curated by choreographer **Jade Hackett**, this day-long takeover of Somerset House's courtyard, in collaboration with **Dance Umbrella**, features showcases, workshops, cyphers, live DJs and a big outdoor party
- **The Missing Thread: Untold Stories of Black British Fashion** (21 Sept 2023 – 7 Jan 2024) - A major new exhibition charting the shifting landscape of Black British culture and the unique contribution it has made to fashion design

Somerset House Programme

The Morgan Stanley Exhibition

The Missing Thread: Untold Stories of Black British Fashion

Curated by the Black Oriented Legacy Development Agency

21 September 2023 – 07 January 2024

East Wing Galleries

General admission £12.50/Concessions (disabled, job seekers, seniors, NHS workers) £9.50

This autumn, Somerset House explores the untold stories of Black British fashion in a major new exhibition, **The Missing Thread: Untold Stories of Black British Fashion**.



Spanning from the 1970s to the present day, *The Missing Thread*, curated by the Black Oriented Legacy Development Agency (BOLD), charts the shifting landscape of Black British culture and the unique contribution it has made to Britain's rich fashion design history.

Set against a backdrop of politics and culture, the show examines how Black style and creativity has evolved across the decades and in turn influenced the world of fashion through music, photography, art and design. Rather than approaching fashion in isolation, the Black contribution to British fashion culture will be set within the broader socio-political context, placing garments alongside artworks, cultural artefacts, music, memorabilia, videos and installations. Contributors include **Ozward Boateng, Chris Ofili, Maud Sulter, Bruce Oldfield, Althea Mcnish, Ajamu** and many more.

The Missing Thread concludes by spotlighting the genius of one of Britain's most influential Black fashion designers, the late **Joe Casely-Hayford OBE**, presenting the first ever major staging of pieces from the designer's extensive archive. A series of new commissions by contemporary Black designers will be woven throughout the show, including **Nicholas Daley, Bianca Saunders, Martine Rose** and Somerset House Studios resident **Saul Nash**, celebrating the generational lineage of Black creative excellence in British fashion.

Three Parent Child: Sonya Dyer
28 September – 12 November 2023
River Rooms, New Wing
10.00-18.00 daily
Free



Somerset House Studios resident **Sonya Dyer** undertakes a new commission to be presented throughout the River Rooms from September, marking the artist's first solo exhibition in London. The installation, **Three Parent Child**, will be the final stage of Dyer's Andromeda trilogy, as part of her ongoing project [Hailing Frequencies Open](#). HFO reimagines the history and radical potential of human space travel, exploring the intersections between scientific enquiry and science fiction. Sonya weaves influences including Star Trek, the legacy of HeLa cells, and mythology, to engage with ongoing conversations around monumentalism, memory and the role of speculation. *Three Parent Child* features two works: *Action>Potential*, and *Lucy*.

Action > Potential is a two-channel moving-image work centring Andromeda, the personified galaxy and constellation that shares its name with the Aiethiopian Princess Andromeda in Greek mythology. In Sonya's work, Andromeda metaphorically embodies the reclamation of the neglected stories of Black women of science and mythology. In *Action>Potential*, Andromeda is trying to return 'home' to her galaxy after unexpectedly finding herself in a science lab, where she comes across a rogue mitochondria named Lucy. "Action potential" is a scientific term used to explain the brief electrical impulse cells use to transmit information from one place to another. This exchange is a key inspiration for the movement patterns in the film.

Lucy is a large-scale sculpture of the afore mentioned rogue mitochondria, mutating through the three River Rooms and transforming into something new altogether. *Lucy* forms the last in a series of space vessel sculptures named after three enslaved women experimented on by a notorious 19th-century gynaecologist.

The title *Three Parent Child* takes its name from the recent scientific development of Mitochondrial replacement therapy (MRT), a new technique that incorporates DNA from three people to create a child, which mirrors Dyer's adherence to trilogies throughout her practice. Whilst in residence at the Studios, Sonya Dyer's research has been supported as part of the King's College London x Somerset House Studios Programme.

Commissioned by Somerset House and developed in residence at Somerset House Studios. Generously supported by Cockayne – Grants for the Arts and The London Community Foundation.

Sonya Dyer In Conversation

Tue 31 October 2023

Lancaster Rooms, New Wing

18.45-20.30

Tickets £6 via somersethouse.org.uk

This event sees Sonya Dyer in conversation about her new Somerset House exhibition, *Three Parent Child*. Comprising of a two-channel moving image work and multi-room sculpture, the show forms part of her ongoing *Hailing Frequencies Open* project – a reimagining of the history and radical potentiality of human space travel, exploration of the intersections between scientific enquiry, the stories of Black women of history and mythology, and ongoing conversations around monumentalism and memory.

The evening will include a screening of the previous two films in Sonya's HFO trilogy ('Andromeda' and 'The Betsey-Drake Equation') alongside late access to *Three Parent Child* through extended exhibition opening hours.

