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barbican

Barbican announces Play Make Do, a new festival of fun and creativity that encourages all the family to take part

The Barbican is your own playground with circus skills in the Conservatory, a sensory forest to explore in the foyers, Tai-Chi on the Lakeside and an inclusive ceilidh underground!

Plus international and new release cinema screenings for all ages

13 July – 16 August 2025

[Play Make Do press images 2025](#)



Barbican announces Play Make Do; a new festival of fun for all the family
Credit: Matt Munday

The Barbican invites visitors to roll up their sleeves this summer and explore a new festival of creative activities and performances for all ages. **Play Make Do** brings local communities together to inspire playful imagination, connection and hands-on adventure. The inaugural festival runs from **13 July – 16 August 2025**, with events delivered in collaboration with leading artists and companies from across the creative sector.

Play Make Do is a new initiative from the Barbican's Creative Collaboration department, building on from last summer's hugely popular 'anti-exhibition' in *The Curve, Our Street*, which invited children and families to play through games, performance and conversation. *Play Make Do* is taking place all over the iconic arts centre this year. The line-up includes even more interactive and breathtaking sessions to entertain the whole family, focusing on the joyful and transformative moments experienced when different generations unlock their creativity together.

The ground floor foyer will fizz with fun for all ages, with free, collaborative events including: design-your-own imaginary playground inside the Barbican's brutalist walls, led by collage experts **Artizine UK**; drop-in to our summer **Play Space** packed with giant games and timeless playground classics; travel to the forest through interactive sensory materials, supported by experienced playworkers **Assemble Play Works**.

From the forest world to a tropical paradise, head to the Barbican Conservatory for free, breathtaking, high-flying performances from award-winning contemporary circus disruptors **Upswing**, with opportunities for audiences to try out their own aerial techniques or circus skills at floor-level. Or restore calm with **Mei Quan Academy's** morning of outdoor **Tai Chi** on the picturesque Lakeside.

Ramp up the rhythm with afternoons of joyful communal dance in the atmospheric subterranean foyers: learn fiery and beginner-friendly Cuban Salsa with **Rueda Libre**; join an inclusive ceilidh dance party with spirited live music provided by **Queer Folk's** in-house ceilidh band.

Celebrate one of the most spellbinding ancient traditions - the magic of storytelling - in further free sessions: get stuck into the 2025 Summer Reading Challenge with storytime inspired by nature and the great outdoors, hosted by the **Barbican Children's Library**; internationally acclaimed children's author and CBeebies' favourite **Chitra Soundar** performs tales from India; award-winning Sierra Leonean performer **Usifu Jalloh** returns with a new interactive adventure inspired by Anansi folklore.

Everyone can discover new skills and explore their own creative voice, with **workshops** on **illustration, storytelling** and **kite making**. For young people, week-long creative camps encourage 11-16 year olds to be creative and build confidence in hand-made animation filmmaking and devising theatre, and an intergenerational drama workshop session inspired by the spectacular summer production in the Barbican Theatre focuses on the themes of family, tradition and resilience. Also for film lovers, a curated season of **international and new release screenings** will run in the cinemas throughout the festival.

While many of the events are free, audiences are advised to secure their place by booking via barbican.org.uk, tickets available from today.

Oluwatoyin Odunsi, Senior Producer Creative Collaboration, Barbican, said:

"We are so excited to welcome families to the Barbican Centre, especially those from our local communities, to take part, have fun and explore their creativity this summer. We have brought together fantastic and passionate collaborators at the top of their fields, to give the public a taste of everything the Barbican has to offer. By spending quality time together and having fun, we hope everyone who comes along will be energised, relaxed and inspired to explore whatever they can imagine."

Karena Johnson, Head of Creative Collaboration, Barbican, said:

"We are thrilled to continue building on our department mission to hold space which invites people to play and explore their creativity. In a time when families are under pressure, we are committed to our arts centre being an affordable and free civic space for London's diverse communities to encounter extraordinary artists and try something new. We're offering many routes in this summer, inviting new audiences and neighbours who have may have felt excluded to make new memories with us, and to feel that this local arts centre is absolutely theirs."

Further highlights for the Barbican Centre's summer programming includes **Frequencies**, a curated season about the power of sound featuring a packed programme of film screenings, concerts, events, workshops and talks. The season (May – August) explores how the power of sound moves more than just the body, and how it continues to inspire generations to rebel and create change.

