

**SOMERSET  
HOUSE**

**ARRIVALS**

Date	Name
21-03-18	WILBUR WORSLEY
20-06-63	THOMAS MALCHERCZYK
17-05-97	SIENAVENTURINOMALCHE
04-09-60	ANNA MARIA VENTURINO
01-07-29	AZIZ ABOLIRA
14-05-69	GRAEME DEVINE
22-11-99	EUAN DEVINE

**SOMERSET HOUSE**

**2020/21**

# INTRODUCTION

We have positioned Somerset House as a forward-facing organisation, encouraging interdisciplinarity, new ways of thinking, building an environment for our residents that is creative and inspiring whilst nurturing a young and relatively diverse audience. Much of this has been severely tested over the pandemic in ways we could hardly have imagined but the foundations remain firm and we remain positive and optimistic.

The self-sustaining financial model that we have developed and the wellbeing of our creative community, as well as our own staff, have been significantly challenged. Nonetheless, we adapted and innovated in ways that grew our digital audiences, supported our creative residents and saw us continually evolving our cultural programme plans in response to changing government guidelines.

During 2020/21 as the duration and full impact of COVID-19 fully materialised, we adapted our priorities to be:

- Ensuring we emerge from the current crisis with a strong and sustainable financial model
- Assessing how we can adapt our workspace and the support offered to creative businesses post-COVID, to help rebuild our income streams and help the sector to recover
- Identifying how we can make best use of our diminished resources in terms of public benefit and our charitable objects, continuing to extend the reach of our cultural programme and 'Engagement & Skills' activities via digital platforms
- Streamlining our processes and embedding new ways of working, learning from the positives of remote-working
- Delivering and building on our Anti-Racism Pledge
- Continuing to support key strategic projects including the Courtauld Institute of Art with their ambitious "Courtauld Connects" project, especially in relation to the reopening of the Courtauld Gallery in 2021 and the Strand Aldwych Project with Westminster City Council

We are grateful to everyone who has supported us over the last year and are especially thankful for the Government's Job Retention Scheme and Culture Recovery Fund. In 2021 we also said farewell to our outgoing Chair, William Sieghart, after 6 years of extraordinary service. William's time as chair was characterised by great ambition and a dedication to creative community, which will be his lasting legacy.

## Jonathan Reekie CBE

Director, Somerset House Trust

Cover photo: Arrivals & Departures by Yara + Davina

# FUTURE PRIORITIES

Our long-held commitment to creative innovation and entrepreneurial spirit gives us confidence that we can rebuild, despite the financial uncertainties of the year ahead. We are already detecting a number of green shoots, both in terms of new residents joining the Somerset House community and witnessing the reaction of visitors to events such as the London Design Biennale, Dodge and Photo London since fully reopening.

Whilst rebuilding our income streams and taking forward the lessons of the last year, we will be focused on nurturing our creative community, offering a distinctive cultural

programme and ensuring public enjoyment of the site.

In the year ahead, we will harness the power of our programme, our people, including our residents, and our building to:

- Drive artistic and social innovation
- Develop the widest span of talent and minds across community, sector, race, gender, age and stage
- Challenge the status quo and reinvigorate our own programme
- Leverage the power of the arts to intervene and make change across the whole of society

Little Debbie by Leila Aouad, photo by Tim Bowditch

## ADAPTING OUR CULTURAL PROGRAMME

We were quick to respond to locked-down audiences with a growing digital programme, drawing on our rich archive, working with the Studios' community to make new projects and bringing our careers focused Engagement & Skills programme online with great success.



Malik Nashad Sharpe performing in AGM

Much energy was expended on constantly changing scenario planning. Staff coped admirably with the pressures and uncertainty of this, as well as the need to cut almost all non-funded cultural programme.

We experimented with new kinds of digital content and formats that have informed our future ambitions for producing evergreen digital content and engaging audiences online.

