

SOUTHWARK THEATRE DISTRICT: AN OFF-BROADWAY FOR LONDON

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AN OFF-BROADWAY FOR LONDON

A borough with a history of cultural freedom, Southwark can take centre stage in London with live performance as its driving force.

▶ In this decade, over 50 per cent of people around the world will live in urban environments. For the new economic giants this means cities turned into places of production and manufacturing. However in the West, the loss of mass industrial manufacturing and production offers another industry: “ideas” and the opportunity to turn our major cities into the locus of creative and cultural innovation.

Taking a strategic approach to placemaking that focuses on the cultural and knowledge economies can therefore help provide an overall sense of purpose and creative vision for the regeneration of our former industrial and brownfield areas. London is not alone: major cities across the world are developing these strategies as they attempt to attract the investors, businesses and people needed to develop a competitive ideas economy. Already creative districts such as Covent Garden, Southbank and Shoreditch/Tech City are internationally recognised as urban successes that have attracted people and businesses to London.

However, if London is to keep its hard-won title of “global cultural city” it must move forward, encouraging its creative industries by investing in cultural infrastructure, providing funding for research and education, and

creating urban places of quality and originality where people and businesses can co-exist. The challenge for politicians, planners and developers is to build authentic creative districts that are rooted in the “local”, reflecting on an area’s history without defaulting to a heritage approach to placemaking.

Building modern creative places is about risk and experiment, seizing the moment; in Southwark there is an opportunity to build on the unique energy of the arts as a catalyst for change and regeneration. A “city of villages”, London’s enduring ability to reinvent itself echoes the movement of our iconic tidal river. For the last 200 years the southern riverbank has been inaccessible to the public, ring-fenced by private ownership; it was only in the mid 1950s and the Festival of Britain that the connectedness of the river itself began to be reflected on its banks. In 2012 Southwark is poised to take a leadership role in a new London – a city built on its international identity, trade, people, creativity and ideas – that a newly joined up river is once again beginning to represent. The Southbank – of which Southwark shares ownership and vision with Lewisham and Greenwich to the East, Lambeth and Wandsworth to

“

We must build local ownership of the big idea; Southwark has a critical mass of creative people and businesses, homegrown audiences and active community participation

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the West – is no longer a place but an idea and a journey. Beginning at Tower Bridge, it is now possible to walk an entire stretch of the Thames to Nine Elms and Battersea Power Station through increasingly dynamic and culturally enticing new districts.

As Southwark’s south bank redevelops, becoming home to a series of new residential towers and cultural institutions, attention will inevitably move inwards to other Southwark neighborhoods. Bermondsey High Street, Blackfriars Road, Waterloo, Elephant & Castle, Peckham and Camberwell are all positioned to benefit from the knowledge and creative sectors, with their theatres, art schools, world-class museums and clusters of creative industries and businesses.

Was it Southwark that contributed to the sentiment behind the London cabby’s eternal cry of, “Not south of the river at this time of night,” so familiar to residents south of the city? Historically outside of the jurisdiction of the City of London, Southwark was a place of relative cultural freedom; successive centuries saw north Londoners take a boat trip south to the Rose Theatre, to places of intrigue, liaison, ribaldry and entertainment. If “Southwarkness” can be described as a love of theatre, performance and live action then the borough can be proud to have embraced change without losing its cultural heritage. Modern theatres such as the Young Vic and the Southwark Playhouse, supported by the engine rooms of the Jerwood Space and National Theatre Studios, have sustained the production of independent, innovative theatre; new live, immersive productions by experimental companies such as Shunt and Punchdrunk have found new spaces and audiences. Even the Tate Modern has got in on the act with the opening of its “Tank Galleries”, offering a programme of experimental live arts events.

As our research shows, there is no doubting the importance of the existing theatre offer to the local economy. By joining the dots a

creative-district concept built around theatre can draw in businesses working in prop making, fabrication, scenery design, fashion and textiles, arts and craft, design and social media, as well as an extended “theatre family” that includes the food and beverage industry. It is the idea of a new theatre district for Southwark that resonates. However, it will need supporters and drivers if it is to succeed; to quote Sara Bernhardt, “The theatre is the involuntary reflex of the ideas of the crowd.” The implication is that we must build local ownership of the big idea; Southwark has a critical mass of creative people and businesses, homegrown audiences and active community participation.

Futurecity believe the theatre district concept will provide a catalyst for the reinvigoration of Southwark’s neighbourhoods, but a theatre district cannot be imposed. Instead we can put in place the basic elements, kick start the scheme with the support of the cultural community and encourage take-up of the idea by the stakeholders outlined in this document. Marketing, branding and PR is necessary but it will inevitably need political and private sector partnerships and sponsorship to succeed.

Mark Davy

Founder and Director of Futurecity

UNION: SOUTHWARK’S THEATRE DISTRICT

Contemporary Southwark is home to some of London’s finest independent theatres: the Globe, Young Vic, Unicorn Theatre, Southwark Playhouse, Union Theatre and The Miller are all located in Southwark, with the National Theatre and the Old Vic close by on its Lambeth boundary. These theatres are supported by over 50 local private businesses, trading in costumes, props, set and lighting design, theatre architecture, and education, sets and lighting design. These theatres are supported by over 50 local private businesses, trading in costumes, props, set and lighting design, theatre architecture, and education, sets and lighting design, as well as some of the UK’s best theatre companies, and institutions such as the Jerwood Space, National Theatre Studio, and English Touring Theatre. That this clustering of business, visible and invisible, should have grown up in Southwark is not coincidental: creative businesses, as with most traditional trades, establish themselves close to their customers and suppliers.

Theatre has a distinguished heritage in Southwark. There are its medieval galleried inns: from one of these, the Tabard, Chaucer’s travellers in the *Canterbury Tales* depart; in another, The George Inn on Bermondsey Street, contemporary drinkers can continue to gather. There is also the major proliferation of theatres on the southern river bank of the Thames that occurred in the late 1500s: Shakespeare’s Globe, the Rose, Newington Butts, Blackfriars Playhouse and the Hope (built on the site of the Beargarden, Southwark’s infamous bear-baiting ring) combined to establish a thriving performance community in the area. This was echoed in the 19th century by the establishment of Victorian music halls: the Raglan on Union Street, Britannia on Blackfriars Road and Winchester on Southwark Bridge Road in north Southwark alone.