Highlights within Frequencies include **Feel the Sound**, a bold new multi-sensory exhibition experience across the whole Barbican Centre that examines our relationship to sound; the world premiere of a new version of the award-winning Virtual Reality experience **In Pursuit of Repetitive Beats**; **Rebel Radio**, a celebration of London's pirate radio story.

Frequencies also features a series of concerts bringing audiences on sonic adventures through immersive sound experiences, exploring dance, rave and Carnival culture. Concerts include **Rampage: Carnival Classics 2**, a special night that sees the **Rampage Sound System** return, this time joined by the 30-piece **Nu Civilisation Orchestra** to reimagine Carnival classics and celebrate over three decades of iconic tracks that define the sounds of Notting Hill Carnival. A much-awaited return by **Jeff Mills** with the Barbican's Resident Orchestra, the **London Symphony Orchestra** for a very special evening marking the 20th anniversary of *Blue Potential*, Mill's groundbreaking 2005 project and 2006 album combining electronic and symphonic music.

Frequencies is part of **Barbican's Summer 2025**, a season packed with unmissable events in Theatre, Music, Cinema, Visual Arts and more, including **Encounters: Giacometti x Huma Bhabha**; **Fiddler on the Roof** and **Good Night, Oscar** in the Barbican Theatre; Classical concerts **Khatia Buniatishvili & Friends** and **CBSO Orchestral Qawwali with Abi Sampa**; as well as **Herbie Hancock** celebrating his 85th birthday; a film season and two special **Classical Music** concerts celebrating **PRIDE** in June; and Barbican's **Outdoor Cinema** with its full season of films under the stars.

ENDS

PRESS CONTACTS

For further information, images or to arrange interviews around Play Make Do please contact:

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IMAGES

LISTINGS

Play Make Do

13 July-16 August 2025

Barbican Centre

Silk Street, London EC2Y 8DS

@barbicancentre

<https://www.barbican.org.uk/whats-on/2025/series/play-make-do-a-festival-of-family-fun>

Cinema programme:

£13 tickets plus booking fee, £6 Young Barbican tickets available

Savages (PG)

Thu 7 Aug 2025, 2:30pm, Cinema 2

2024, Dir Claude Barras

Switzerland/France/Belgium/UK

Premiering at Cannes Film Festival last year, **Claude Barras'** latest stop-motion animation follows a girl and an orangutan on a mission to protect their forest home from imminent destruction.

11-year-old Keria lives in Borneo, where she discovers an abandoned baby orangutan in her father's palm tree operation. She starts to take care of the young ape while fighting against the threat of destruction that descends on the ancient forest.

After the global success of Claude Barras' last film *My Life as a Courgette*, which won of two César Awards and an Oscar nomination, this new feature is both sensitive and irresistible.

Savages also features the voices of **Babette de Coster**, **Martin Verset**, **Laëtitia Dosch** and **Benoît Poelvoorde**.

The Legend of Ochi (12A)

Fri 8 Aug 2025, 2:30pm, Cinema 3

2025, Dir Isaiah Saxon

USA

This visually dazzling fantasy adventure follows Yuri, a shy farm girl and her encounter with the elusive animal species known as ochi, starring **Willem Defoe** and **Finn Wolfhard**.

Set on a remote village on the island of Carpathia, Yuri has been raised to fear ochi. But, when she discovers a wounded baby ochi who has been left behind, she escapes on a quest to bring him home.

A true visual feast, Isaiah Saxon has created a charming and jaw dropping world, mainly using practical effects in a refreshing departure from Computer Generated Images (CGI).

Starring **Willem Defoe** (*Spider-man, The Boy and The Heron*), **Emily Watson** (*The Book Thief*), **Finn Wolfhard** (*Stranger Things*) and **Helena Zengel**.

Young Hearts (12A)

Thu 14 Aug 2025, 2:30pm, Cinema 2

2024, Dir Anthony Shatteman

Brussels

Thirteen year-old Elias falls in love for the first time and attempts to confront his inner turmoil in this heartfelt tale of young, gay, love, in **Anthony Shatteman's** feature.

After realising that he is attracted to his new neighbour, Alexander, Elias sets out to prove he is worthy of his heart.

