

SOMERSET
HOUSE

HYPER FUNCTIONAL, ULTRA HEALTHY PRESS RELEASE

Tue 2 Feb – Tue 2 Mar 2021

SOMERSET
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STUDIOS



FREE; pre-booking required for embroidery workshop | www.somersethouse.org.uk

Somerset House Studios' *Hyper Functional, Ultra Healthy* series returns with a dynamic online programme of new commissions, films, workshops, and conversations from artists and scientists exploring the concept of health and wellbeing in the age of the pandemic

The 2021 edition of *Hyper Functional, Ultra Healthy* considers individual health and collective wellbeing in the current moment, exploring how art can help navigate through times of crisis and create space to reconnect with the planet and each other. Offering moments of reflection and relief, *Hyper Functional, Ultra Healthy* invites audiences to consider how a healthier, more progressive future may be achieved collectively.

Launching on 2 February, the free digital series offers nine moments for audiences to discover new commissions, films, workshops, and conversations from the Studios creative community and beyond, tackling themes ranging from the sensory and spiritual to social and environmental.

Highlights include:

- New co-commission from artist-healer-seeker Tabita Rezaire guides audiences through the ancient African practice of Kemetic yoga
- Premiere of new commission from Studios residents Laura Grace Ford and Sam Williams reflects on the relationship between the city and the body in a time of heightened isolation
- Embroidery workshop led by artist Rebecca Jagoe explores the impact of words on the self, inspired by textual amulets worn during the Middle Ages to protect the body

Full programme:



Tabita Rezaire: MerKaBa For The Hoeteps

Tue 2 Feb

Created from artist Tabita Rezaire's home in Cayenne, French Guyana, *MerKaBa For The Hoeteps* forms an online guided introduction to the practice of Kemetic yoga, an African healing spiritual system practiced in ancient Kemet (ancient Egypt) based upon deep breathing, meditation and a series of geometrical postures.

In her new audio-visual commission, Rezaire invites viewers to join her meditative journey into the ancient African teachings from the comfort of home. The spiritual technology enables participants to reconnect with themselves and feel connected with each other, despite the physical distance enforced between them, all through the science of breath, geometrical alignments, storytelling, and sound.

Co-commissioned by Migros Museum and Somerset House Studios.



Timur Si-Qin: Podcast

Fri 5 Feb

Artist Timur Si-Qin presents a new podcast exploring how the health of the individual is fundamentally tied to that of the natural world. Following his internationally acclaimed series of works criticising the West's exploitation of the world and the resulting consequences of climate change, Si-Qin seeks to deconstruct the concept that people and the planet

are disparate entities, inviting listeners instead to consider a spirituality of symbiosis as explored in his 'New Peace' project.



Dr Romy Gad el Rab: *Digital Depletion and Conscious Computing: Burnout in an Era of Hyperconnectivity*

Tue 9 Feb | 18.30

With many restricted to the confines of their homes at multiple points over the last year, the inevitable increased dependence on digital devices has led to a new age of hyperconnectivity, and a real threat of digital burnout. In a new live streamed online lecture, Dr Romy Gad el Rab, consultant Psychiatrist and

collaborator of Studios resident collective Hyphen-Labs explores the impact of technology on mental health. A Q&A following the lecture offers viewers the opportunity to consult with Gad el Rab on possible solutions to a global digital burden.

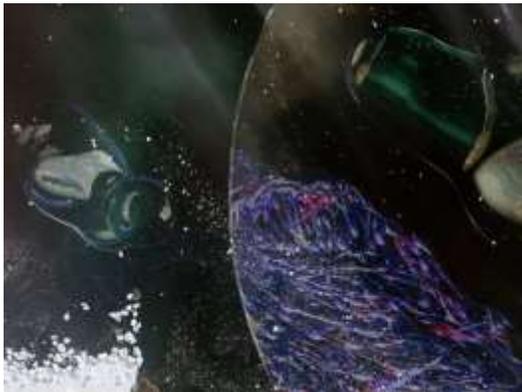


Shenece Oretha: *Listening Wholes*

Thu 11 Feb

Multidisciplinary artist Shenece Oretha immerses listeners in an experimental podcast exploring the theme of the body. Layering music, speech and sound in a powerful DJ lecture mix, Oretha invites listeners to journey through her sonic terrain, celebrating the mobilising effects of Black oral traditions in its exploration of improvisational musical practices,

audience culture, and Black literature. Demonstrating how sound has the power to move emotionally, physically and socially, Oretha's *Listening Wholes* connects listeners from wherever they may be in an intimate audio landscape.