Morgan Stanley Lates at Somerset House with The Courtauld

Wed 4 October 2023

Site-wide

18.00-22.00

For ticket information visit somersethouse.org.uk



Morgan Stanley Lates will return for the third time in its 2023 series this

October, with the doors of Somerset House and The Courtauld once again thrown open after-hours for an exclusive evening of performance and activities celebrating two headline exhibitions; The Morgan Stanley Exhibition, *The Missing Thread: Untold Stories of Black British Fashion* at Somerset House and *Claudette Johnson: Presence* at The Courtauld.

London Battle

Saturday 7 October 2023

Edmond J. Safra Fountain Court

13.00-18.30

Free

London Battle will take over Somerset House's iconic, open-air courtyard for a day packed with showcases, workshops, cyphers, live DJs and a big outdoor party.

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of hip hop culture and with Breaking set to be the highlight of the 2024 Paris Olympics, Dance Umbrella and Somerset House are bringing together some of the most exciting talent from the four corners of London to go head-to-head across a diverse range of styles.



Curated by choreographer **Jade Hackett**, you will be the judge, deciding which part of our global city brings the best dance flavour – north, south, east or west.

A Dance Umbrella and Somerset House co-production.

Makerversity: Designing for the Real World

1 November 2023 – 4 February 2024

Terrace Rooms, South Wing

Pay What You Can

This autumn, Somerset House celebrates the ten-year anniversary of one of its first creative residents **Makerversity**, with a brand-new exhibition showcasing innovative projects and the process behind disruptive design.



Makerversity is a pioneering community of over 300 creatives based at Somerset House, working at the intersection of design, engineering and digital practice, developing ground-breaking solutions for the world's biggest societal challenges, including climate change, health and inequality.

The exhibition will showcase award-winning successes as well as research-in-progress across topics as diverse as sustainable materials, customisable product design, ethical AI, and pollution reduction. Key to the exhibition is *Makerversity's* ethos of designing and inventing with a social purpose, of solving problems in the present to create a better way to live in the future.

Across three rooms, a selection of current residents, as well as alumni, will take visitors on a journey through the process of bringing creative solutions from the *Makerversity* lab and workshop to life, from initial ideation and prototyping to the making process and real-life application.

The exhibition is curated by Paul Smyth, *Makerversity* Director and Co-Founder.

CUTE

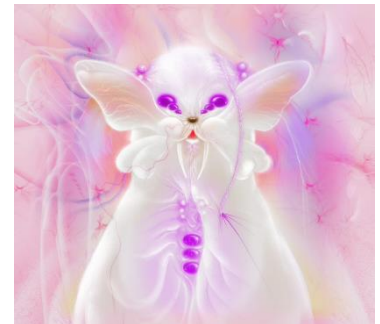
An exhibition exploring the irresistible rise of cuteness

25 January – 14 April 2024

Embankment Galleries, South Wing

Tickets on-sale this autumn

Opening January 2024, Somerset House presents **CUTE**, a major new exhibition exploring the irresistible force of cuteness in contemporary culture.



Focusing on the work of artists and musicians who use cute as a key register in their work, the exhibition will spotlight cuteness through cultural phenomenon such as **fashion, toys, video games and social media**, to reveal its extraordinary and complex power dynamic. Exploring notions of nostalgia, childhood, cultural exchange and feminine power, harnessing ideas of care and comfort, play and community, the surreal and the grotesque - the exhibition shows how cuteness seeks to enhance, disrupt and re-imagine the world we live in today.

Featuring **Karen Kilimnik, Nayland Blake, Cosima von Bonin, Ed Fornieles, Juliana Huxtable, Rachel Maclean, Paige K. B., Isaac Lythgoe, Alake Shilling, Wong Ping, Ram Han, Julien Ceccaldi, Liv Preston** (with many more contributors to be announced), plus Somerset House Studios artists **Chris Zhongtian Yuan** and **Sian Fan**, the exhibition aims to illuminate our understanding of how cuteness inspires surprising and revelatory responses to society. Alongside showcased works, visitors will discover a series of new commissions, including an **immersive visual and sonic music installation from multidisciplinary artist Hannah Diamond**, plus an activity space and games arcade for all ages.

The exhibition will also spotlight and celebrate the 50th anniversary of one of cute's most iconic and ubiquitous figures, **Hello Kitty**, in partnership with **Sanrio**. Visitors will have the opportunity to learn more about the beloved character's history before taking to the dancefloor in a **Hello Kitty inspired immersive disco**.

CUTE is curated by Claire Catterall, Senior Curator at Somerset House.

Somerset House Studios Programme

AGM 2023

13 October 2023

New Wing

19.00 - 23.00



Save the date: Somerset House Studios proudly mark another year of its exceptional resident artist community with its yearly late-night party. Taking over the Studios' ground floor, this year's edition of **AGM** will be a night of collaborative energy, art installations, and captivating live performances, alongside a late opening of *Three Parent Child*.

Full programme to be announced.