Confused by these feelings, he turns to his friends and family but is only met with more questions and sets out to sort his inner chaos.

This first feature from **Anthony Shatteman** is gentle and sincere in its exploration of how burgeoning gay love shapes identity in a supposedly neutral world.

Elio (PG)

Fri 15—Sun 17 Aug 2025, Cinemas 2&3

2025, Dir Adrian Molina, Domee Shi and Madeline Sharafian

US

Elio is suddenly transported into outer space in Disney Pixar's latest animated sci-fi adventure.

Young Elio has always been obsessed with aliens, dreaming of encountering life beyond Earth. That dream turns real when he's suddenly whisked across the universe to a dazzling alien utopia. But things take a wild turn when he's mistaken for Earth's leader.

Now, Elio must form unexpected alliances and rise to the challenge of a galaxy-wide dilemma. Featuring standout voice performances from **Yonas Kibreab**, **Zoë Saldaña**, **Remy Edgerly**, **Jameela Jamil**.

Previously announced full programme:

Father & Daughter Drama Workshop

Sunday 13 July

Garden Room, Level 3

11am – 1pm

Suitable for ages 11+

Content guidance: Contains themes and topics raised in the *Fiddler on the Roof* story and theatre production

Adults: £15; Under 16s: free

Young people aged 11+ and their father, carer or guardian explore themes of family,

tradition and resilience in an intergenerational workshop inspired by ***Fiddler on the Roof***, led by *Fiddler on the Roof's* Jewish Culture, Religion & History Consultant, Rabbi Rose Prevezer. Participants will delve into musical theatre, tradition, joy, love, loss and the complex bonds between fathers and daughters.

Together, participants will reflect on community, culture and faith alongside current and important topics of migration, connection, separation and resilience. Using creative activities, drama and discussion, the workshop offers a space to share hopes, dreams and lived experiences across generations, all framed by the powerful story of the beloved musical.

Summer Drama Camp

Barbican Centre

Monday 28 July – Friday 1 August

10am – 4pm

Suitable for ages 11-16

£100 for the full week. Concession tickets available: for more information, please email creative.collaboration@barbican.org.uk with the subject 'Summer Youth Clubs'.

Theatre director and sound artist **Brigitte Adela** leads a fun and imaginative drama camp, where ages 11-16 will create a site-responsive play in just one week.

Taking inspiration from the Barbican's building, participants will develop characters, craft a compelling narrative, and imagine the world in which their story unfolds. Through a combination of games, creative writing, movement, improvisation, sound design, acting, and more, everyone will learn, collaborate, and create together. No prior knowledge or experience with drama is needed.

Summer Film Camp

Barbican Centre

Monday 28 July – Friday 1 August

10am-4pm

Suitable for ages 11-16

£100 for the full week. Concession tickets available: for more information, please email creative.collaboration@barbican.org.uk with the subject 'Summer Youth Clubs'.

Artist **Nia Fekri** returns to the Barbican with a new, collaborative filmmaking workshop. Participants create a 16mm film from start to finish, encouraging imaginative storytelling through manipulation and abstraction of pre-recorded film.

Over the course of five sessions, participants will work together to experiment with texture, rhythm and movement, bringing their narrative to life frame by frame. No prior experience with film is required - just curiosity and a willingness to explore and create.

Story Garden: A Summer Reading Adventure! with the Barbican Library

Fountain Room, Level G

Wednesday 6 and Thursday 14 August

10am – 11am

Suitable for ages 4+

Free

Bring the family together for a magical storytelling session hosted by the Barbican Children's Library. Part of the 2025 Summer Reading Challenge, a UK-wide programme developed by The Reading Agency and delivered in partnership with the public library network, encouraging children to keep reading during the summer holidays.

This year's Challenge, *Story Garden – Adventures in Nature and the Great Outdoors*, will inspire children to tap into a world of imagination through reading, exploring the magical connection between storytelling and nature.

Artizine: Forever Playground

FreeStage, Level G

Wednesday 6 August

11am – 12noon, 12noon – 1pm, 1pm – 2pm, 2pm – 3pm, 3pm-4pm

Suitable for all ages

Free

Artizine UK returns to the Barbican with a large-scale, free, collage workshop for the whole family. Suitable for all ages, **Forever Playground** participants collaboratively construct an imaginary playground made entirely from paper—ready to be built, dismantled, and reimagined. Designed to spark creativity and connection between families, it encourages a radical rethinking of the Barbican's public spaces.