- Due to lockdown restrictions, our total site visitors in 2020-21 were limited to 192,000 (previous year 2.6m+) and our in-person cultural audiences reached only 26,000 (previous year 394,000)
- 9,300 people watched our Studios' AGM takeover online, which compares with an in-person capacity of 800 in previous years. 53% of YouTube viewers were international
- Programme-led digital content increased the watch time and retention of audiences by 174% over 2020 in comparison to the previous year



Arrivals & Departures by Yara + Davina



Online artwork by Paradise as part of Assembly



Tameslouht, 2011 from Les Marocains by Leila Alaoui, photo courtesy of Leila Alaoui and Galleria Continua



Anna Mikkola performing in AGM

## SUPPORTING OUR RESIDENT COMMUNITY

Our carefully nurtured resident community has faced considerable pressure over the last year and we have done our best to support the different elements of our creative community in a variety of ways.

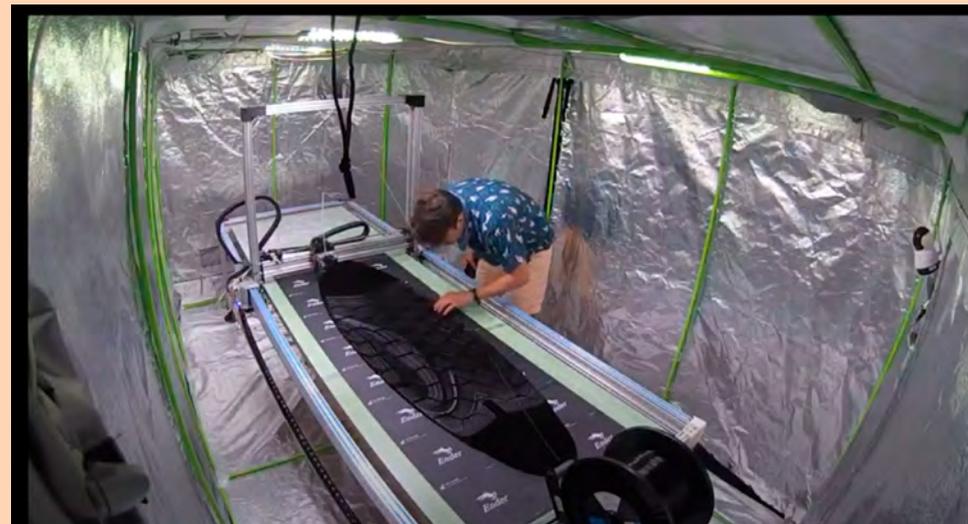
The greatest change has been among creative enterprise residents and we ended the year with 30% of our office space vacant, which reduced income from rent and service charges by £1.6m. We have adapted vacant spaces to create more flexible options and are currently seeing more residents returning to Somerset House on a regular basis and new residents arriving.

**“Somerset House gives our operation a halo of being part of a positive space, it gives us optimism and creativity, a shot of adrenaline when we really need it.”** – Somerset House resident

At the end of March 2021, Somerset House was home to over 370 creative organisations and artist collectives.

- 64 Somerset House Studios artists and their teams in 25 studios over 15,000 sq ft
- Almost 100 creative enterprises occupying 172 spaces across almost 63,000 sq ft
- Over 200 members of the creative co-working space Somerset House Exchange
- Over 200 creative-tech and maker members from 70 different organisations at Makerversity which provides dedicated and shared workspaces and specialist workshops

**Images on the right:** Makerversity member Nate Petre's 3D printing facility for PPE at Somerset House's Lancaster Rooms. This initiative involved collaborating with other Makerversity members and umbrella organisation SHIELD and drew on PhD work at Imperial College focusing on disrupted distributed manufacturing.



**“COVID-19 took so much from so many, I had the great fortune to help where and how I could. Not only was I able to help set up one of the UK's largest 3D print farms to tackle the PPE crisis but once it was up and running I managed to also build the UK's largest 3D printer that allowed us to make 3D printed bicycles and boards from the same waste plastic used for the PPE.”** – Nate Petre

## BEYOND SOMERSET HOUSE

The work of our extraordinary resident community has been recognised at the highest levels beyond Somerset House, with our artists and enterprises making waves on the global cultural stage. Here are some examples of their world-class work.