This is an 18+ event

Somerset House Inclusive Talent

Upgrade Yourself Festival

17 - 18 November

Lancaster and River Rooms

Free

For ticketing information sign up to the [Upgrade Yourself Newsletter](#)



Upgrade Yourself Festival returns in November across two days, empowering young people to pursue creative careers on their own terms. Connecting 16–24-year-olds aspiring to break into the creative industries with trailblazing industry experts, the festival will feature workshops and bespoke mentoring sessions, enabling attendees to navigate the creative sector with confidence. Guest speakers will share the tools, hacks and skills to help navigate the creative industries, such as financial literacy, DIY content creation, wellbeing and self-care. November's Upgrade Yourself Festival will also feature programming linked to Somerset House's major autumn exhibition *The Missing Thread: Untold Stories of Black British Fashion*.

Generously supported by the Warburg Pincus Foundation, and part of the Culture and Community Programme funded by Westminster City Council

The Morgan Stanley Exhibition

The Missing Thread: Untold Stories of Black British Fashion Upgrade Yourself Takeover

2 December

Seamen's Hall, South Wing

Free

For ticketing information sign up to the [Upgrade Yourself Newsletter](#)

Upgrade Yourself is taking over *The Missing Thread: Untold Stories of Black British Fashion* for one night only! This free event gives emerging and aspiring creatives aged 18-30 the chance to make meaningful connections with likeminded individuals, engaging in development workshops, talks and networking with industry professionals. The night includes free entry to the exhibition.

There will be daytime activations in partnership with **National Saturday Club** exclusively for younger audiences, which will inform and be linked to the content of the evening event.

Partner Events

1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair

12-15 October 2023

Site-wide

1-54 Contemporary African Art Fair is delighted to return to Somerset House for the 11th consecutive year over four days from **12 – 15 October 2023** (Press Preview 12 October). As the leading international art fair dedicated to contemporary art from Africa and the African diaspora, 1-54 London 2023 will host over 60 international exhibitors, it's largest number to date.



Of the 62 international exhibitors, one third are from the African continent and 14 galleries will participate at the fair's London edition for the first time. Newcomers to the fair include **Affinity Gallery (Lagos, Nigeria)**, **Efie Gallery (Dubai, United Arab Emirates)**, **Asfalto (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil)**, **Krystal Ann Art (Lisbon, Portugal)**, **Hannah Traore Gallery (New York, USA)**, and **The African Art Hub (London, UK)**, among others. New and returning exhibitors will present over 170 artists working across an array of mediums from painting and sculpture to mixed media and installation. Works from established artists such as **Joana Choumali**, **Ibrahim El Salahi** and **Soly Cissé** to young and emerging artists including **Josué Comoe**, **Anya Paintsil** and **Edozie Anedu** will be on view.

Specially commissioned for the Edmond J. Safra Fountain Court at Somerset House, the Moroccan artist **Amine El Gotaibi** presents his most ambitious work to date: *"Illuminate the Light"* in collaboration with MCC Gallery in Marrakech, Morocco. The artist presents twelve individual geometric sculptures inspired by the seeds of a pomegranate that vary widely in shape and colour, to represent the diversity and abundance of the African continent. Wielding light as a solid medium within the sculptures, El Gotaibi also uses light as a metaphor to foster positive stories of Africa to counter the West's frequent stereotypes of the "dark continent." At dusk, the sculptures transform into luminous installations, underscoring the artist's philosophy that "out of darkness, light emerges".

NOTES TO EDITORS

ABOUT SOMERSET HOUSE

Step Inside, Think Outside

As the home of cultural innovators, Somerset House is a site of origination, with a cultural programme offering alternative perspectives on the biggest issues of our time. We are a place of joy and discovery, where everyone is invited to Step Inside and Think Outside.

From our historic site in the heart of London, we work globally across art, creativity, business, and non-profit, nurturing new talent, methods and technologies. Our resident community of creative enterprises, arts organisations, artists and makers, makes us a centre of ideas, with most of our programme home-grown.

We sit at the meeting point of artistic and social innovation, bringing worlds and minds together to create surprising and often magical results. Our spirit of constant curiosity and counter perspective is integral to our history and key to our future.

ABOUT SANRIO

Sanrio is the global lifestyle brand best known for Hello Kitty who was created in 1974, and home to many other beloved character brands such as My Melody, Kuromi, LittleTwinStars, Cinnamoroll, Pompompurin, gudetama,

Aggretsuko, Chococat, Bad Badtz-Maru and Kerokerokeroppi. Sanrio was founded on the philosophy that a small gift can bring happiness and friendship to people of all ages. Since 1960, this philosophy has served as the inspiration to offer quality products, services and activities that promote communication and inspire unique consumer experiences across the world. Today, Sanrio's business extends into the entertainment industry with several content series, gaming offerings and theme parks. Sanrio boasts an extensive product lineup which is available in over 130 countries. Sanrio hopes to bring smiles to everyone's faces with their vision of "One World, Connecting Smiles."

To learn more about Sanrio, please visit www.sanrio.eu and follow on YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.