Union responds to this significant clustering of theatre in Southwark, drawing on examples such as the London Design Festival (and corresponding Brompton, Shoreditch, London Fields and Clerkenwell Design Districts) and Milan’s Zona Tortona to propose a brand for a new theatre district for London. Taking its identity from the prologue of Shakespeare’s *Henry V*, the “wooden O”, Union’s concept is to draw together the energy of the borough’s theatre practitioners and businesses to further establish Southwark as a major cultural quarter. In doing so it will support and

expand Southwark’s wider economy by attracting bigger audiences; such a move would be particularly beneficial for the borough’s night-time economy.

In his concept note of 1994, *Resourcing the Artist*, Richard Lee, director of the Jerwood Space, points out that the invisibility of artistic “work”, particularly in theatre, contributes to a general perception of the arts as lacking economic value. The visible end product, the production itself, is a social event for audience and the wider industry alike; the labour that goes into making it is largely hidden, dispersed across a range of halls, rooms and studios – both public and private – across the city.

Whilst this has shifted significantly for the visual arts and design in the following decades, the business of theatre remains largely imperceptible to a wider public audience. Initiatives such as the Battersea Arts Centre’s open scratch events, the early emergence of theatre hubs such as Bristol’s Residence, Marylebone’s Theatre Delicatessen and Stoke Newington’s International Airport, and immersive theatre companies such as Shunt, Punchdrunk and Coney, combine to bring theatre and its workings closer to audiences. However, there are few events in theatre that mirror the Open Studio-style projects that have brought the work of visual artists out in to the open.

How Union might best serve the theatre industry of Southwark – as well as local businesses such as restaurants and bars, and theatre practitioners beyond the borough’s boundaries – is very much open to debate. The following pages explore various models that might contribute to that conversation and propose what the Union brand might look and feel like, and how it might be applied. As a starting point, Futurecity has discussed Union with a series of companies, institutions and practitioners; their thoughts and feedback forms part of the Union proposal. At the same time we explore what makes Southwark a unique place and expand on the multiplicity of ways in which Southwark ‘performs’ on its streets for residents and visitors alike.

HYPOTHETICAL LOGO DEVELOPMENT



Futurecity has developed a hypothetical logo for Union in order to demonstrate how the concept might work in practice: it is not proposed as a finalised entity.

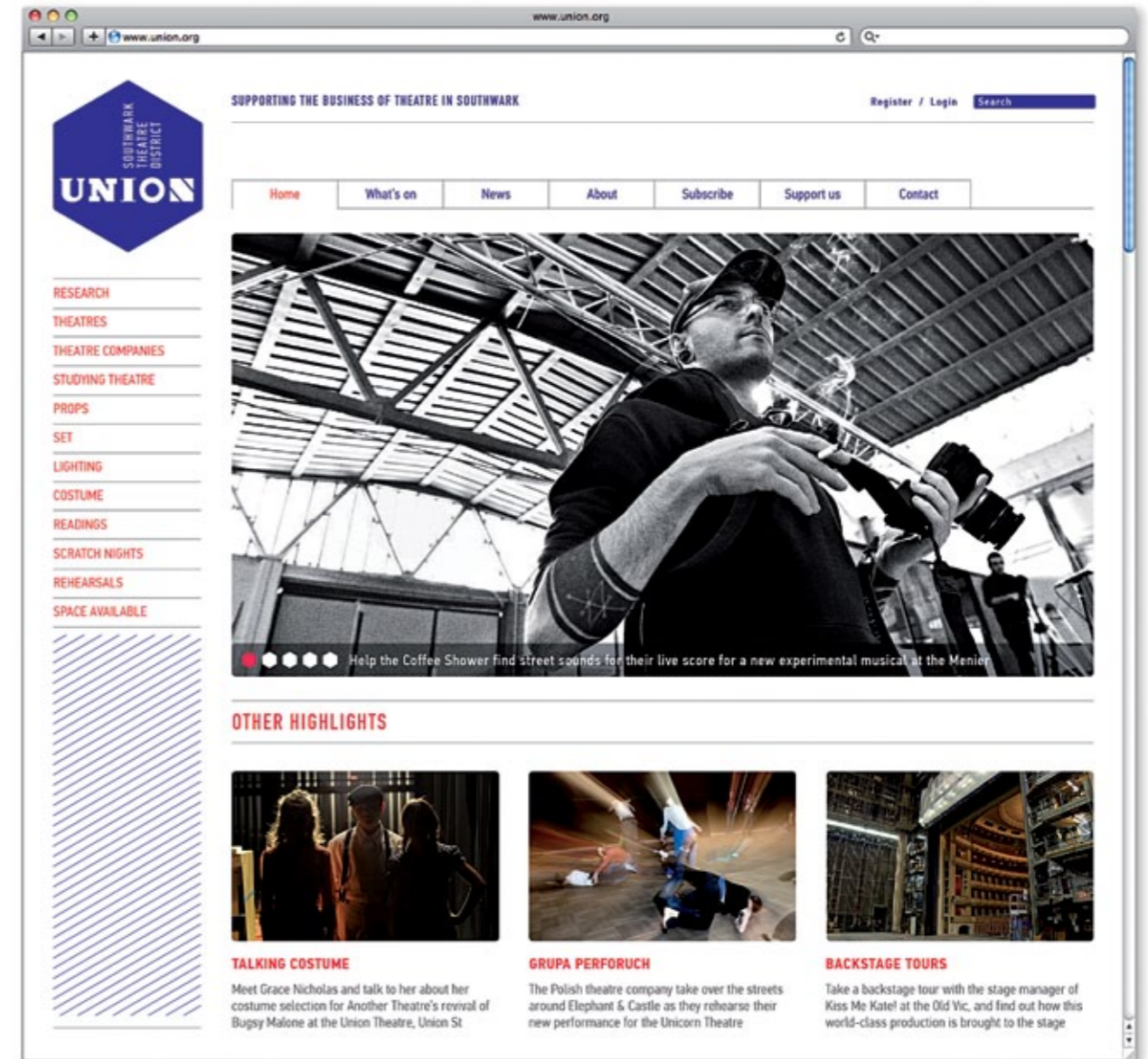
The name Union was selected for its geographical resonance: the Jerwood Space and The Union Theatre are both located on Union Street, which itself is opposite The Cut and its wealth of theatrical offers. It also encapsulates the aim of the project: to unify and make visible Southwark's theatre ecology.