**Art in Flux** (collective of Exchange members) curated exhibition at Ars Electronica



**Saul Nash** (Studios resident) was nominated for the LVMH Prize and selected by the British Fashion Council for NEWGEN



**Coders of Colour** (Exchange member) founder Tolúlope Oğúnremí named among Forbes 30 Under 30



**Rebecca Salvadori** (Exchange member) launched trilogy about rave culture which was screened at various festivals as well as ICA



**Anna Meredith** (Studios resident) was nominated for the Mercury Prize for her album *Fibs*



**A Vibe Called Tech** (Exchange members) partnered with Gucci to highlight Black creatives to tell stories about the Black experience present, past and future



**Ananas Anam** (Resident Organisation) collaborated with Nike on Happy Pineapple Footwear using Ananas Anam's synthetic leather alternative from pineapple leaves



**Akinola Davis Jr** (Studios resident) won the Sundance Short Prize and was nominated for a BAFTA for his film *Lizard*



**Jenn Nkiru** (Studios resident) won a Grammy for Best Music Video on her work *Brown Skin Girl*



**Black Heroes Foundation** (Exchange members) presented a gallery take-over at The Gallery 12 Waterloo Place St James London



**Imran Perretta** (Studios resident) was the recipient of the Turner Bursary. His film *the destructors* was shown at Spike Island and Chisenhale

## SOMERSET HOUSE STUDIOS

We have been keenly aware of the need to find new ways of supporting resident artists, many of whom saw their income disappear overnight.

- We waived Studios rents from April – June 2020
- We launched the One-to-One initiative, pairing individual artists with individual donors to alleviate financial pressures and provide stability
- We introduced a Rent Relief Fund for artists and we have supported 29 artists to remain in their studios since

**“Access to my studio, and studio mates, has been a total lifeline for my mental and physical health.”**

– Somerset House Studios artist, from annual survey

**“This support came at a critical point for me – maintaining the studio would have been impossible in light of the financial implications of Covid. Knowing that there was someone unknown to me willing to support me and my practice was incredibly moving and affirming.”**

– Artist supported by One-to-One programme

- 84% of Studios residents say that being at Somerset House Studios had a significant effect on their practice and development
- 84% say their work has been shaped from access to facilities within the Studios
- 65% of the Studios community see their residency as essential
- 84% say they have received increased opportunities as a direct result of their residency
- 52% of Studios artists were still adversely financially impacted by the pandemic in April 2021

## SOMERSET HOUSE EXCHANGE

The Exchange only opened in autumn 2019 as a new shared workspace for creative start-ups, freelancers and other creative organisations who don't need an office or studio of their own.

**“The Exchange is the most vibrant and diverse working space I've been part of. I'm constantly making new connections, it's a real community.”**  
– Exchange member

We currently have 359 active members spanning the breadth of the creative sector: 23% are solo operators / freelancers and 77% are small businesses. 13% of our members have diversity, inclusion and social mobility at the heart of their business and services, 10% focus on innovation in the arts through creative tech and new ways of working, and 10% work in sustainability.

Given how new Somerset House Exchange was when COVID-19 struck, it is striking how we have managed to continue to cultivate the Exchange and to facilitate connections and encourage collaboration despite remote working.

- 54% of members have made valuable new contacts as a result of being part of the Exchange
- 23% members have won new clients as a direct result of their membership
- Despite the lockdown restricting economic and social activities for much of 2020, approximately 54% of respondents have collaborated with either arts or cultural institutions, while 27% of respondents have engaged with external research partners based at higher education institutions
- 19% of survey respondents have received funding or won new projects as a result of their membership
- Approximately 12% of respondents indicated that they have generated additional revenue as a result of their membership

Figures extracted from evaluation by London Economics as part of our reporting to the Mayor of London's Good Growth Fund.

# INCLUSION & PARTICIPATION

Our Engagement & Skills programme aims to remove barriers and increase representation across the creative sector.

As the pandemic engulfed the world, we recognised the need to respond to young people's anxiety and isolation and take some of our creative careers programme, *Upgrade Yourself*, online.

