

PRESS RELEASE

EARTH DAY SEASON 2019 AT SOMERSET HOUSE

Tuesday 16 – Monday 29 April 2019

A fortnight of installations and events exploring creative responses to climate change

Somerset House celebrates Earth Day 2019 with an extended two-week programme bringing together leading artists from across the world to present a series of large-scale installations and interactive events. As part of Somerset House's year-round commitment to sustainability, the programme explores different ways of engaging with climate change and sustainable living, from a major new courtyard commission, to hands-on, family-friendly workshops.

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- **REDUCE SPEED NOW!**, an installation of nine large solar-powered LED signs in the Edmond J. Safra Fountain Court by American artist **Justin Brice Guariglia** brings together international voices on the world's ecological crisis, including 16-year-old Swedish political activist, **Greta Thunberg** and philosopher, **Timothy Morton**
- A new art installation from Somerset House Studios artists, **Hyphen-Labs**, invites visitors to explore a dystopian vision of a post-human future in **The Anxious Ocean and The Moon-Bathers**
- **Khaos Spirit**, a **new flag and audio commission** from artist **Serena Korda** explores the voice of the natural elements from the rooftop of Somerset House
- A **free late-night event** where visitors can meet the artists and residents behind the Earth Day Season. Also features readings of **new, unpublished poems** from former **Young Poet Laureate for London (2015-16)**, **Selina Nwulu**, and specially-created snacks and drinks using 'waste' produce from Skye Gyngell's acclaimed **Spring** restaurant



REDUCE SPEED NOW!

by Justin Brice Guariglia

Tuesday 16 – Monday 29 April

Edmond J. Safra Fountain Court

Free

American artist Justin Brice Guariglia presents his largest scale installation to date, **REDUCE SPEED NOW!**, formed of nine large solar-powered LED signs usually seen on motorways. In this new project commissioned by Somerset House, Guariglia brings

together the critical voices of international activists, poets and philosophers to address the ecological crisis as a catalyst for social and political change.

EARTH DAY SEASON 2019 AT SOMERSET HOUSE

Tuesday 16 – Monday 29 April 2019

Contributors include the 16-year-old Swedish political activist, **Greta Thunberg**, whose protests over the past year have since mobilised students across the world and recently inspired thousands of young people across the UK to protest against political inaction on climate change. Her speech sits alongside the voices of global indigenous elders, whose lives are deeply connected to nature and the preservation of ancient human wisdom. Another sign displays the poem **Rise: From One Island to Another** by Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner and Aka Niviâna, from the Marshall Islands and Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland) respectively. The islanders' poem demonstrates the interdependency of the world and forms a call for action to city dwellers in the face of an environmental crisis.

Other writing includes excerpts from French philosopher and sociologist **Bruno Latour's** provocative publications; playful aphorisms written by eco-theorist **Timothy Morton**; and Guariglia's own thoughts on climate change, accumulated from over two decades of work addressing the subject.

The striking installation extends beyond the courtyard with a further LED warning sign by Guariglia located on Somerset House's Lancaster Place, addressing the public in a range of different languages widely spoken in the capital. A library of the works featured in *REDUCE SPEED NOW!* will be available for visitors to read in Seamen's Hall.



The Anxious Ocean and The Moon Bathers by Hyphen-Labs

22 March – 5 May

Great Arch Hall

Free

A new installation from Somerset House Studios residents, **Hyphen-Labs**, invites visitors to explore an underwater world, exactly where Somerset House

would have been below water hundreds of years ago. Taking the form of graphics and 3D works, **The Anxious Ocean and The Moon Bathers** transports visitors to a dystopian, post-human future, far away from the lives of modern-day Londoners, to illustrate how the lifestyle of society today may impact the ocean in years to come. The installation imagines the legacy of humanity through the eyes of the ocean, cautioning visitors against current damaging human behaviours and inviting them to act on their anxieties around climate change.



Khaos Spirit

by **Serena Korda**

Tuesday 16 April – 10 June

Edmond. J Safra Fountain Court / Seamen's Hall

Free

Following her acclaimed installations at the National Trust's Speke Hall and The Hepworth Wakefield, Wakefield, award-winning artist Serena Korda joins

EARTH DAY SEASON 2019 AT SOMERSET HOUSE

Tuesday 16 – Monday 29 April 2019

Somerset House's Earth Day 2019 programme with **a new, site-responsive work** exploring society's relationship with the natural elements. Inspired by the Greek primordial goddess of air and mother of birds, Khaos, Korda raises a new flag above the Somerset House courtyard, with the design paying homage to a history of maritime warning flags.