Community Kite Project: Kimono Kite Making

Fountain Room, Level G

Thursday 7 – Friday 8 August

10.30am – 12.30pm

Suitable for ages 8+. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a responsible adult, parent or carer.

Under 16s: free; Adults: £10; Young Barbican £6

For hundreds of years, kites have been central to both childhood and adult games and pursuits. Across the globe, kite flying is synonymous with freedom, the outdoors, imagination, and possibility. Discover the fascinating history and story of the Sode (Kimono) Kite, as the **Community Kite Project** guides a hands-on workshop where participants will use materials and techniques to craft their own kite.

Play Space

Fountain Room, Level G

Thursday 7 – Saturday 9 August

11am – 4pm

Suitable for all ages. Children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by a parent, carer or guardian.

Free (ticketed)

Game on! Challenge the whole family with these playground classics in this free, drop-in play zone in the Barbican's expansive ground floor foyers. All ages are welcome to dive in to play with giant dominoes and Connect 4, towering Jenga and timeless hopscotch, get competitive with space hopper races, or test stamina with long rope and hula hoop.

Rueda Libre: Salsa Workshops

ClubStage, Level -1

Thursday 7 – Friday 8 August

1pm-2.30pm and 3pm-4.30pm on Thursday 7 Aug, 1pm-2.30pm on Friday 8 Aug

Suitable for ages 10+

Under 16s: free; Adults: £10; Young Barbican: £6

Laugh, connect and learn the basics of Rueda de Casino, a Salsa style of circle dancing that started in the streets of Cuba. The fun and vibrant workshop is led by London-based dance school **Rueda Libre**. Fiery duo Crown and Jessie's classes are filled with a mix of history and culture. They break down each move to take everyone through the footwork and timing, how to respond to the music, the crowd, and the energy in the room with confidence.

Tai Chi on Lakeside

Lakeside Terrace, Level G

Saturday 9 and Saturday 16 August

8.30am-10am

Suitable for ages 12+. Anyone under 18 must be accompanied by an adult or guardian. This event is open to adults of any age. This event is open to adults of any age.

Under 16s: £5; Adults: £10; Young Barbican £6

Discover the calming power of Tai Chi in the picturesque surroundings of the Barbican's Lakeside. This beginner-friendly, morning session is designed to improve balance, wellbeing and focus. Rooted in ancient practice, Tai Chi blends elements of meditation and martial arts into slow, flowing movements that build strength, balance and awareness.

No previous experience needed, **Mei Quan Academy of Tai Chi** will guide the session at a relaxed pace, with the focus on moving with ease and connecting mind and body. Ideal for people of all ages and abilities, this is a gentle and restorative way to find inner balance.

Family Illustration Workshop with Suhayla Ibrahim

Stalls Lounge, Level -1

Saturday 9 August

10.30am – 12.30pm

Suitable for ages 2+

Under 16s: free; Adults: £10; Young Barbican £6

Let your imagination run wild in this joyful, hands-on illustration workshop led by local artist and storyteller Suhayla Ibrahim. Families work together and are invited to contribute to a collaborative artwork celebrating family, community and creativity.

Whether you're drawing your mum, your dog, yourself, or reimagining your whole family as dragons, this is your space to play, explore and express your story through art. No experience is needed – just bring your curiosity and a willingness to have fun. Expect a welcoming atmosphere filled with colour, laughter and artistic energy as we create something truly special together.

Usifu Jalloh: Play Songs: Anansi and Matonkoni and the Palm Oil Roasted Catfish

FreeStage, Level G

Saturday 9 August

11am-12noon, 12noon – 1pm, 1pm-2pm

Suitable for all ages

Free

Master storyteller **Usifu Jalloh** returns the Barbican with an interactive adventure filled with music, imagination, fun and storytelling for all ages. In a lively new tale, the legendary Anansi the Spider transforms into a superhero, using wit, creativity and a bag of tricks to outsmart Matonkoni the Leopard and his pesky ninkinonkors.

