



FACTORY INTERNATIONAL LISTINGS AUTUMN - WINTER

Factory International, the organisation behind Manchester's landmark cultural space **Aviva Studios** and the biennial **Manchester International Festival**, produces an ambitious year-round programme of original creative work, music, special events and community activities. Artists are encouraged to create work in new ways, to collaborate across disciplines and blur the boundaries between art and popular culture.

Find out more about Factory International's upcoming events this Autumn/Winter season, including:

- **Programme Highlights**
- **Black History Month**
- **Music & Dance**
- **Comedy & Talks**

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LISTINGS:

PROGRAMME HIGHLIGHTS:

Portrait of Black Britain (1 Oct – 2 Nov) | Free to drop in, find out more [HERE](#)

Commissioned by Factory International. Co-Produced by Factory International and Cephias Williams.

In *Portrait of Black Britain*, **Cephias Williams** explores what it means to be Black, living in the UK. Part of a project to build a significant photographic archive of portraits of Black British people, the exhibition was originally commissioned for Manchester International Festival (MIF) 2021 and shown as a major public exhibition in Manchester's Arndale Centre.

The exhibition has since grown and returns to Manchester with 228 portraits of people from Manchester and across the UK, free to attend all October in the Social at Aviva Studios.

Audiences can also join Cephias Williams, the creator of *Portrait of Black Britain*, *56 Black Men*, *Letter to Zion* and *The Black Network*, **in conversation** with Factory International Artistic Director **John McGrath** on 17 October (book free tickets [here](#)).

Common Frequency (3 – 6 Oct) | Book free tickets [HERE](#)

Common Frequency is a free exhibition and event series on the transformative power of music, created by the **adidas Originals Creator Network North** - a group of 20 young creatives from across the North West. The exhibition in Aviva Studios' North Warehouse brings together moving image, visual installation, a zine, and two original films.

On select days, the installation transforms into an event space kicking off with an **evening of live music and poetry**, featuring **Manchester Camerata** (3 October); a **hands-on creative**



workshop (4 October); and a closing night celebration and networking session with a chance to **meet the adidas OCN North cohort** (6 October) to hear about their experiences on the programme and creating *Common Frequency*, with a contribution from DJ and Broadcaster **Mary Anne Hobbs**.

The Immortal Sisterhood LIVE (8 Oct) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Gemma Cairney's *The Immortal Sisterhood* is transformed into a genre-blending show about honour and grief.

Originally a literary work by the award-winning broadcaster and writer, ***The Immortal Sisterhood LIVE*** is a groundbreaking ensemble-led collaboration blending sound, opera, movement, live cello, violin and poetry. Witness an unforgettable journey of the remarkable women that we stand on the shoulders of, celebrated through an extraordinary fusion of artforms that transcend time and genre.

The Immortal Sisterhood LIVE features **Mele Broomes, Gemma Cairney, Fay Guiffo, A Jones, Simone Seales and Roxanne Tataei**. The event takes place in the Social and is followed by **DJ Sippin' T** playing a set for us all to take part in the ceremony that takes place on the dance floor.

Application 39 (9-10 Oct) | Book [HERE](#)

A sharply satirical, future-facing drama by Palestinian theatre maker and writer **Ahmed Masoud** - ***Application 39*** imagines a Gaza risen from ruin, unexpectedly awarded the right to host the 2048 Olympic Games, exactly 100 years after the Nakba.

In *Application 39*, two young IT workers in the municipality of Gaza hack the bid process for the 2048 Olympics as a prank – and win. Their “victory” becomes a surreal yet pressing journey through occupation, bureaucracy, absurdity and reconstruction.

Prehistoric Planet: Discovering Dinosaurs (8 Dec – 6 Jan) | Book [HERE](#)

Stand face-to-face with the greatest dinosaurs in history on a colossal adventure through time. See Earth transformed by the age of dinosaurs in *Prehistoric Planet: Discovering Dinosaurs* – a new 360° immersive **Lightroom** experience narrated by **Damian Lewis**.

Prehistoric Planet: Discovering Dinosaurs blends iconic moments from Apple TV's Emmy-nominated series with bespoke illustrations and extended CGI sequences – set to an epic original score by multi-Academy Award-winner **Hans Zimmer, Anže Rozman** and **Kara Talve** for Bleeding Fingers Music.