We developed fortnightly lunchtime sessions called *Upgrade Yourself: Peer Exchange*, collaborating with Somerset House's creative community and respected industry peers to share their career journeys and tips.

In the autumn, we also launched Future Producers, which provides

emerging creatives aged 18–30 with London Living Wage paid opportunities to develop skills and creative practice. Their first project, *Decentralise*, was produced with Somerset House Studios residents Comuzi. A number of Future Producers also interviewed creative practitioners for some of the *Upgrade Yourself: Peer Exchange* online sessions.

**“We were encouraged around our skills, as the group was so diverse we didn't have to feel a certain way about how different our work was”**

**“This project has affirmed that I am on the right track and helped me make the decision to find a career in something that is reflective of the work I want to do”**

- We reached 80,000 people through our monthly newsletter
- We reached 54,576 people aged 18-30 through our events and engagement activities online, through online sessions and smaller group session with Future Producers
- We delivered 119 hours of engagement through our online Upgrade Yourself sessions and Future Producer workshops



UPGRADE YOURSELF: THE CINEMATOGRAPHER'S LENS WITH BRADFORD YOUNG  
FILM 4 SUMMER SCREEN



UPGRADE YOURSELF: INSPIRATION  
CREATIVE VISION & COLLABORATION WITH HENRY HOLLAND

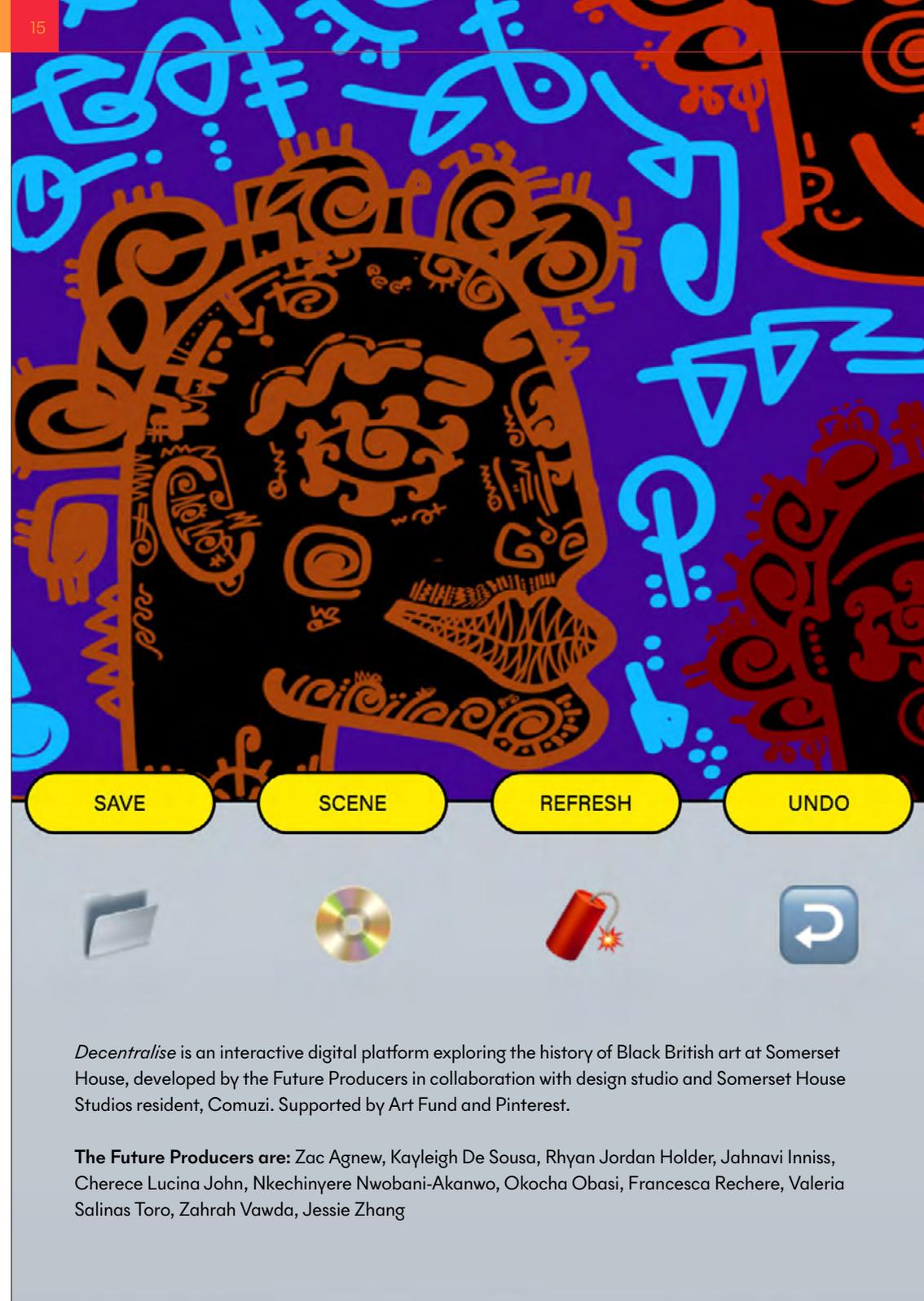


UPGRADE YOURSELF | INSPIRATION  
GOING LIVE WITH PRESENTER & BROADCASTER SWARZY MACALY

## COMMITMENT TO ANTI-RACISM

The Black Lives Matter movement has shone a light on how much more we need to do ourselves to be actively anti-racist and to address under-representation within our organisation and across our sector. Action taken over the last year, led by our Anti-Racism Taskforce, includes:

- A new **Speak Up policy**, supporting anyone working on behalf of Somerset House Trust to report any concern about wrongdoing, including racist incidents, without fear of reprisal. Somerset House's residents have access to the same channels of communication for raising concerns
- Producing an internal resource on **inclusive language** to support all staff to feel more confident when talking or writing about issues of representation
- Updated our **Code of Conduct** to include a statement on everyone's individual commitment to being anti-racist. This is something all staff are required to sign on joining and renewed annually
- **Anti-racism training** led by diversity consultant Bilal Harry Khan for all staff and trustees
- Created opportunities for anti-racist learning amongst our staff, such as an **Uncomfortable Conversations Club**, a discussion space for all staff to join, and a regular reading group for the senior management team