Expect energetic drumming, joyful dancing and infectious songs that bring the story to life and invite everyone to join in. Blending humour, heart and traditional wisdom, this session celebrates kindness, resilience and the power of storytelling to bring people together.

Assemble Play Works: Colour Forest

FreeStage, Level G

Wednesday 13 - Friday 15 August

11am – 12noon, 12noon – 1pm, 1pm – 2pm, 2pm – 3pm

Suitable for all ages

Free (ticketed)

Step into a world of imaginative play as specialist 'playworkers' **Assemble Play Works** transform the Barbican's foyer into a magical forest of creativity for families to explore together for free. Inspired by outdoor play, adventures in nature and den building, children can dress as creatures, interact with curious materials and let their imaginations run wild in a colourful landscape designed to spark creativity.

Assemble Play Works bring their unique, child-led approach, transforming the Barbican's foyer into a playful environment where children and grown-ups can explore, build and invent together. It's a space to be silly, brave, quiet or loud. At the core of their practice is removing fixed play infrastructure (for example, found in playgrounds), which facilitates the creation of original structures and experiences.

Circus Flavours: Aerial Performances with Upswing

Conservatory Terrace, Level 4

Thursday 14 – Saturday 16 August

11am – 11.30am, 1pm – 1.30pm, 3pm–3.30pm, 5pm–5.30pm

Suitable for all ages. Children under 18 must have a parent, carer or guardian present during all workshops and performances.

Free (ticketed)

Be wowed by **Upswing's** thrilling aerial circus performances in the lush surroundings of the Barbican Conservatory, with four shows each day.

Circus Flavours showcases breathtaking aerial artistry and gravity-defying skill. These shows offer a rare chance to see world-class circus up close, as the Conservatory is transformed into a stage for high-flying feats and mesmerising movement. An unforgettable experience for all ages.

Circus Flavours: Aerial Workshops

Conservatory Terrace, Level 4

Thursday 14 – Saturday 16 August

11.30am – 12.15pm, 1.30pm – 2.15pm, 3.30pm – 4.15pm*

11.30am & 1.30pm sessions are suitable for 8-14yrs; 3.30pm is suitable for 15+yrs. Children under 18 must have a parent, carer or guardian present during all workshops and performances

*Workshop sessions are subject to limited capacity

Children & young people (8-16yrs): £5; Adults: £10; Young Barbican: £6

Ever dreamed of joining the circus? Step into the world of contemporary circus with **Upswing's Circus Flavours**. Watch stunning aerial acts and then try the skills yourself in one of their hands-on workshops.

Set in the lush surroundings of the Barbican Conservatory, each day features four breathtaking aerial performances from Upswing artists, showcasing gravity-defying skills and extraordinary physicality. After watching the pros in action, try out aerial techniques in workshops led by professional performers—no experience needed, just curiosity and courage.

There are two daily workshops for ages 8–14 and one for ages 15+. Workshop spaces are limited and must be booked online in advance.

Circus Flavours: Ground Skills Workshops

Conservatory Well, Level 3

Thursday 14 – Saturday 16 August

11.30am – 12.30pm, 1.30pm – 2.30pm, 3.30pm – 4.30pm

Suitable for 5yrs+. Children under 18 must have a parent or guardian present during all workshops and performances.

Free*

*The groundwork sessions will operate on the first come first served basis with limited capacity to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for all. Please note we expect this event to be popular and anticipate there may be some waiting times throughout the day.

Watch spectacular circus performances from **Upswing**, then join free, drop-in groundwork skills workshops for ages 5+ in our Conservatory. These playful, high-energy sessions are designed for different ages and abilities, offering a chance to try out a range of accessible circus skills including juggling and manipulation tricks.

Led by Upswing's expert team, these sessions are a great way to build confidence, explore physicality and experience the joy of circus. Whether you're watching or joining in, this is a celebration of movement, creativity and joyful connection. No booking or previous experience needed, just turn up and play!

Queer Folk: Family Ceilidh Dance Party

ClubStage, Level -1

Friday 15 August

2pm-2.45pm; 3-3.45pm

Open to all ages, children must be accompanied by adult

Under 2s free; 2-16yrs £5; Adults £10 plus booking fee; Young Barbican £6

Queer Folk's legendary **Queer Celidh Dance Party** takes over the Barbican's lower foyer with their lively, inclusive ceilidh. With live folk music from their brilliant queer ceilidh band, everyone will be guided through each dance – from do-si-do to strip the willow. No experience or partner required, just a willingness to move!