David Bowie: You're Not Alone (8 Dec – 10 Jan) | Book [HERE](#)

Be transported into the many worlds of **David Bowie**. Through iconic performances, rarely-seen interviews and never-before-exhibited material, discover the creative mind, spirit and soul of one of the world's greatest, most visionary artists. Featuring Bowie himself as its sole voice, *David Bowie: You're Not Alone* is both a multimedia spectacle and an intimate portrait.

Using the incredible **Lightroom** visual technology and spatial audio behind *David Hockney: Bigger & Closer (not smaller & further away)*, *The Moonwalkers* and *VOGUE: Inventing the Runway*, this 360° immersive experience sees Bowie invite you into his many worlds. The show brings together iconic performance footage, rarely heard interviews and never-before-seen material selected from thousands of hours of film in the vaults of the David Bowie Archive in New York.

It's a Sin (16 – 27 Feb 2027) | Book [HERE](#)

Rambert and Factory International transform **Russell T Davies'** landmark TV series *It's a Sin* into a powerful dance story of love and survival – directed and choreographed by Artistic Director **Benoit Swan Pouffer**.

In the heart of '80s London, Ritchie, Roscoe, Colin and Jill are chasing identity, connection and a life on their own terms. But as the AIDS crisis begins to unfold, their lives are irrevocably changed. Brought to life by **Rambert's** extraordinary dancers, *It's a Sin* weaves past and present into something raw, visceral and devastating – an epic story told through movement, asking who gets remembered, who gets left behind and how we choose to live now.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH:

Poetry Place: In the Beginning (1 Oct) | Book free tickets [HERE](#)

The Poetry Place marks Black History Month and World Poetry Day with a dynamic showcase featuring **Griot Gabriel** and **Maureen Onwunali** and a live musical performance from rapper **OneDa**, bringing a raw, powerful energy to the stage. Have some words to share? Join the open mic after the showcase.

Breathe: Dance & Poetry Slam 2026 (3 Oct) | Book tickets + find out how to take part [HERE](#)



BREATHE competition is back... hosted by poet and playwright **Reece Williams**. Watch pairs of dancers and poets perform duets showcasing their complementary styles while telling a single story through language and movement.

These dynamic duos face off in a head-to-head battle judged by a panel of leading artists from the worlds of poetry, dance and theatre, with the winning duo taking home the £200 prize.

Enjoy special guest performances from award-winning artist **Sophia Thakur** and internationally renowned dancer-choreographer **Olivia Beckford** – all set to music by a pioneering figure in the UK Hip Hop dance battle scene, **DJ Renegade**.

Sip and Paint: Honouring Our Communities (16 Oct) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Join us for an evening of creativity and reflection as we celebrate the people, places and stories that shape our communities – hosted by **Cultureville** and **Black Creative Trailblazers**.

In celebration of Black History Month, create artwork inspired by the connections, traditions, communities and shared experiences that bring us together.

MuseumMisha Presents: Stay In Those Colours (18 Oct) | Book free tickets [HERE](#)

Multidisciplinary artist **Misha B** brings together abstract painting, music, film and storytelling in one shared journey.

Rather than following a traditional exhibition format, *Stay In Those Colours* unfolds as three interconnected chapters – Arrival, Reflection and Release – exploring how creativity can become a space for healing, connection and transformation.

AMC Gospel Choir (18 Oct) | Book free tickets [HERE](#)

One of the UK's top gospel choirs returns to Aviva Studios for a joyful afternoon of music.

Based across Manchester and Birmingham, **AMC Gospel Choir** regularly perform in venues across Manchester, on BBC Songs of Praise and as part of the legendary Hacienda Classical tour. Expect soundscapes that tingle the body and warm the heart as well as inspiring solos and musical arrangements – all organised by the director and members of the choir.

Factory Remix: Call and Response (22 Oct) | Book free tickets [HERE](#)

Curated by **Azora**, this edition of Factory Remix celebrates remixing, reinterpretation and the lasting influence of Black diasporic art across contemporary culture. Discover voices pushing



the boundaries of their practice – spanning alternative R&B, experimental composition, poetry and nu rap – while celebrating the creativity and impact of Black artistry today.