Nella Aarne: *Notes on our Collective Cosmoecological Body*

Tue 16 Feb | 18.30

In this live lecture, audiences join curator Nella Aarne to consider what it means to live as part of one collective body. Guiding viewers through scholarly work and examples of artistic practices, Aarne reflects on the interconnectedness between human and non-human, exploring how society's relationship with the environment defies dualist characterisations.



Ana Vaz Double-Bill: *A Film, Reclaimed*
& *Occidente*

Thu 18 Feb | 18.30

Encouraging viewers to further consider the relationship between the world and its inhabitants, award-winning Brazilian director Ana Vaz presents a double-bill of two captivating film works. In *A Film, Reclaimed* Vaz shares her cinematographic essay reflecting on the impact of cinema on the global crisis, whilst *Occidente*

explores the impact of colonialism using a striking fusion of archive and contemporary footage alongside found imagery. The films are accompanied by a blog post featuring a Q&A with Vaz.

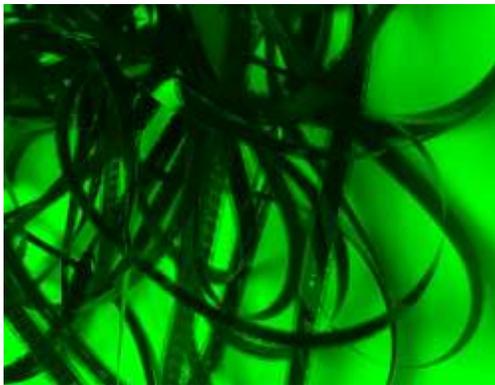


I beseech thee: Embroidering Textual Amulets
Workshop | Tue 23 Feb

For those looking to escape from the stresses of daily life, Irish artist Rebecca Jagoe leads an exclusive embroidery workshop, creating a calming space to slow down and enjoy trying a new skill. Inspired by the Western medieval practice of textual amulets, where short texts written on parchment and worn on the

body were considered to protect the bearer from enemies, participants have the chance to make their own embroidered textual amulet and accompanying carrying pouch. As sewers craft their embroidered pieces using scrap fabrics, Jagoe will meditate on the power of words, exploring the impact of language on the self and the wider community.

The workshop is suitable for embroidery beginners, and those who do not wish to sew are also welcome. Participants are encouraged to use fabrics they may have at home, making their amulets personal and unique. The first 30 individuals to sign up to the workshop will receive a complimentary kit of embroidery silk and needles.



not/nowhere Presents: Film Screening

Tue 25 Feb | 18.30

In the second and final film night of the series, artist workers' co-operative not/nowhere present a curated evening of short films selected from submissions by their 'community n/n'. Ranging from personal reflections on the meaning of 'wellness' to explorations of possible environmental implications, the films will all respond to and resonate with the

concept of health and wellbeing. The not/nowhere film programme will be announced on 15 February.



Laura Grace Ford & Sam Williams: Premiere

Fri 2 Mar

In this newly commissioned collaborative work for *Hyper Functional, Ultra Healthy 2021*, Studios resident artists Laura Grace Ford and Sam Williams fuse their respective disciplines of written word and video to form a striking audio-visual conversation piece. Capturing the radically altered urban experience in a time of social isolation, the artists engage with the liminal and spectral relationship between the city and the body.

HYPER FUNCTIONAL, ULTRA HEALTHY

2 Feb – 2 Mar 2021

FOR PRESS ENQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT: 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

Somerset House Studios Facebook:
www.facebook.com/SomersetHouseStudios
Somerset House Studios Twitter: [@sh_studios_](https://twitter.com/sh_studios)
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ABOUT SOMERSET HOUSE STUDIOS

Somerset House Studios is an experimental workspace in the centre of London connecting artists, makers and thinkers with audiences. The Studios offer space and support to artists pushing bold ideas, engaging with urgent issues and pioneering new technologies, and is a platform for the development of new creative projects and collaborations.

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