The hexagon shape hints at both the theatrical "empty space" of a cube and the multifaceted external architecture of theatres such as the Globe. The logo's typography uses eclectic Victorian typefaces associated with vintage theatre posters and combines them with classic modernist typefaces to create a unique union of the historic and contemporary. The "O" is highlighted in reference to Shakespeare's prologue to *Henry V*, where he refers to the interior space of the theatre as "this wooden O".

The clean, modern vertical strapline marks would be the far vertical edge of the cube and they hint at the urban landscape line of Southwark. It also gives the logo another key feature, its positioning allowing the logo to be used at any one of four different angles of rotation. This allows for varying degrees of emphasis on either Union or the strapline. This feature also reinforces the logo's reference to Southwark's many circular, flexible theatrical spaces.

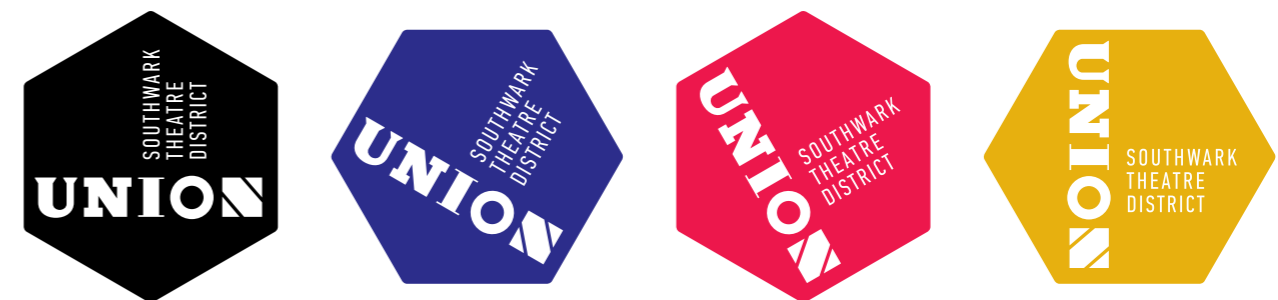
Logo in context

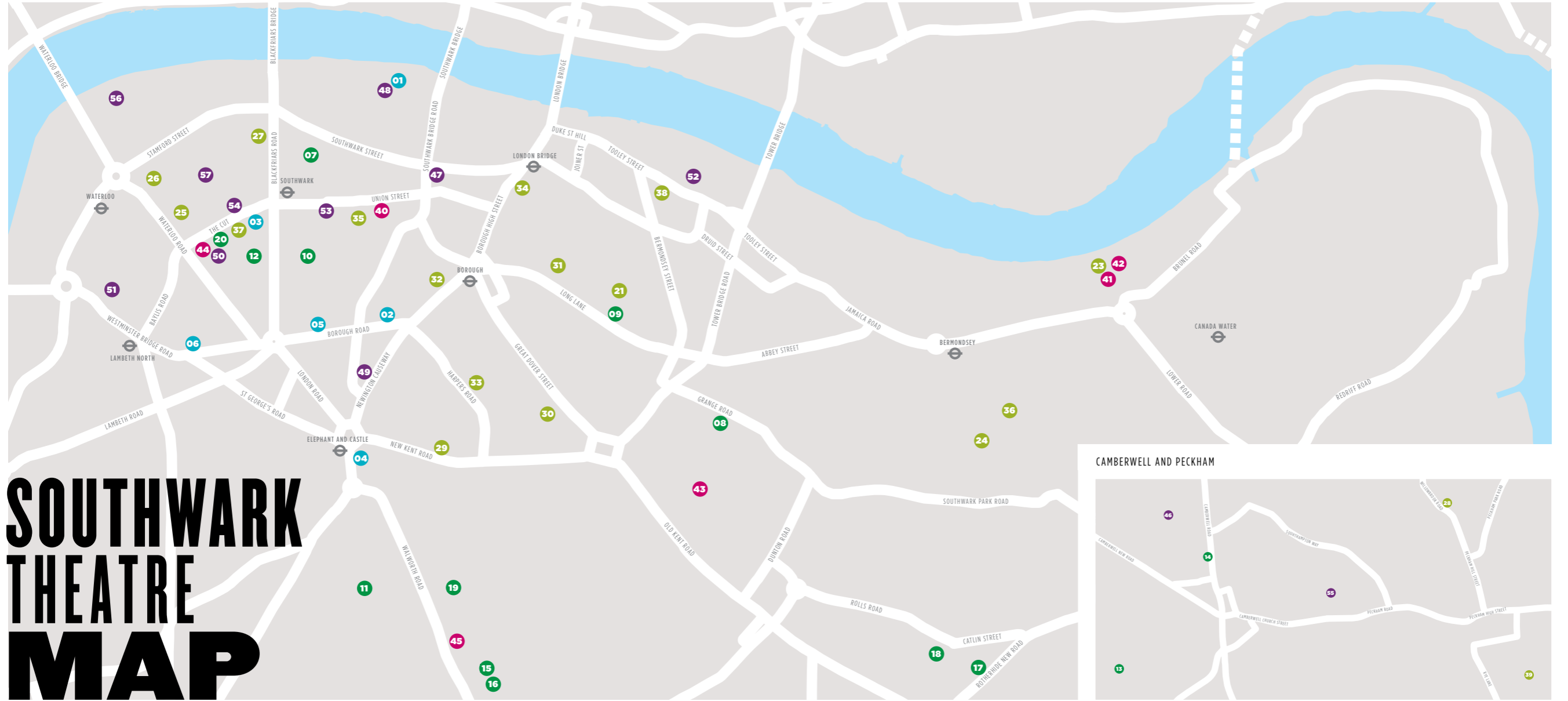
The logo's robust design means that it reproduces clearly in even the most utilitarian of situations.



Logo rotations and colour scheme

The logo is designed to be used at any one of four different angles of rotation, and in any one of the identity's three colours.