Enjoy performances from four artists from across the North of England: **Rory A. Green; Lei Hope; Sophia Harari; and Ty Untold.**

Factory Spotlight: Liberation Town (27 Oct) | Book free tickets [HERE](#)

Liberation Town is an immersive and culturally rich celebration of African and Caribbean history and heritage – curated by multifaceted performing artist and community champion **Dee Kolo.**

Liberation Town blends culture, education, choreography and live artistry into a seamless celebration of community and local talent. Expect performances by local artists **Dada Za Roho, Sophia & Friends, Chisom Atakulu, Zolatec, Olumide Holloway, Vivi, Mc Shallar, DJ Kollegah and Dee Kolo.**

MUSIC & DANCE:

Bill Callahan (2 Oct) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Lo-fi indie rock artist **Bill Callahan** is back on the road in celebration of eighth studio album *My Days of 58*. Bill Callahan continues to blaze one of the most original songwriting and performance trails out there, performing first under the name Smog and now as a solo artist.

Grace Petrie (3 Oct) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Folk singer-songwriter **Grace Petrie** performs a stripped-back solo set followed by a full band retrospective. For a decade and a half, Grace Petrie has been one of the UK's most urgent and passionate songwriters.

Characterised by razor-sharp lyricism and the unmistakable passion of her stage presence, her live shows have a unique atmosphere of hope and solidarity. The LGBTQ anthem 'Black Tie' has racked up 1.5 million streams and provided the soundtrack of expression for young queer folks all over the world.

Chris Stussy Presents USS (9 – 10 Oct) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Chris Stussy brings his acclaimed USS event concept to Aviva Studios. Designed as a space where music takes precedence, USS strips the club experience back to its essentials: long unhurried sets, low lighting and an uncompromising focus on the dance floor.



No phones, no spectacle, no unnecessary distractions. Just a shared connection between the DJ, the sound system and the people in the room.

Courtney Barnett (17 Oct) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Courtney Barnett brings her UK tour to Manchester in celebration of fourth studio album *Creature of Habit*. A formidable live performer, Barnett has played major festivals including Coachella, Glastonbury, Primavera and Lollapalooza, bringing her incisive lyrics and virtuosic guitar work to audiences around the world.

Factory House Choir (17 Oct) | Book free tickets [HERE](#)

Led by singer and music director **Lizzie Simms**, this isn't your traditional choir experience. Expect to get your groove on and belt out a tune, whether it's funk and soul or UK garage vocal arrangements.

Join us for a singing session in the Social to learn group singing techniques, meet new people and master a whole song – with harmonies – in just one afternoon! Open to everyone – just bring your voice.

Factory Sounds Takeover (24 Oct) | Book free tickets [HERE](#)

Calling all musicians, artists and creatives from across Greater Manchester! Drop by the Social for an evening of music from the 2026 cohort of **Factory Sounds** – our annual programme designed to support and raise the profile of the music industry in Greater Manchester.

Expect live performances by some of our talented artists: **Lenacha Lema, Chia Kali, Isaac Malibu, Megan Wroe, Pooch, Dahveed** and **Edzor Talez**. Chat with other creatives for potential collaborations and meet our Factory International staff to learn more about the programme and the next callout taking place in November.

Reza Sadeghi (24 Oct) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Reza Sadeghi – one of the most recognised voices in Persian pop music – performs in Manchester for the first time.

Known for his distinctive voice, emotional performances and extensive catalogue of popular songs, he has built a strong following among Persian-speaking audiences around the world.

Freya Skye (29 – 30 Oct) | Book tickets [HERE](#)



Freya Skye announces Stars Align UK tour with a stop at Aviva Studios. Freya Skye shot to fame after representing the UK in the Junior Eurovision Song Contest 2022 at just 13 years old.

Since then, she has earned an unprecedented surge of fan support, amassing over 1.5 billion streams of her music and millions of new social media followers.

underscores (14 Nov) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Hyperpop star **underscores** brings the GALLERIA tour to Aviva Studios, celebrating her acclaimed third album *U*.