- Engaged **Inclusive Recruiting** to advise on better use of inclusive language within our recruitment processes and to review how we benchmark representation within our current workforce most effectively
- As part of our Anti-Racism pledge, we have commissioned historians Dr Michael Bennett and Esther Brot to conduct new research on Somerset House's history in order to **understand our colonial context** more fully. This work will feed into our revamped Historic Highlights tours and stimulate ideas for future programming and interpretation
- Launched the **Black Business Incubator**, developed with Mentor Black Business and sponsored by Morgan Stanley. This new twelve-month programme aims to help early-stage Black-led creative businesses fulfil their potential



SAVE

SCENE

REFRESH

UNDO



*Decentralise* is an interactive digital platform exploring the history of Black British art at Somerset House, developed by the Future Producers in collaboration with design studio and Somerset House Studios resident, Comuzi. Supported by Art Fund and Pinterest.

**The Future Producers are:** Zac Agnew, Kayleigh De Sousa, Rhyan Jordan Holder, Jahnavi Inniss, Cherece Lucina John, Nkechinyere Nwobani-Akanwo, Okocha Obasi, Francesca Rechere, Valeria Salinas Toro, Zahrah Vawda, Jessie Zhang

## OUR HERITAGE AND ESTATE

Despite constraints on resources amid great uncertainties, a priority has been to ensure the building is well maintained for staff, residents and, as restrictions ease, visitors. This work has included:

- Completing restoration of the South Wing façade thanks to the government's Culture Recovery Fund and Heritage London Trust
- Urgent ceiling repair in the Chairman's Entrance
- Planning for upgrade to CCTV systems and for restoration of John Bacon's statue of George III
- Introducing our first electric vehicle charging point in our goods yard
- Working closely with the Courtauld on their major capital development ahead of reopening in November 2021
- Playing an active role in Westminster City Council's plans for the pedestrianisation of the Strand and the public realm improvements that will significantly enhance visitors' arrival to Somerset House



Marking the start of the pedestrianisation of the Strand/Aldwych. Photo by Richard Thompson

# FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT 2020/21

As with most organisations, 2020/21 was a very different year financially for the Trust due to COVID-19. We are grateful for the support received from the Government's Culture Recovery Fund, the Job Retention Scheme, rates relief and grants and the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme. Without this, we would be telling a very different story.