SOUTHWARK THEATRE MAP

KEY

- Academic Centre
- Private Company
- Theatre Company
- Theatre Institution
- Working Theatre

LISTING

- 01** Globe Education
Shakespearesglobe.com/education
- 02** London School Of Musical Theatre
Lsmt.co.uk
- 03** Lewisham College (incorporates Southwark College)
Lewisham.ac.uk/courses/home/performing-and-creative-arts
- 04** London College of Communication
Lcc.art.s.ac.uk/courses/courses-by-subject/theatre-design
- 05** London South Bank University
Prospectus.lsbu.ac.uk/courses/course_search/search_post.php

- 06** Morley College
Morleycollege.ac.uk/departments/drama
- 07** Blackfriars Scenery
Bsstaging.com
- 08** London Audio Hire
Londonaudiohire.com
- 09** Stage Electrics
Stage-electrics.co.uk
- 10** Academy Costumes
Academytextiles.com
- 11** Enigma Systems
020.7708.3562
- 12** S2 Events Ltd
S2events.co.uk
- 13** Cover it Up
Cover-it-up.com
- 14** Scena Productions LLP
Scenapro.com
- 15** Flint Hire & Supply Ltd
Flints.co.uk
- 16** Ken Creasey Ltd
Kencreasey.com

- 17** Souvenir Scenic Studios
Souvenir.co.uk
- 18** TMS Theatrical Ltd
Tmstheatrical.com
- 19** Abacus Arts
Abacus-arts.org.uk/index.htm
- 20** The Calder Bookshop & Theatre
Calderbookshop.com
- 21** Box Clever
Boxclevertheatre.com
- 22** The Lions Part
Theionspart.co.uk
- 23** London Bubble Theatre Company
Londonbubble.org
- 24** Bold and Saucy
Boldandsaucy.co.uk
- 25** Company of Angels
Companyofangels.co.uk
- 26** Futures Theatre Company
Futurestheatrecompany.co.uk
- 27** In toto Theatre Company
In-tototheatre.co.uk

- 28** Peckham Shed
Peckhamshed.com
- 29** Real Drama
Rdtheatre.co.uk
- 30** Southwark Mysteries
Southwarkmysteries.co.uk
- 31** Scary Little Girls
Scarylittlegirls.co.uk
- 32** Vayu Naidu Company
Vayunaiducompany.org.uk
- 33** Tangled Feet
Tangledfeet.com
- 34** 11:18
Eleven-eighteen.com
- 35** 3rd Thought
1stframework.org
- 36** Shunt
Shunt.co.uk
- 37** English Touring Theatre
Ett.org.uk
- 38** Exchange Theatre
Exchangetheatre.com

- 39** The Last Refuge
Thelastrefuge.co.uk
- 40** Jerwood Space
Jerwoodspace.co.uk
- 41** Rewrite
Rewrite.org.uk
- 42** STEP (Southwark Theatres' Education Partnership)
Step-partnership.co.uk
- 43** Southwark Arts Forum
Southwarkartsforum.org
- 44** National Theatre Studio
Nationaltheatre.org.uk/discover-more/about-the-national/studio/what-we-do
- 45** InSpire
In-spire.org.uk
- 46** Blue Elephant Theatre
Blueelephanttheatre.co.uk
- 47** Menier Chocolate Factory
Menierchocolatefactory.com/Online/default.asp
- 48** Shakespeare's Globe
Shakespearesglobe.com

- 49** Southwark Playhouse
Southwarkplayhouse.co.uk
- 50** Old Vic Theatre
Oldvictheatre.com
- 51** The Old Vic Tunnels
Oldvictunnels.com
- 52** Unicorn Theatre
Unicorntheatre.com
- 53** Union Theatre
Uniontheatre.biz
- 54** Young Vic Theatre
Youngvic.org
- 55** Theatre Peckham
Theatrepeckham.co.uk
- 56** National Theatre
Nationaltheatre.org.uk
- 57** Waterloo East Theatre
Waterlooeast.co.uk

To add your company to the Southwark Theatre Map, please contact Futurecity at info@futurecity.co.uk

RISE OF THE CREATIVE DISTRICT

Spitalfields, Covent Garden, Deptford: all examples of different kinds of Creative Districts. Southwark is next on the list...

► Culture is at the heart of the world around us, influencing and informing our rapidly changing environment. Some cities, especially in Europe, are ahead of the game in achieving their goals through arts-led renaissance. These cities have been successful in using the arts to help developers, architects and planners to brand the urban environment in ways that are distinctive and creative.

London currently attracts many of the world's most talented people and companies, providing the energy, ideas and investment that make us a member of a small group of world-class cities including such diverse places as Tokyo, New York and Shanghai. If London is to continue to compete for this global class of young, intelligent, multicultural and mobile professionals there needs to be new thinking in the way we plan and use culture in London. This means new ideas and intellectual property as well as an ever-evolving and fertile cultural landscape of buildings, public realm, music, theatre, opera, education, sports and community activities.

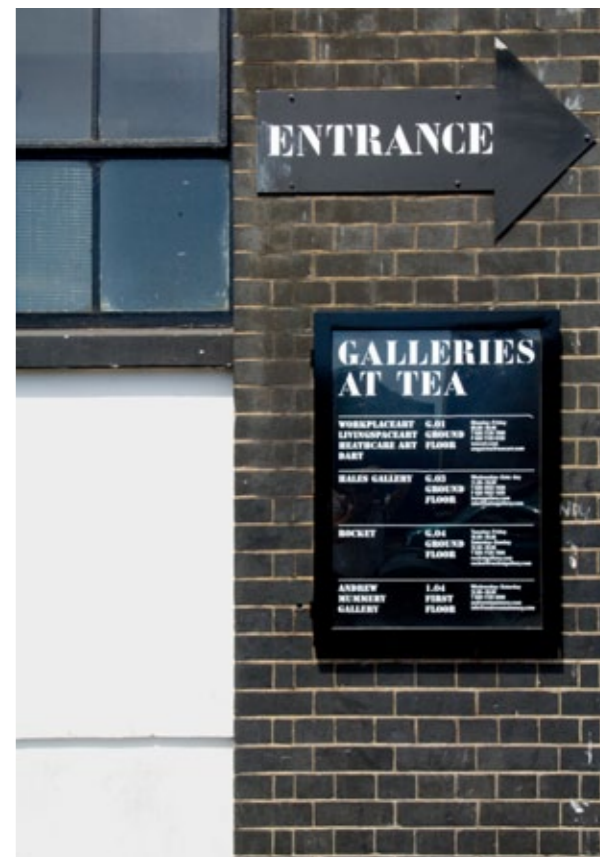
All this must happen while encouraging authentic districts that have a distinctive feel to them in terms of community, architecture, design, retail offer and public realm. To deliver this the public and private sectors need a relationship that is about shared values, objectives and language. ►

