

SOMERSET HOUSE PRESS RELEASE



FORTNUM & MASON
EST 1707



Skate at Somerset House with Fortnum & Mason

15 November 2017 – 14 January 2018

Tickets from £7.50

Available from 14 September: somersethouse.org.uk/skate

Somerset House to transform into the ultimate winter destination, with stylish skating, Fortnum's food, drink & festive shopping, celebrated DJs & exciting exhibitions for all

From 15 November, Somerset House's iconic neoclassical courtyard will once again transform into London's most vibrant festive setting, signalling the start of the winter season in the capital.

Skate at Somerset House with Fortnum & Mason is part of a winter celebration of contemporary culture at Somerset House, including exhibitions, installations, special events and cutting-edge music. Visitors to the site will be welcomed by a stunning 40ft Christmas tree and there will be an array of activities for all ages onsite, both on and off the ice, from extra-special skating experiences at **Skate Lates**, and lessons with **Skate School** and **Polar Cub Club** for those wishing to hone their skills to festive shopping at **Fortnum's Christmas Arcade**. Après-Skate, visitors can treat themselves to delicious food and drink at the cosy **Fortnum's Lodge**.

Taking place on 17 evenings across the season, **Skate Lates** will bring a collection of celebrated DJs, artists and more to the rink-side decks. Skate Lates will offer a unique skating experience through takeovers from the likes of Peckham-based radio station **Balamii**, Field Day founders **Eat Your Own Ears**, premier club night **Supa Dupa Fly** and Somerset House Studios artist **Larry Achiampong**, whose vibrant flag commission flies above the ice rink until the end of January. Composer **Anna Meredith** and music technology platform **Music Hack Space**, both residents of Somerset House Studios, will present a brand new sonic artwork inspired by the movements of the ice-cleaning machine as a transition track ahead of each Skate Lates evening, from 19.45-20.00.

Whether a seasoned skater or nervous novice, Somerset House's Skate School offers weekend lessons with experts from the National Ice Skating Association (NISA) to help skaters improve and find their confidence. Under-eights learning to take their first steps on the ice can try the Polar Cub Club with guidance from NISA instructors and a little help from polar bear-shaped skating aids, designed exclusively for Somerset House.

In the West Wing, the Fortnum's Christmas Arcade will showcase a special edit of Fortnum's favourites from tea, preserves and hampers to glittering decorations and gifts. This year, the heart of the arcade will be a chocolate lover's paradise. Visitors can shop handmade chocolates, truffles laced with Champagne, Turkish delight and more, while a hot chocolate bar complete with chocolate fountains will serve up the popular winter warmer to take away and drink by the rink, or savour inside The Lodge in copper mugs. For the first time this year, it will be possible to order the full Fortnum's range from their website and arrange to Click & Collect from Somerset House.

The Lodge will return with extra space for groups to come together and share aperitifs and delicious dishes such as poutine raclette. There are also a number of bespoke packages, each including a skating ticket designed to share with a loved one. Skaters with a sweet-tooth might like the Champagne & Chocolate Fondue or Mulled Wine & Sharing Mince Pie with Clotted Cream options, both of which are new for 2017. For those looking for savoury treats, Champagne & Smoked Salmon Platter and Wine & Cheese Fondue are also available.

Spectators can also taste a selection of long drinks and cocktails from Jägermeister alongside a menu of hot drinks and tasty treats at the Skate Lounge, which offers a rink-side view of fellow skaters.

After refuelling, visitors can explore the various exhibitions and displays on offer around Somerset House, including the major winter show **North: Fashioning Identity**, which examines representations of the north of England and Northerners in contemporary photography, fashion and art, and **Hassan Hajjaj: La Caravane**, a vibrant exhibition from British-Moroccan artist Hassan Hajjaj, whose work fuses north African culture with Western imagery and iconography.

Skate tickets start at £7.50 including skate hire. Sessions sell out quickly so it is advised that visitors book tickets in advance to avoid disappointment on the day.

Ends

For press enquiries and images, please contact press@somersethouse.org.uk or 0207 845 4624.

For press enquiries specifically relating to Fortnum & Mason, please contact the press office at Seven Dials PR on fortnums@sevendialspr.com or 0203 740 7476

Notes to Editors

Dates: 15 November 2017 – 14 January 2018

Opening Hours: Daily from 10.00. Last Skate session starts at 21.15, except on selected dates and Skate Lates.

Fortnum's Christmas Arcade and Fortnum's Lodge: Please note that Fortnum's Christmas Arcade is open from 12.00-19.00 on 29 December, and from 10.00-18.30 on 31 December. Fortnum's Lodge is open from 9.45-18.30 on Christmas Eve, and from 9.45-17.00 on New Year's Eve.

Address: Edmond J. Safra Fountain Court, Somerset House, Strand, London WC2R 1LA

Admission: Prices range from £7.50, dependent on session. A booking fee applies.

Transport: ☉ Temple, Embankment, Covent Garden ➡ Charing Cross, Waterloo, Blackfriars

Somerset House public enquiries: 020 7845 4600 | www.somersethouse.org.uk

Somerset House Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/SomersetHouse>

Somerset House Twitter: @SomersetHouse

Somerset House Instagram: @SomersetHouse

Hashtag: #SkateSomersetHouse

About Somerset House

A unique part of the London cultural scene, Somerset House is an historic building where surprising and original work comes to life. From its 18th-century origins, Somerset House has been a centre for debate and discussion – an intellectual powerhouse for the nation. Somerset House is today a key cultural destination in London in which to experience a broad range of artistic activity, engage with artists, designers and makers and be a part of a major creative forum – an environment that is relaxed, welcoming, and inspirational to visit while providing a stimulating workplace for the cultural and creative industries.

Since its opening in 2000, Somerset House has built up a distinctive outdoor public programme including Skate, concerts, an open-air film season and a diverse range of temporary exhibitions throughout the site focusing on contemporary culture, with an extensive learning programme attached. In October 2016, Somerset House launched Somerset House Studios, a new experimental workspace connecting artists, makers and thinkers with audiences. The Studios provide a platform for new creative projects and collaboration, promoting work that pushes bold ideas, engages with urgent issues and pioneers new technologies. Somerset House is also one of the biggest community of creative organisations in London including The Courtauld Gallery and Institute of Art, King's College London Cultural Institute and over 100 other creative businesses. It currently attracts approximately 3.4 million visitors every year. www.somersethouse.org.uk

About Fortnum & Mason

A fixture in Piccadilly since 1707, Fortnum & Mason remains an essential London destination for anyone in search of extraordinary food, glorious gifts and unforgettable experiences. From the food halls and confectionery counters at street level, to the beautiful fragrance, beauty and fashion floor, expertly-curated gentlemen's department, and refined Diamond Jubilee Tea Salon above, Fortnum's is committed to making the everyday special for each customer, whether they're shopping in-store or from around the world at the award-winning fortnumandmason.com. Renowned for its famous teas, scotch eggs, handmade chocolates and iconic wicker hampers – each of which play a large part in Fortnum's centuries of history – the iconic brand remains committed to imagination and discovery too. From new stores at home and abroad, to delicious innovations like Fortnum's Champagne Pops and adventure-ready Hamperlings, Fortnum's mission – as it has been since 1707 – remains to deliver a sense of pleasure to every customer. www.fortnumandmason.com.