Hailing from San Francisco, Filipino-American artist April Harper Grey started making music as underscores in school, sharing a steady stream of SoundCloud one-offs and building a community of like-minded fans. Since then, underscores has garnered over 150 million global streams and continued releasing adventurous, genre-defying music, including the concept album Wallsocket and collabs with Oklou, Danny Brown, Yaeji, Yves, Ninajirachi, umru and more.

Bloc Party & Interpol Co-Headline Tour (23 Nov) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Bloc Party and **Interpol** announce a co-headline tour that will unite two era-defining bands for a run of 18 dates across the UK and Europe in 2026 – with a stop at Aviva Studios.

The tour will see two of the most influential acts of the last three decades performing songs from across their 20 year-spanning discographies, including Bloc Party's seminal *debut Silent Alarm* and Interpol's landmark sophomore album *Antics*.

John Hopkins (25 Nov) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Jon Hopkins brings his instrumental live show to Manchester, centred around his longform piano performance, with **Maddie Ashman** on cello, live effects and vocals, and **Leo Abrahams** on guitar.

The trio move from hushed, meditative piano, into vast waves of noise, cello, guitar and electronics in a truly unique performance, inviting the audience into an open and unboundaried state.

Supported by the mesmerising **Hinako Omori**, whose work fuses piano, electronics and vocals, the show is fully seated in the Hall.

Nia Archives: Emotional World Tour (28 Nov) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Bradford born, Leeds raised **Nia Archives** takes over the Warehouse in celebration of her Mercury Prize shortlisted second album *Emotional Junglist* – her biggest sonic leap to date.



On *Emotional Junglist*, which earned her her first #1 on the Official Dance Chart and has received huge critical acclaim, her alt-jungle sound has been perfected and honed into something utterly original yet unequivocally Nia Archives.

Manchester Collective: Black Gold (4 Dec) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Feel the ground tremble as shape-shifting ensemble **Manchester Collective** morph into a bass-heavy ensemble. Sliding rhythms and revving engines from **James Tenney**'s *Glissade* rip open a chasm from which **Luke Mombrea**'s atmospheric *Black Gold* emerges.

Sitting between these tectonic pieces is a new commission by composer **Sasha Scott**, known for her shattering, glitchy music. Finally, enjoy a moment of catharsis with contemplative Bach chorales and a cinematic vista from **Hildur Guðnadóttir**. Much loved for her *TÁR*, *The Joker* and *Chernobyl* scores, her piece *From the Other Place* is a masterclass in restraint and expanse before we plummet back towards the shattered earth.

Marcel Khalife 50 Years of Promises of the Storm - solo concert (30 Jan 2027) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

One of the Arab world's most influential musicians, **Marcel Khalife** returns solo to Manchester for the first time in 10 years, with a powerful reimagining of the music that began his extraordinary career.

Fifty years after the release of his debut album *Promises of the Storm*, the legendary Lebanese oud player and singer revisits four of its songs, which were originally shaped by exile, war, poetry and resistance. The album marked the beginning of Marcel Khalife's enduring musical relationship with Palestinian poet **Mahmoud Darwish**. Now, Khalife returns to these songs in a new, stripped-back recording.

Bonobo: Distance In Static - Live (4 – 5 Feb 2027) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Electronic pioneer **Bonobo** tours a brand-new live show in celebration of new album *Distance in Static*.

Across the record, Green collaborates with a striking cast of artists including Arooj Aftab, Joy Crookes, Nilüfer Yanya, Ichiko Aoba, Nicole Miglis and Anya Martin. Lyrics appear in English, Urdu and Japanese while historic Iranian samples and guzheng recordings sit alongside Green's own meticulously processed instrumentation.

Now he unveils a brand-new Bonobo Live show, designed by Pierre Claude (Air, Gesaffelstein, Phoenix and Caroline Polachek).



COMEDY & TALKS:

Susan Calman: Tall Tales (4 Oct) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Join stand-up comedian **Susan Calman** for an evening of barely believable stories, laughter and (probably) dancing.

You might have seen her on the television or heard her on the radio but the absolute best way to see her is live on stage. You won't believe how short she really is. As seen on *Grand Day Out*, *Cruising with Susan Calman*, *QI*, *House of Games* and (a long time ago) *Strictly Come Dancing*.