Culture and creativity are big business. London's status as one of the world's creative powerhouses is substantively linked to the success of our creative industries and our cultural scene. Since 1998, growth in the creative industries has outperformed almost every other industrial sector in the UK's economy and was a key economic driver in the first decade of the new millennium, earning an average of £55bn a year. That's more than the construction industry and more than double the value created by the insurance, pensions and pharmaceutical industries combined.

It is likely that the creative industries will be an even stronger economic driver in this decade with many economists and politicians predicting that they will be the UK's most potent economic sector in the years to come (the Centre for Economic & Business Research most recently stating that "media, internet and creative" will outstrip finance as London's most important business driver by 2017). Currently 800,000 people work in creative jobs in London, representing 32 per cent of the national total and generating a GVA of over £10bn.

London has seen a rapid expansion of its cultural offer over the past 20 years thanks to sustained investment in galleries and museums, visual arts, film, theatre and dance, public realm and education. When people talk about London and all the things they most love about living in and visiting the city they invariably find themselves discussing culture. The volume of cultural assets and creativity in London challenges that of all of the world's global cities: more museums than Paris; four Unesco World Heritage sites; nearly twice as many bookshops as New York; and more than 30,000 live music performances a year. Creativity resonates throughout the city and for many, their most valued experiences will not be the treasures of a renowned museum collection but their visit to an East End art gallery, watching a band play in Camden or discovering an architectural gem among the layered history of London's streets.

London's cultural vibrancy and creative industries are not distributed uniformly; rather, they are focused within a network of relatively small "Creative Districts", each around one mile across and with their own unique character and opportunities. Seeing London as a series of Creative Districts means a fresh approach to planning. It provides a strong argument for the most successful parts of the city to be led by a deliberately eclectic mix of uses. It also allows for regeneration to prioritise character and atmosphere, and results in places that are varied, rewarding, intriguing, unexpected and inspiring. This is the antithesis of the post-WW2 planning policy that aimed to separate urban ►



Clockwise from top left: Shoreditch is an organic Creative District with Brick Lane; the Tea Building; Spitalfields Market; and plenty of restaurants



Covent Garden is an Established Creative District, able to build on its heritage of live performance

experiences into places for living, business, retail and leisure.

Planning a cultural- and creative-industries strategy as part of a development scheme from inception (what Futurecity calls “cultural masterplanning”) leads to better places that improve quality of life for residents, tenants and visitors. But there are also hard economic reasons why cultural masterplanning makes sense as it offers three exceptional means of adding value to new-build developments:

- Culture and creativity instill a distinctive communicable identity and a sense of place;
- A vibrant cultural realm adds a premium that attracts residents, business tenants and visitors;
- Communication through culture creates alliances and a feeling of ownership, and draws in local populations and stakeholders.

London has always been a city of villages but the unique identity of these villages, particularly the boroughs on the edge of London, has increasingly eroded. This greying of our cities and the rise of chain businesses has resulted in the term “clone town”. How do we stop our buildings and public realm looking the same as any other world city? By encouraging these Creative Districts with distinct identities where culture and business come together in

a common goal and offer demonstrable potential to reverse urban uniformity. Futurecity and its research partner Burns Owen Partnership have identified four distinct types of Creative District – Established, Planned, Organic and Emerging – each with unique characteristics.

The Established Creative District

Some Creative Districts have long-established identities that are based on their main occupiers. Covent Garden and Shaftesbury Avenue have renowned histories of hosting theatre, for instance. They are home to clusters of buildings providing a high-quality performing-arts offer including opera, theatre and ballet, and are also supported by a fine grain of hotels, bars, clubs and restaurants.

With age comes heritage and the accidental – alleyways and hidden squares, tourism and tolerance – and so building uses change. Established Creative Districts have good transport links and an identifiable location that is easy to find. They are often home to numerous cultural supply-and-support businesses and attract many small private-sector companies that feed off the association with creativity and the uniqueness of the place. However, they are often places with high rent, densely packed and lacking the capacity and space to expand.

The Organic Creative District

The area around Shoreditch, Broadgate and Spitalfields could be considered London’s best Organic Creative District. Here the creative energy is more about edginess and authenticity. It has evolved via the route of low rents for artists and creatives, the colonisation and re-use of areas of post-industrial decay and the evidence of a history of immigration and upwardly mobile populations that have left their mark on the area.

Be it Huguenots, Eastenders, Jews or Bangladeshi, each community has left cultural traces, architecture, trades, names, markets, food and festivals. Symbolised on one hand by Brick Lane, Bhangla-Town and the Truman Brewery, and on the other by Heron Tower and Broadgate, this organic Creative District is inextricably linked with the creative industries. Spitalfields Market is interwoven with design and artists’ studios, as well as galleries and crafts businesses. Like an Established Creative District it is supported by large numbers of independent creative businesses with a strong sense of place and style that deploy the arts to create a symbiotic link between the customer, the business and the area.

The Emerging Creative District

These are often areas perceived as having low-quality public realm and housing infrastructure, plus remnants of a traditional industrial base. The areas are often marked by brutal, intrusive infrastructure such as roads and rail. However, these areas also have a core of cultural life and community that add real value.

In London, one example is Deptford: it has attracted a burgeoning cultural population of writers, musicians, artist, designers and dancers. It also has a mix of nationalities that have stayed in the area, bringing an attractive and complex mix of shops to the high street to serve the resident population (Emerging Creative Districts are most often all but invisible to outsiders). Importantly, it also has some cultural investment in the form of a theatre (Albany), a Dance Centre (LABAN), a crafts centre (Cockpit Arts) and a renowned art college (Goldsmiths), which has brought some level of quality to the cultural offer.

