

NEWS RELEASE

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PATTI SMITH **appointed Artistic Director of** **MELTDOWN 2005**

11 – 26 June 2005
South Bank Centre, London

The South Bank Centre announces that **PATTI SMITH**, one of the most influential women of rock, is the Artistic Director of the thirteenth annual **MELTDOWN** festival. The celebrated artist and peace activist, heralded as one of the creators of punk, will curate her own festival of events to be staged across the venues of London's South Bank Centre from 11 to 26 June 2005.

PATTI SMITH is the thirteenth artist who has accepted the invitation to head **MELTDOWN**, one of Britain's most famous cutting edge festivals, since its inception in 1993. Renowned throughout the world for its eclectic mix of rock, classical and contemporary music, film, dance and performance, each year **MELTDOWN** offers a guest director the chance to produce his or her own fantasy festival, mixing artists and art forms, reflecting their own personal passions and interests.

2005 marks the 30th anniversary of **PATTI SMITH**'s landmark album, *Horses*, a seminal recording that many believe changed rock music. Since then she has continued to create music of intensity, passion and inventiveness, while also producing a number of books containing original poetry and artwork. From her first independent single, *Hey Joe/Piss Factory*, to her Grammy-nominated *Glitter In Their Eyes* and last year's critically acclaimed *Trampin'*, her passion for music, art and politics has undeniably stood the test of time, leading many artists to acknowledge her enduring influence.

PATTI SMITH says "I am very happy and proud to be part of a festival whose objective is to produce an atmosphere of creative conspiracy. This sense of community from crew to volunteers to performers will be the backbone of our festival. Everyone will draw the best of themselves and happily face new challenges.

"We will strive to reinforce our cultural voice.

"We will all work hard, respect one another and also have a good time together. I look forward to exploring new ideas and new possibilities of collaboration."

GLENN MAX, Producer of Contemporary Culture at the South Bank Centre says: "Rare artists like Patti Smith have led and influenced our cultural climate to such a degree that contemporary institutions like the South Bank Centre can produce festivals such as Meltdown that audiences still celebrate across the UK and beyond for 13 years now. She is a teacher, rebel and poet whose holistic and wide-ranging views on art and history are integrated and synthesized as a direct hit to the heart in all her work. As a rabid fan, and having had my most powerful concert experiences while Patti and her band righteously rocked the house, I am very proud that she has accepted the invitation to host what is certain to be an amazing Meltdown."

Previous Meltdown Directors are MORRISSEY (2004), LEE 'SCRATCH' PERRY (2003), DAVID BOWIE (2002), ROBERT WYATT (2001), SCOTT WALKER (2000), NICK CAVE (1999), JOHN PEEL (1998), LAURIE ANDERSON (1997), MAGNUS LINDBERG (1996), ELVIS COSTELLO (1995), LOUIS ANDRIESEN (1994) and GEORGE BENJAMIN (1993). Last year's festival yielded memorable performances from the director himself as well as historic shows from the specially reformed NEW YORK DOLLS just weeks before the sad death of Arthur "Killer" Kane, as well as performances by ALAN BENNETT, SPARKS, LYPSINKA and NANCY SINATRA. The roster of artists who have taken part in earlier Meltdowns includes RADIOHEAD, NINA SIMONE, TRICKY, BADLY DRAWN BOY, POLYPHONIC SPREE, SIR LES PATTERSON, SPALDING GRAY, BLUR, LOU REED, RYUICHI SAKAMOTO, MAX ROACH, COLDPLAY, SONIC YOUTH and THE LENINGRAD COWBOYS.

The full line-up for **PATTI SMITH'S MELTDOWN** will be announced soon.

For press information please contact Tim McKeough on 020 7921 0632, or email: tmckeough@rfh.org.uk.

Tickets for MELTDOWN on sale soon www.rfh.org.uk/meltdown

Notes to Editors:

The South Bank Centre (SBC) each year presents nearly 1,000 paid performances of music, dance, literature and other events and more than 300 free foyer events in the Royal Festival Hall, Queen Elizabeth Hall and Purcell Room. Up to six major art exhibitions are presented at the Hayward Gallery as well as National Touring Exhibitions in more than 100 venues around the country. The South Bank Centre annually attracts more than 3 million visitors.

PATTI SMITH'S MELTDOWN is the last to be held at the South Bank Centre prior to the closure of the Royal Festival Hall in July 2005 for a period of 18 months for complete refurbishment.