Folk is for all - all dances are gender-free and can be adapted to suit all ages and abilities, so everyone can join in. Expect high-energy folk dancing, big smiles and a whole lot of fun

for the family.

Idea Blaster – Making Up Stories from Nothing & Everything with Chitra Soundar

Fountain Room, Level G

Saturday 16 August

2pm – 3.30pm

Age restriction: 6+. This event isn't suitable for children younger than 6 years old.

Under 16yrs: Free; Adults: £10 plus booking fee; Young Barbican: £6

Create your own story from scratch with author **Chitra Soundar** in this fun, hands-on storytelling workshop for children ages 6+.

With her signature energy and creativity, Chitra will guide children through the storytelling process using her brilliant 'idea blaster' approach. Learn how to take everyday moments and ideas and create something brand new from what's around you. This lively, interactive session is designed to fire up imaginations and encourage young wordsmiths and storytellers to create their own tales.

Pumpkins & Porcupines: Delightful Stories from India with Chitra Soundar

FreeStage, Level G

Saturday 16 August

4-5pm

Suitable for ages 3+

BSL interpreted

Free (ticketed)

Step into a world of wonder with award-winning author and storyteller **Chitra Soundar** (Nikhil & Jay, CBeebies). In this joyful, interactive, free session for children and their families, she shares original and traditional tales from across India.

Chitra invites young audiences and their grown-ups to join her on a storytelling journey full of imagination, humour and heart, from a farm in Rajasthan to a giant pumpkin in the Western Ghats.

NOTES TO EDITORS

BIOGRAPHIES

Ioana Simion is a visual artist and arts educator based in East London. Working under the artistic identity of **Artizine UK**, she runs creative workshops that focus on handmade zines for artistic minds. Her socially engaged practice positions craft as a powerful tool for community-building and social change.

Assemble Play Works is a part of Turner Prize-winning art and architecture collective Assemble, led by experienced Playworker Penny Wilson. The child-led project is designed to improve the wellbeing and happiness of children and families by developing easily replicable, high quality, free to access play opportunities in urban environments. Assemble Play Works have delivered projects for local authorities (London Boroughs of Waltham Forest and Southwark), developers (Argent), design practices (LDA), museums and galleries (Royal Academy, John Soane Museum, Pitzhanger Manor, Headstone Manor, Ty Pawb.), schools (Hugh Myddelton School), art festivals (Brent Biennial) and charities (Toynbee Hall, Great Ormond Street).

Brigitte Adela is a theatre director, sound artist and facilitator. She has worked as a collaborator with London's leading cultural institutions and independent companies including the National Theatre, Almeida Theatre, Young Coney's cohort, artsdepot and Tamasha.

Chitra Soundar is an internationally published, award-winning author of children's books, writer of kids TV, audio and theatre. She has published over 60 books for children of all ages, across genre and format. Her books have been nominated and shortlisted for multiple awards in the UK and US including the Kate Greenaway Medal for Illustration, Surrey Children's Book Award and Inclusive Book Awards. She is also the co-founder of [Colourful Connections](#), a collective for PoC in UK Kids Media and the co-founder of [SAIL Fest](#), UK's first South Asian Literature Festival. Her TV recent credits include *Music Time* (Netflix) and *The Woohos* (Channel 5: Milkshake!), and her young fiction series *Nikhil and Jay* is currently airing on CBeebies. Chitra has written multiple episodes on the show and serves as one of the executive producers.

Community Kite Project believes fun and imagination are precious commodities. For hundreds of years kites have been central to childhood (and adult) games and pursuits; kite flying across the globe is synonymous with freedom, the outdoors, imagination and possibilities. Founded in 2011, CKP runs kite-making and flying workshops for everyone and anyone. Find out more at www.kiteproject.co.uk

Nia Fekri is an Iranian-British artist and educator whose practice spans moving image, writing, and performance. Her work often explores themes of migration and familial relationships. As an educator and facilitator, she focuses on collaborative storytelling and speculative practice across a range of media.