The Planned Creative District

London’s first planned Creative District is “Albertopolis”, the area in Kensington and Chelsea that boast the Science Museum, V&A, Albert Hall and Natural History Museum. But the most recent example of this type of planned approach is King’s Cross, developed by Argent and supported by the London Borough of Camden. This vast site will be home to two

updated 21st-century terminuses (King’s Cross and St Pancras stations) and a major new offer for public realm, parks and open spaces.

The development also aims to attract major businesses to the area by offering transport links, high-quality public realm, strong cultural identity and great buildings. Renowned cultural organisations already based in the area include the new St Martins College with its world famous fashion degree as the centrepiece, Kings Place with its high-profile tenants (Guardian Media Group, Pangolin Gallery), Anthony Gormley’s Chipperfield-designed studio, the Hub and many other cultural and creative industry-led businesses.

Places that lead their regeneration through culture, whether through high-profile cultural assets (such as a major new gallery) or through many smaller street-level initiatives, often find themselves stealing a march on their peers. These places have been successful in “branding” the urban environment in distinctive ways, creating environments that people want to live in and work in, as well as visit.

As the Work Foundation put it, “A place with... strong cultural assets can draw in the world’s most talented workers and entrepreneurs; a healthy and vibrant cultural, leisure and sporting life can enhance cities in a positive way.” We couldn’t agree more.

The Truman Brewery in Shoreditch is home to creative businesses as well as cafés and bars



CASE STUDY ZONA TORTONA

Having become a depressing post-industrial district of Milan, Zona Tortona's decline was completely reversed by an influx of creative businesses. This is how it was done...

▶ The Zona Tortona district of Milan has developed a reputation for being a centre of creative activity. Similarly to London's Shoreditch, this activity has taken root in a post-industrial neighbourhood of the city with a strong creative reputation. The Zona Tortona is not an official administration designation in the city but a branding device placed on an area close to the Porta Genova railway station.

The neighbourhood, which lies south-west of Milan's city centre, is an old industrial district that owes much of its character to the opening of the local train station in 1870 and the intersection of several canals. Over time, many important international and Italian companies – such as Ansaldo, Bisleri, General Electric, Osram, Nestlé and Riva Calzoni – set up factories around the station to take advantage of the transport links. Smaller industries also settled in the area, with artisans setting up numerous workshops.

However, shifts in industrial patterns from the 1960s onwards led to many of these factories and workshops being left empty as businesses moved on. By the 1980s, the area had become a quiet, semi-abandoned neighbourhood, consigned to being part of the city's suburbs.

The transformation of Zona Tortona needed pioneers. The first notable creative business

project was born in 1983 when photographers Flavio Lucchini and Fabrizio Ferri opened fashion-photography studio Superstudio in a disused bicycle factory. After leaving his role as creative director of *Vogue Italia*, Lucchini founded Edimoda, his publishing house, in an old chandelier factory on the piazza S. Eusebio. Lucchini established three photographic studios within the building, predominantly for his own use but also for hire by other practitioners.

Within a few short years, Lucchini found that the volume of hire requests outstripped availability and he began to look for alternative accommodation in the area, founding Superstudio at number 7-13 via Forcella with fellow photographer Fabrizio Ferri. Lucchini aimed to create “a Cinecittà of image, in which we create, meet other people and learn as well, attracting great international photographers and training new Italian ones gravitating towards Milan”.

Over the following years Lucchini's vision for the Tortona district attracted other photographers (such as Photo Studio Orsi, which opened its doors on via Tortona in 1985), tailors (such as the Brancato theatre costume workshop in the old Bisleri factory), restoration laboratories and various small-scale workshops, as well as major Italian fashion brands (Esprit, Kenzo, Zegna and Hugo Boss among others).



When the great Japanese architect Tado Ando turned the former Nestlé building into the headquarters of Giorgio Armani in 2001, Tortona's transformation into the heart of Milan's fashion scene was complete.

The fashion industry was followed by other private, public and academic investment in the area. In 1999, the Milano Municipality acquired the Ansaldo complex, a large ex-industrial premises in Tortona that had belonged to the established Italian company. British architect David Chipperfield was commissioned to

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In 2001, Tortona's transformation into the heart of Milan's fashion scene was complete

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transform the buildings into the Centre for Advanced Studies of Cinema & Television and the rehearsal rooms and stage laboratories of Teatro all Scala, as well as housing other cultural initiatives. In the same year Lucchini purchased the former General Electric building on via Tortona and founded Superstudio Più, a major gallery, restaurant and centre for performance rehearsal studios, as well as a series of smaller gallery spaces, providing a creative alternative to the city's more established Salone, home to Milan's Fashion & Furniture Fairs.

In the second half of the 1990s, property entrepreneur Alessandro Crivelli's Estate4 implemented a less organic and more concrete “cultural mix model”. It involved hosting activities linked to design, art, communication and fashion in the dismantled factories and creating an artist's village, including advertising studios, inside the former Schlumberger precision-instruments factory. In addition, design school Domus Academy moved to a site close to Via Tortona in the early 2000s.

The redevelopment of Zona Tortona and the influx of creative business provided fertile ground for the branding of the area as a major Creative District, a project initiated by marketing agency DesignPartners in 2000 with the aim of connecting the locations of the Fuorisalone: the off-Salone exhibitions held alongside the Salone Internazionale del Mobile (Milan Furniture Fair). By 2009, the district had 90 fair venues drawing 88,000 visitors. The events contributed around €180m to local business during the Salone, with restaurants and bars taking half their annual income over the course of a few weeks and landlords earning 40 per cent of their annual rent in the same period.

In 2011, management of the Zona Tortona was taken over by a consortium of local businesses lead by Superstudio. The new Tortona Design Week organisation updated the visual identity of the area with the direct involvement of all the major local businesses, as well as the assistance of designer Stefano Giovannoni. It is another project that proved enormously successful – and proved the power of well-organised Creative District. Tortonadesignweek.com

Above: Tortona Design Week attracts huge crowds; left: an exhibit from the 2009 Fuorisalone event

CASE STUDIES

The blend of individual, private and public-sector intervention in the establishment of Creative Districts is enormously varied. These international case studies demonstrate how Creative Districts – both planned and organic – can impact positively on an area's economic and social regeneration.