Serena Terry: Therapy (6 Oct) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Serena Terry, comedian, author and creator of online sensation 'Mammy Banter', is bringing Therapy, her biggest stand-up comedy tour to date, to Aviva Studios.

After selling out her previous two UK and Ireland comedy tours and becoming the first ever female to sell out Belfast's SSE Arena in 2024, Serena should have been feeling on top of the world. Instead, she found herself smack bang in the middle of depression.

After a four-month hiatus, an exhaustive list of therapies and an explorative mission towards self-care, she's back (still medicated, still peri-menopausal and a little bit mentally unstable) to her best!

Artists in Times of Upheaval: Jewish Artists in Today's UK (11 Oct) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

As part of Factory International's [Artists in Times of Upheaval](#) talk series and in collaboration with **JW3**, the UK's leading Jewish Cultural and Community Centre, a panel of UK-based Jewish artists discuss their current work and the reality of life as a Jewish artist in the UK today.

JW3 is the first and only Jewish Community Centre and arts venue of its kind to exist in UK. Their mission is to create open and welcoming Jewish spaces that bring different people together, strengthen identities and build community through arts, culture, education and social action.

Dream Space Live (15 Oct) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

What does art have the power or potential to do, when we allow ourselves to dream?

Artist, author and Scotland's first Black supermodel **Eunice Olumide** joins host **Gemma Cairney** for a special episode of *Dream Space* podcast live at Selfridges, ahead of season four.



Step inside Eunice's mind as she conjures up her dream space live on stage – then take part in an audience Q&A.

In Factory International's British Audio Awards shortlisted podcast [Dream Space](#), host Gemma Cairney takes listeners on a journey through an imaginary, limitless space with infinite dream resources. Hear about the dream creative utopias of the world's most exciting artistic minds, with past guests including Nish Kumar, Marina Abramovic, Max Porter, Zawe Ashton and more.

All Killa No Filla: Live – At Halloween! (25 Oct) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

It's the most macabre time of the year... and **Kiri Pritchard-McLean** (QI, 8 Out Of 10 Cats) and **Rachel Fairburn** (House of Games, Live At The Apollo) are ready to get spooky with their huge annual Halloween live show.

Never been to an **All Killa No Filla** live show before? There's no revision required. Get your best fancy dress out of the attic (not compulsory) and prepare to see two hilarious and outspoken stand-ups at the top of their game.

Akaash Singh (1 Nov) | Book tickets [HERE](#)

Join stand-up comedian, podcaster and actor **Akaash Singh** on his UK tour.

Akaash Singh shot to fame with appearances in TV shows including MTV's *Wild'n Out*, Netflix's *Brown Nation* and HBO's *The Leftovers*. He then pivoted his focus toward the now hugely successful podcast *Flagrant*, co-created with fellow comedian and good friend, Andrew Schulz.

As a stand-up comedian, his comedy specials and clips have amassed almost 2 billion total views on YouTube alone. His newest special *Gaslit*, released in 2024, has already gained over 6 million views.

Artists in Times of Upheaval: Yael Bartana (21 Nov) | Book free tickets [HERE](#)

Join us for a conversation with **Yael Bartana** – one of the most significant visual and mixed-media artists working today

Based in Berlin, she created *What if Women Ruled the World*, a visionary re-imagining of Stanley Kubrick's *Dr Strangelove*, for Manchester International Festival in 2017, and has since created a series of works re-imagining our shared futures, including her critically praised project for the German Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2024.



Artists in Times of Upheaval: Threats to Disabled Leadership (5 Dec) | Book
free tickets [HERE](#)

What impacts are Access to Work reforms having on the viability of disabled leadership in the arts and creative industries? What does it mean to create work under the threat of governments hostile to disabled people? What do current media narratives tell us about the importance of disabled-led storytelling?

Multi-disciplinary artist and cultural leader **Christopher Samuel** sits down with writer, artist, and activist **Jess Thom** to discuss the current challenges facing Deaf, disabled, and neurodivergent cultural leaders.

ENDS

See the full programme of events at Aviva Studios, home of Factory International, on the website at factoryinternational.org/whats-on

DOWNLOAD IMAGES [HERE](#)

For further information please contact:

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