Queer Folk was founded by Sophie Crawford and George Sansome and now encompasses a network of many more musicians, dancers, songwriters, music fans, and likeminded LGBTQIA+ people. Queer Folk amplify LGBTQIA+ performers and history, foster collaborations, and encourage the building of LGBTQIA+ community in the trad folk scene. They run regular Queer Ceilidh Dance Parties at Cecil Sharp House in London, present a monthly radio show at [Voices Radio](#), and often host workshops, concerts, and LGBTQIA+ artist showcases.

Founded by Crown and Jessie, **Rueda Libre** is London's home of outdoor Cuban Salsa. Their classes are detailed with a mix of history, culture and laughs, leading ruedas that are fun, challenging and full of flavour. Nourishing a growing community of Latin dancers, hundreds of people each week join their distinctive group dance classes in King's Cross.

Suhayla Ibrahim is a London-based illustrator, winner of the FAB Prize for Illustration (2022). Born in Britain and of Sudanese heritage, she likes to depict characters from different backgrounds in her work as well as humour and archetypes of animals and objects. She loves using colours and creating a playful aesthetic. Alongside her illustration work, Suhayla is a multidisciplinary creative director and stylist making content across fashion, lifestyle and music.

Upswing is a multi-award-winning UK-based contemporary circus company based in Stoke-on-Trent. Founded by artistic director Vicki Dela Amedume in 2006, they use the human body to tell new stories in extraordinary ways – amplifying and celebrating the skills, creative talents and stories of diverse artists and communities. With co-commissioners and producers including Stratford Circus, National Theatre, Roundhouse, Channel 4 and Hull UK City of Culture, Upswing have created an electrifying portfolio of work that regularly tours nationally and internationally. Upswing is a National Portfolio Organisation receiving core support from Arts Council England.

Usifu Jalloh is an award-winning storyteller, performer, and educator with over 20 years of experience in arts education. Born in Kamakwie, Sierra Leone, his storytelling encompasses music, dance, and multilingual narratives rooted in African oral traditions. He founded *Maambena Fest* and the *National Storytelling Festival* in Sierra Leone to inspire and educate young people to learn more about their culture. Usifu's theatre productions include *Africa's Cowfoot*, *The Cowfoot Chronicles* and *One Cowrie Shell*, and he recently performed in *The Secret Lives of Baba Segi's Wives* at Arcola Theatre. Film work includes creating *The Cowfoot Prince* documentary with director Bex Singleton

and the National Film and Television School. As an international performer, he has worked across five continents, collaborating extensively with the BBC and clients including WHO, British Council Sierra Leone and the Obama Foundation. In 2021, he co-curated *This is Africa* for Coventry City of Culture.

ABOUT THE BARBICAN

The Barbican is a catalyst for creativity, sparking possibilities for artists, audiences, and communities. We showcase the most exciting art from around the world, pushing traditional artistic boundaries to entertain and inspire millions of people, create connections, provoke debate, and reflect the world we live in.

We are an international arts and events centre rooted firmly in our own neighbourhood, collaborating with local communities and putting the City of London on the map as a destination for everybody. Central to our purpose is supporting emerging talent and shaping opportunities that will accelerate the next generation of creatives.

As a not-for-profit, we rely on the generosity of individuals and organisations, including our principal funder the City of London Corporation. Every ticket purchased, donation made, and pound earned supports our arts and learning programme and enables the widest possible range of people to experience the joy of the arts.

Opened in 1982, the Barbican is a unique and audacious building, recognised globally as an architectural icon. As well as our theatres, galleries, concert halls and cinemas, we have a large conservatory with over 1,500 species of plants and trees, a library, conference facilities, public and community spaces, restaurants, bars, and a picturesque lakeside oasis.

We're proud to be the home of the [London Symphony Orchestra](#), our Resident Orchestra, and a London base for the [Royal Shakespeare Company](#). We regularly co-commission, produce and showcase the work of our Artistic Associates the [Academy of Ancient Music](#), [BBC Symphony Orchestra](#), [Boy Blue](#), [Darbar Arts](#), [Cultural and Heritage Trust](#), and Serious, and our other associates and partners including [Doc'n Roll Film Festival](#), [EFG London Jazz Festival](#), [London Palestine Film Festival](#), and [Trafalgar Theatre Productions](#).

For more information, visit our [website](#) or connect with us on [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [YouTube](#) | [Spotify](#) | [LinkedIn](#)