PROJECT DESIGN DISTRICT / METROPOLITAN DESIGN CENTRE Buenos Aires, Argentina

Barracas is an inner-city neighbourhood located in the southeast of Buenos Aires and has been an economically disadvantaged district since the 1980s; a typical post-industrial neighbourhood. The Project Design District is a municipality-led programme to develop Barracas as an economic cluster of design-related cultural production. Regeneration started with the rehabilitation of a wholesale fish-market site in 2002. Closed down for half a century it has been refurbished as a modern 14,500 sq m architectural project to house the Metropolitan Design Centre.

The building has an employment potential of 1,500. It houses government offices concerned with promoting design and businesses in the creative industries and foreign trade. It has 70 workspaces for the “incubation” of entrepreneurial ventures, an auditorium, classrooms, spaces for workshops and laboratories, 3,000 sq m for exhibitions and displays, a specialised library, a museum, a cultural centre and a cafeteria. Preferential loans, tax cuts and subsidies have also been offered for the restoration of buildings to design-related companies that base themselves in the area surrounding the Metropolitan Design Centre. Cmd.gov.ar

QUARTIER DES SPECTACLES PROJECT Montreal, Canada

First proposed in 2002, the Quartier des Spectacles is a regeneration project led by the City of Montreal for its economically disadvantaged eastern downtown section. The project's goal has been to make the district a permanent venue for culture, cultural enterprises and craftspeople where a critical mass of cultural activities can be developed. Many cultural institutions and venues already existed in this neighbourhood but the project's intention was to give the area a boost as a designed Creative District.

In 2003, the Partenariat du Quartier des Spectacles was created: a non-profit organisation consisting of 23 members from the cultural, real estate, educational and business sectors, along with residents, the city and the government of Québec. In 2007, the city joined with

the governments of Québec and Canada to commit a total of \$120m over four years to help develop the project.

The centrepiece of this project is the 2-22 building, 75 per cent of which is given over to cultural uses such as community radio and arts organisations while the rest is for commercial use, including restaurants and cafés. The building looks set to become a cultural landmark for Montreal. The district is already home to 30 performance venues with about 28,000 seats spread over approximately 1 sq km. It also supports some 8,500 jobs in 450 cultural, knowledge-based and artistic enterprises. Quartierdespectacles.com

BAM CULTURAL DISTRICT Fort Greene, Brooklyn, USA

Proposed in 2000, the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) Cultural District development plan has aimed to revitalise the Fort Greene neighbourhood of Brooklyn in New York City. Similar to the Quartier des Spectacles project (albeit on a smaller scale), the plan is to capitalise on pre-existing cultural facilities and cultural organisations in the area to further develop the neighbourhood and clearly designate it as a cultural epicentre.

Anchored by the world-famous BAM, the district will include new performance and rehearsal space as well as office space for a diverse group of local arts organisations. One of its most important achievements has been the construction of a permanent home for the Theatre for a New Audience, an internationally renowned arts group with a 299-seat theatre, rehearsal studio and public plaza. Bam.org

798 ART ZONE – THE DASHANZI ART DISTRICT Beijing, China

A post-industrial area of decommissioned military factory buildings in the Chaoyang District of Beijing, the Dashanzi district began its regeneration in 1995. Artists started renting cheap factory spaces to use as studios, creating an artist enclave in the area. In 2003, a series of spectacular and experimental exhibitions occurred in the 798 Art District, attracting many visitors and establishing the area in the public imagination. Consequently the number of artists and art foundations choosing to rent parts of the former factory complex increased dramatically in the same year.

As the area became increasingly well known as a cluster of artistic activities the Beijing city government realised that it could deploy culture as a way to bolster economic growth and deal with decayed industrial complexes. 798 was recognised as a site of “Creative Cultural Enterprises” in 2008 and thus the district was heavily promoted as a tourist attraction for the 2008 Olympic Games. Due to the nature of the artist works in that area, plus the Bauhaus architecture of its building, the district has been branded by the government as a site of underground and experimental art activity, turning it into a trendy and fashionable district. The government is slowly developing the district as an international art centre. 798art.org



798 Art Zone –
The Dashanzi
Art District,
Beijing, China



Quartier des
Spectacles Project,
Montreal, Canada

IN SEARCH OF SOUTHWARK

Visitors flock to this South London borough but do they understand the significance of where they are? It's time Southwark put itself on the map.

WRITER
Seb Emina

PHOTOGRAPHER
Damon Cleary

▶ In the summer of 2012 a spectacular laser show lit up the sky above London, marking the official launch of Europe's new tallest building. But how many of those who gazed up at The Shard that evening would have thought as they did so, "I am looking at Southwark"? Not that many, you would guess. Why is it that so many eyes are on this historic enclave yet so few realise it?

Not just eyes in fact but feet, too. Year upon year, millions make pilgrimages to Shakespeare's Globe, the Tate Modern and Borough Market. Many of these wanderers, whether native Londoners or visiting tourists, will never think, "I have just been to Southwark." The same goes for those who visit the area's countless theatrical spaces, enjoy its convivial restaurants and pubs or take the Thames-side walks that offer some of the most spectacular views found anywhere from Twickenham to Tilbury. When people make the trip to Notting Hill, Hampstead or Hoxton they are excited to visit an *area*, with all the intangible magic that this entails. They are as excited about this as they are about any market, gallery or pub that they might find there. Will the same ever be true of Southwark? It should be.

"South London has been underdeveloped in past centuries," notes Peter Ackroyd in *London: The Biography*, "but this neglect has allowed it effortlessly to reinvent itself." How true of Southwark and, as Ackroyd would no doubt suggest, the best way to understand how this reinvention is happening right now is to go for a stroll with open eyes. You begin to realise just how much has, until recently, been hidden in plain view – and how much this is starting to change.

South Work

A good approach for our stroll is from the Thames, hitting the area's north-west corner from Blackfriars Bridge. It's a chance to enjoy one of the more stunning of the capital's river views and consider the tumultuous relationship between the City of London and its southern neighbour. As long as London has existed there has been a "south of the river" and those living northside have glanced with anxiety and fascination at the banks facing them.