Accompanying the flag is an audio piece formed using a handcrafted aeolian harp, a musical instrument named after the ancient Greek god of wind, Aeolus. Korda recorded the harp, which produces sound when a current of air passes through it, during an afternoon spent in and around the dome that holds Somerset House's flag. Combined with additional field recordings of the flag, the resonance of the flagpole and wind data taken from an anemometer, which records wind speed, the resulting audio installation captures the voice of the air. It will be based in Seamen's Hall for visitors to experience on ground level, and available on the Somerset House website.



Earth Day Late

Tuesday 16 April

18.00-21.00

South Wing

Free

This **special, free event** (available on a first-come, first-serve basis) offers guests the opportunity to meet the artists behind the installations and events, including Justin Bryce Guariglia, Hyphen-Labs and Serena Korda with

an exclusive performance of new poems from Selina Nwulu. Somerset House residents offer insight into the sustainable projects they are developing on-site in a one-off series of talks, whilst **Skye Gyngell**, one of Britain's most acclaimed chefs and founder of **Spring restaurant** brings together leading chefs and restaurateurs for an exclusive panel event on food and sustainability. **Spring** brings a taste of their widely-praised 'Scratch Menu' using 'Waste' produce to create **specialty-created snacks and drinks** available to purchase during the evening.

FURTHER EARTH DAY 2019 EVENTS

For the second weekend of the Somerset House Earth Day Season, visitors of all ages can enjoy a series of workshops to further engage with environmental issues. Full details for each event can be found at somersethouse.org.uk

Screening: Eating Animals

Friday 26 April

19.00-20.30

Screening Room, South Wing

Tickets £12/£10 concessions

Somerset House residents [Dartmouth Films](http://DartmouthFilms) present a **special preview screening** of **Eating Animals**, a new documentary based on the bestselling book by Jonathan Safran Foer, narrated by

EARTH DAY SEASON 2019 AT SOMERSET HOUSE

Tuesday 16 – Monday 29 April 2019

co-producer **Natalie Portman**, and directed by **Christopher Quinn** (*God Grew Tired Of Us*). The documentary is an urgent, eye-opening look at the environmental, economic, and public health consequences of factory farming. Tracing the history of food production in the United States, the film charts how farming has gone from local and sustainable to a corporate monster that offers cheap eggs, meat, and dairy at a steep cost: the exploitation of animals; the risky use of antibiotics and hormones; and the pollution of the world's air, soil, and water. This special screening will be followed by a panel discussion with leading industry experts.

Progress to Process: Interwoven

with Makerversity

Saturday 27 – Sunday 28 April

New Wing

Times and ticket prices vary, please check the website for more details

Europe's pioneering community of maker businesses and Somerset House Studios resident, **Makerversity**, present **Interwoven**, a weekend festival exploring the future of textile design in creating sustainable change within the fashion industry and beyond.

Highlights include **an interactive exhibition** focusing on innovative textile approaches, co-curated with textile producers **Bysshe Partnership** and **Doppelhaus** in collaboration with sustainable fashion designer **Eliza Collin**. A series of workshops run alongside the showcase, including debates about bio-designing fabrics, fashion activism's link to climate justice, and a textile clinic breaking down fabrics' sourcing and production. Speakers include **Central Saint Martins' Sustainable Fashion Tutors, Clare Farrell and Alice Wilby**.

Loneliness: A Climate Change Story

with Selina Nwulu

Dates and times vary, please check the website for more details

Former **Young Poet Laureate for London (2015-16)** **Selina Nwulu** explores the evolution of human consumption and its impact on climate change in **six new, unpublished poems**.

Through a series of readings, Nwulu invites people to explore the power of art as a tool for social change and delve deeper into the connections between the personal and political in response to the current ecological crisis. Nwulu will deliver an **exclusive performance** of her poems at the free opening event for Earth Day 2019 on Tuesday 16 April.

Nwulu's poems will be displayed across the Somerset House site for visitors to enjoy throughout the year as part of the ongoing sustainability programme.