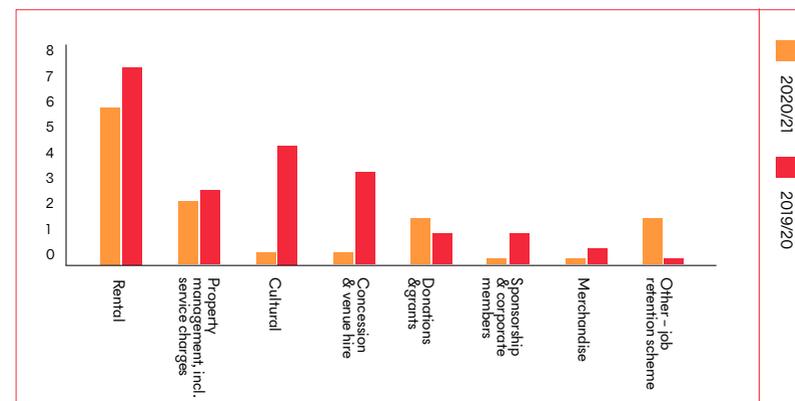
We took immediate action in March 2020 with the objective of emerging from the pandemic in as strong a financial position as possible, whilst continuing to deliver against our charitable obligations and supporting our staff. We focused on ensuring liquidity, securing a £5m loan under the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, froze recruitment, furloughed most of our staff and put in place tight cost control measures.

The Trust ended the year with a surplus (before depreciation) of £2.4m, free reserves of £3m and available cash of £12m. The Trust had a stronger than expected end to the year with the final quarter lockdown restricting activity, delaying expenditure – including the postponement of events and exhibition openings - and increasing furloughing of staff.

The vast majority of earned income was from the Trust's community of residents who play an important role in our cultural community and are a vital part in the Trust's self-financing model as we receive no regular public funding. Steps were taken throughout the year to retain and support those residents wherever possible. Despite this, we ended the year with 30% of our office space empty (2019/20: 1%). Notice periods afforded the Trust some protection during 2020/21, although the effect will annualise in 2021/22.

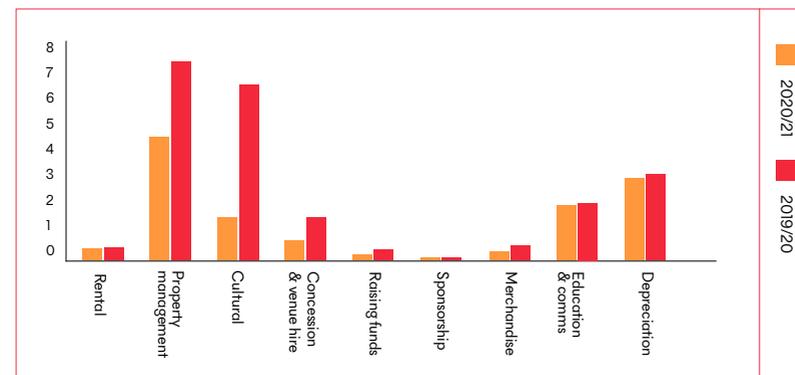
We are focused on rebuilding our income, but anticipate a loss in 2021/22, with a range of potential outcomes. Our reserves and cash position, bolstered by borrowing, provide mitigation against the longer-term effects of Covid on our financial model and will enable us to continue to provide a public programme and to fund some deferred capital and renovation works.

