

PRESS RELEASE

SKATE AT SOMERSET HOUSE WITH FORTNUM & MASON

Wednesday 13 November 2019 – Sunday 12 January 2020



Edmond J. Safra Fountain Court

TICKETS FROM £11 adults / £8.50 children

On sale in September

Now in its 20th year, Skate at Somerset House with Fortnum & Mason returns, promising a spectacular season of celebration in the heart of London

Hailed as one of the capital's favourite winter experiences, Skate at Somerset House heralds the start of the festive period with unrivalled skating, groundbreaking music, seasonal shopping, and delicious food and drink.

The magnificent ice rink transforms the neoclassical courtyard into an exciting winter destination, complete with a **glorious 40ft Christmas tree** laden with Fortnum & Mason hampers, and a multitude of special events and experiences. From skating lessons with **Skate School** for adults and **Polar Bear Club** for children, to the ultimate nightlife sets from trailblazing DJs on rink-side decks at **Skate Lates**, there is something for everyone across the *Skate* season. Off the ice, the **Fortnum's Lodge** offers alpine-inspired comfort with indulgent dishes and warming drinks, whilst the **Fortnum's Christmas Arcade** brings a special selection of the iconic grocer's products for festive shoppers to gift their loved ones. With its unrivalled atmosphere and central location, *Skate at Somerset House* forms the perfect place for family and friends to celebrate the winter season, from morning to night.

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An unmissable experience for late-night skaters and music lovers, **Skate Lates** sees leading DJs takeover the rink-side decks, with this year's line-up welcoming some of the finest names from the contemporary music scene. Joining the 2019 line-up is critically acclaimed Somerset House Studios resident artist, **Nabihah Iqbal**, hailed by *The Guardian* as 'a trailblazer for Asian women in rock', who takes over the rink with an eclectic celebration of music for an unforgettable *Skate Lates* residency. **RockersLDN** bring a Caribbean Christmas extravaganza, whilst top promoters **Eat Your Own Ears** return with a selection of the best new music.

For those looking to enhance their first skating experience, or for seasoned skaters looking to advance their skills, the ever-popular **Skate School** and **Polar Bear Club** offer sessions with National Ice Skating Association (NISA) instructors, guaranteed to build confidence on the ice. The rink is open to wheelchair users across all skating sessions, and dedicated sessions for wheelchair users are also available.

Alongside groundbreaking contemporary music at *Skate Lates*, *Skate at Somerset House* offers the opportunity for friends and family to enjoy the very best of contemporary culture through a host of **special exhibitions and events**, including **Somerset House's major winter exhibition, 24/7**. This landmark show examines society's inability to switch off from its 24/7 culture, creating a space where visitors can pause and reflect on their own lifestyles through a series of immersive and interactive works from leading global artists. To celebrate the opening of *24/7* and to mark the launch of the winter season, Somerset House **presents London's very first 24-hour skating event**, keeping its doors open throughout the night for a skating experience unlike any other. Day or night, *Skate at Somerset House* forms the perfect place **to take time out from the pressures of everyday life**, embrace new experiences both on and off the ice, and enjoy quality time with loved ones.

Visitors can also enjoy a **free exhibition** from **one of South-Africa's most prominent contemporary artists, Mary Sibande**. Forming her first UK solo exhibition, ***Mary Sibande: I Came Apart at the Seams***, Sibande presents a series of striking photographic and sculptural works exploring the power of imagined narratives in challenging stereotypical depictions of women and shaping identities in South Africa today.

Skate at Somerset House partners with **Fortnum & Mason** for the sixth year, marking the return of relaxed dining at the alpine-inspired **Fortnum's Lodge**, a restaurant with a range of delicious après-skate treats that are perfect for sharing with loved ones. Brand new dishes include the indulgent **Mushroom Fondue**, combining Comte, Raclette and Gris Bleu cheeses with sautéed Portobello, Oyster and Chestnut mushrooms; for those with a sweet tooth, freshly baked **Apple and Cinnamon Lattices** await, served with **Black Cherry Bellinis**, whilst further new cocktail offerings include **Sloe Gin Fizz**, **Scandi Coffee**, and **Treacle** – a rum and brandy-based tippie stirred with golden syrup and apple juice.

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There's plenty more to whet visitors' appetites in the **Fortnum's Christmas Arcade**. Celebrating festive feasting and gifting, each room is filled with seasonal delights, from classic favourites including Champagne, coffee, wine, cheese and mince pies, through to the more exotic flavours of glacé fruits, ruby truffles and Elvas plums. This year, Fortnum's introduces its **new range of sumptuous vegan, gluten-free and alcohol-free treats** such as **The Christmas Vegan Hamper** filled with ten vegan-friendly delights, ranging from gluten-free and vegan St James Christmas Pudding to a moreish Cream Sherry; **Fortnum's Sparkling Tea**, the latest evolution in Fortnum's 312-year tea history, forming a refreshing alcohol-free Champagne alternative; and **Chocolate Caviar**, an elegantly sweet alternative and the perfect accompaniment to coffee or digestif. Customers can also order from Fortnum's full range of luxury food, drinks and gifts on their website and arrange to Click & Collect from the Christmas Arcade at Somerset House.

At the **Skate Lounge with Baileys**, visitors can soak up the festive atmosphere from rink-side seats. The ideal spot for a morning coffee with friends, a weekend treat with family, or an alternative date destination, the Skate Lounge welcomes the **Baileys Treat Bar** offering a range of deliciously indulgent hot drinks including **customisable hot chocolates and lattes** plus the unmissable **Baileys Chocolate Reindeer Cocktail**, brand new to the Skate Lounge menu.

Skate tickets start at £11 for adults and £8.50 for children (a booking fee will apply) including skate hire. Sessions sell out quickly so it is advised that visitors book tickets in advance. A small number of tickets will be available on-site each day.

FOR PRESS ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

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NOTES TO EDITORS

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ADDITIONAL LISTINGS INFORMATION

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

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Website: www.somersethouse.org.uk

Somerset House Facebook:

www.facebook.com/SomersetHouse

Somerset House Twitter: @SomersetHouse

Somerset House Instagram: @SomersetHouse

Hashtag: #SkateSomersetHouse

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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.

ABOUT FORTNUM & MASON

First founded in Piccadilly in 1707, Fortnum & Mason has remained an essential London destination for anyone in search of extraordinary food, joy-giving things, unforgettable experiences and exceptional service ever since. From the food halls and confectionery counters to the beautiful fragrance, beauty and fashion floor, expertly curated gentlemen's department, and refined Diamond Jubilee Tea Salon, Fortnum's seeks to make the everyday special. Celebrated for its famous teas, Scotch eggs, handmade chocolates, and wicker hampers, the iconic brand is committed to the imagination and discovery that has seen it through 312 years of history.

Today, Fortnum's continues to expand to new outposts at home and abroad – most recently at London's The Royal Exchange, and in November to its first standalone overseas store and restaurant in Hong Kong's K11 MUSEA – alongside its special winter residence at Skate at Somerset House, now entering its sixth year. Proud of its storied past and innovating still, Fortnum's mission remains to deliver a sense of pleasure to every customer, whether they're shopping in-store or from around the world at the award-winning www.fortnumandmason.com. Follow Fortnum's on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook (@fortnums).