EARTH DAY SEASON 2019 AT SOMERSET HOUSE

Tuesday 16 – Monday 29 April 2019

Voicing the Emergency: Finding a new language for climate change with Do The Green Thing

Saturday 27 April

12.00 – 16.00

Courtyard Rooms

Free; Drop In

Over the last decade, **Do The Green Thing** has worked with more than 500 world-class creatives including Sir Paul Smith, Rupi Kaur and David Shrigley to make films, posters, podcasts and products to inspire people to live more sustainably. In their **first workshop with Somerset House**, the collective invites visitors to explore new ways to talk about the global environmental breakdown and create their own protest posters to challenge it. Families and friends are all welcome to drop-in at any time during the workshop to join the movement towards positive change.

Edible Utopia: Mass Mushrooming

Saturday 27 April

11.00 – 12.30

South Wing

Pay What You Can (£2.50, £5, £7.50)

This Earth Day Season features a special workshop to equip participants with the tools and skills needed to start their own mini mushroom farm. The hands-on, family-friendly session celebrates the magic of mushrooms, the integral role they play in the world's eco-system, and gives attendees **the chance to take away their own fledgling fungi** to nurture at home.

Mass Mushrooming is an extension of the educational food-growing project **Edible Utopia** which looks at growing food in the underused and hidden parts of Somerset House and explores creative responses to sustainability. *Edible Utopia is kindly supported by City Bridge Trust.*

Workshop: By the Code of Soil

Sunday 28 April

13.00 – 17.00

Courtyard Rooms, South Wing

Free; Drop In

Artists **Kasia Molga** and **Scanner (Robin Rimbaud)** invite visitors to reflect on society's relationship with soil in an interactive afternoon workshop. Visitors will get a unique insight into the pair's fascinating STARTS (Science, Technology and the Arts) residency with the GROW Citizens' Observatory and discover the process behind their audio-visual artwork, giving soil a digital voice. *This project is produced in collaboration with the GROW Observatory, and FutureEverything.*

EARTH DAY SEASON 2019 AT SOMERSET HOUSE

Tuesday 16 – Monday 29 April 2019

SUSTAINABILITY AT SOMERSET HOUSE

Somerset House is actively responding to environmental issues both through the practical management of the Grade I listed historical site and thematically as part of our year-round cultural programme. By working together with visitors and the 2500+ resident creative community, we are committed to collectively reducing our impact on the planet. Somerset House has been awarded a 4 star rating in recognition for its environmental commitment, understanding and improvement in the Julie's Bicycle Creative Green Awards. For more information visit somersethouse.org.uk/sustainability

Earth Day Season 2019 is kindly supported by the [Creative Producers International programme](#). Creative Producers International is led by WATERSHED and supported by Arts Council England's Ambition for Excellence Programme, British Council and University of the West of England.

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 Facebook:

www.facebook.com/SomersetHouse

Somerset House Twitter: @SomersetHouse

Somerset House Instagram: @SomersetHouse

Hashtag: #EarthDaySH

ABOUT SOMERSET HOUSE

Inspiring contemporary culture

One of the city's most spectacular and well-loved spaces, Somerset House is a new kind of arts centre in the heart of London, designed for today's audiences, artists and creatives – an inspirational community where contemporary culture is imagined, created and experienced.

From its 18th Century origins, Somerset House has played a central role in our society as a place where our culture and collective understanding of the world is shaped and defined. In 2000, it began its reinvention as a cultural powerhouse and home for arts and culture today, creating unique and stimulating experiences for the public, bringing them into direct contact with ideas from the greatest artists, makers and thinkers of our time. Our distinctive and dynamic year-round programme spans the contemporary arts in all its forms, from cutting-edge exhibitions and installations to annual festivals, seasonal events in the courtyard including Film4 Summer Screen, Summer Series and Skate, and an extensive learning and engagement programme.

As well as welcoming over 3million visitors annually, Somerset House houses the largest and most diverse creative communities in the country – from one-person start-ups to successful creative enterprises including British Fashion Council, Dance Umbrella, Improbable Theatre, Hofesh Schecter Company, and Dartmouth Films.

In 2016 we launched Somerset House Studios – a new experimental workspace connecting artists, makers and thinkers with audiences. Currently housing over 80 artists and Makerversity (a community of over 250 emergent makers), the Studios are a platform for the development of new creative projects and collaboration, promoting work that pushes bold ideas, engages with urgent issues and pioneers new technologies. www.somersethouse.org.uk