## Total Income £m – 2020/21 vs. 2019/20



Total income was £11.9m. Underlying unrestricted income fell by 55% year on year (excl government support). All sources of organic income saw a year-on-year decline with rental income down 20% and income from the cultural programme and concessions and venue hire each down over 90%. Donations & grants includes £0.8m from the Culture Recovery Fund.

## Total Expenditure £m – 2020/21 vs. 2019/20



Expenditure for the year, excluding depreciation, was £9.6m, down almost 50% year on year. Reductions reflect minimal on-site activity together with low discretionary spending to manage the impact of COVID-19. Trust staff took a 5% pay cut with members of the Executive volunteering larger reductions.

The summary income and expenditure figures for the full year ending 31 March 2021 are extracted from our full audited financial statements which will be filed with Companies House before 31 December 2021 and published on our website thereafter.

# THANK YOU

Somerset House receives no regular public funding. We are very grateful to everyone who has supported us, especially over the last year.

## Cultural Programme and Capital Supporters

Adonyeva Foundation	Freelands Foundation
Art Fund	GRoW@Annenberg
Arts Council England	Heritage Of London Trust
- Culture Recovery Fund	John Lyon's Charity
Backstage Trust	Maria Bjornson Memorial Fund
Blavatnik Family Foundation	National Lottery Community Fund
Bloomberg with the London	Pinterest
Community Response Fund	Reed Foundation (via The Big Give)
British Council	The Rothschild Foundation
City Bridge Trust	Jerwood Arts
Cockayne - Grants for the Arts	As well as those who wish to remain
and The London Community	anonymous.
Foundation	

## Corporate Members, Corporate Partners and Sponsors

American Express	Moët Hennessy
Bank of America	Omni Colour
Charles Russell Speechlys	San Miguel
Deloitte UK LLP	Saxton Bampfylde
The Bloomsbury	

## Somerset House Supporters' Court Members

Carolyn and Matthew Addison	Malcolm Grant
Adam and Kerry Ball	Melanie Hall QC
Edward Bell	Jeremy and Kirsty Hardie
Caroline Boseley	Kanika Kumar
Rob and Vanessa Enserro	James Lambert OBE
Judy Gibbons	Charles Nairne Hoare
Paul Goswell	William Sieghart CBE

## Somerset House Studios One-to-One & Rent Relief Supporters

Creative Land Trust	Wol and Kerry Kolade	Julien Sevaux
Martine D'Anglejan Chatillon	Monica Monajem	
Judy Gibbons	Jonathan Newhouse and	As well as those who wish
Paul Goswell	Ronnie Cooke Newhouse	to remain anonymous.

## Trustees

William Sieghart CBE, Chair (until 21 Sep 2021)	Brian Eno	Monica Monajem
Baroness Rebuck, DBE, Chair (from 1 Jan 2022)	Carol Fairweather	Paul Myners
Judy Gibbons, Deputy Chair	Paul Goswell	Jonathan Newhouse
Alix Burge	Melanie Hall QC	Julien Sevaux
	Wol Kolade	
	James Lambert	

## Development Advisory Board Members

Monica Monajem, Chair (Trustee)	Karina de Brabant	Brooke Metcalfe
Rupert Adams	Brendan Finucane QC	Lady Ritblat OBE
Maria Adonyeva	Jeremy Joseph	Emma Sherrard-Matthew
Felicia Brocklebank	Kanika Kumar	Yini Zhang
Elizabeth Crompton-Batt	Camilla Lowther	

This year in particular, Trustees would like to say a special thank you to the staff of Somerset House at every level and in every function, who have adapted and worked tirelessly during a most challenging time. Their dedication, creativity and tenacity have allowed us to thrive in unprecedented circumstances.

For more information on how you can make a difference to our work, please contact: [supportus@somersethouse.org.uk](mailto:supportus@somersethouse.org.uk) Or visit: [somersethouse.org.uk/support-us](https://www.somersethouse.org.uk/support-us)



Henry Kingford photo of Helen Long, Trafalgar Square, Photograph, London, 2020. Reproduced 2021. Courtesy of F+H magazine. Part of Somerset House's, 'No Compromise: State Culture and Community' exhibition, July - September 2021

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

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