Back when London and the City were the same place – walled, powerful and rife with rules – you looked towards the river when ▶





you wanted to see what “outside” looked like, with all the threats and opportunities that it held. Beyond the tan water, boats and fruity pungency could be glimpsed a different settlement, separate from London but very much in its thrall – essentially the last bastion of its southern defences (it is from this defensive “South work” that the name Southwark is derived).

As you arrive at the south side of Blackfriars Bridge you can see the unmistakable brick edifice of Tate Modern to your left and the art deco structure of the Oxo Tower to your right. Many will be aware that the former was once a power station; fewer will know that the same is true of the latter, built in the late 19th-century to generate electricity for the Post Office before being purchased decades later for storage purposes by the company that invented Oxo stock cubes. Today the Oxo Tower Wharf has two galleries, a tower-top restaurant and design-oriented shops, acting as a vital link between the bustling cultural institutions of the Southbank Centre to the west and the Tate Modern and Shakespeare’s Globe to the east.

Set foot from the bridge and you are in Southwark proper, specifically the quarter known as Bankside. Londoners and tourists alike wander along the river in both directions, occasionally stopping for a bite to eat at Doggett’s, a huge sports pub with a Thames view. Closer to Tate Modern they’d be very wise to visit cult riverside pub the Founder’s Arms, where the magnificent vista and delectable food more than make up for its box-like set-up.

Tate Modern’s restaurant is not half bad either. As for its exhibitions, they continue to bring in contemporary art and huge audiences from around the globe, combining shows from box-office certs such as Damien Hirst with those from cult figures of recent art history such as playful Italian artist Alighiero Boetti.

Recently the Tate has delved deeper into its own vast structure, converting the old fuel repositories next to the turbine hall into The Tanks, a cavernous, labyrinthine space for performance-based art. For Southwark, this is significant. By embracing performance, the Tate Modern has not just widened its remit but tapped into one of the most persistent elements of the area’s identity: for as long

The proximity of the Tate Modern to Shakespeare’s Globe illustrates Southwark’s cultural density

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For as long as London has existed, Southwark has been a place to which people come to experience the thrill of live performance – the most famous example is The Globe

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as London has existed, Southwark has been a place to which people come to experience the thrill of live performance.

The most famous example of this is, of course, The Globe, the original version of which was established in 1599 with the help of a well-known investor by the name of William Shakespeare. The presence of today’s reconstructed version is testimony to the dogged vision of its founder Sam Wanamaker but the original Globe was established here for opportunistic reasons.

The performance of plays, along with several other activities deemed louche by the authorities, had been outlawed north of the river. Part of the Bankside area, however, was granted special status from the 12th century onwards, meaning it was no longer under the jurisdiction of either the City of London or the county of Surrey (of which it was geographically part). Instead it fell into the sphere of influence of the Bishop of Winchester, who gave the nod to the performance of theatre – not to mention prostitution and bear-baiting. The Puritans put a stop to such things in the 17th century but theatricality (along with poverty, lawlessness and louche behaviour) clung to the streets; it continues to do so today.

A little past The Globe, the Clink Museum acknowledges another key part of the area’s relationship to the City. As well as being the area to shoo away undesirable activities such as acting, Southwark was where London stored its undesirable individuals. It was home to several prisons, from Marshalsea – where Francis Raleigh once served time for getting into a fight at a tennis court – to Clink, the jail of the Bishop of Winchester. Thus this special, autonomous, theatre-friendly area gained the oddly paradoxical title of The Liberty of the Clink: a place of both freedom and incarceration.

The riverside section of our walk finishes with the plunge into Borough Market. Nobody needs to be told that this is the most famous food market in London and arguably the UK. On Saturday mornings a cheery crowd flocks to its ►



covered halls, stocking up on everything from *fillets mignon* to hand-made breakfast cereals, as well as more down-to-earth groceries sold by traders yelling “Pound a bowl!” Only the inexplicably restrained will fail to sample some of the street food. The aromas – frying chorizo, bubbling paella – are incredible, while the culinary reputation of the market has spilled beyond the stalls into the permanent buildings on its perimeter. Restaurants such as Eliot’s Cafe and Brindisa draw hordes of dedicated visitors week after week, as does the entirely ungentrified Market Porter pub, painted the same green as the market’s cast-iron frame.

Unreal City

Emerging from Borough Market you encounter the mesmerising Gothic structure of Southwark Cathedral, inside which are memorials to some of Southwark’s greatest figures, Shakespeare, Geoffrey Chaucer and the actor Edward Alleyn among them. Today the cathedral, one of Britain’s more liberal places of worship, is known for testing boundaries, often to controversial effect within the Church. For example, in recent years it has hosted events by the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement and extended Southwark’s ingrained tradition of sanctuary to exiled Zimbabweans.

The view from Park Street takes in Borough Market and the magnificent Southwark Cathedral

Eastwards is a lattice of transport links centred around London Bridge Station: railway arches, bridges and roads built on ancient transit routes linking north and south. Transport is part of Southwark’s blueprint: it is London’s terminus town. Here is London’s oldest bridge and railway terminus, still a gateway to the city centre for those crowds of commuters from the south-east, immortally described by T.S. Eliot in *The Waste Land* as flowing through his unreal city “under the brown fog of a winter dawn”.

This has been the home of one of London’s major coach termini, the last stop for many a merchant vessel and the location of the Tabard



Inn, where Chaucer’s “nine and twenty” citizen travellers set out on their *Canterbury Tales* pilgrimage in 1383. A quintessential Southwark experience is that of wandering through a damp black-brick tunnel beneath a train line streaked with green moss and grey lichen, then turning a corner and stumbling, surprised, into a miniature high street of archways full of food producers, theatre companies and wine bars. The face of 21st-century London has been superimposed onto the transport infrastructure of Victorian England.

Further still, the traffic of London Bridge Station starts to give way to the brick Georgian ▶

Maltby Street artisan food market

terraces of Bermondsey. This part of Southwark has changed vastly since the mid-20th century when the factory that made garibaldiis and bourbon creams was based here, giving it the nickname of “biscuit town”. The biscuit industry has given way to the cultural sector, now estimated to employ around 55 per cent of the local population; it was no whim or accident when the White Cube Gallery opened its third branch here in 2011.

In and around the main drag on Bermondsey Street we find the legendary Southwark Playhouse (tucked, of course, into a vault beneath London Bridge Station) and the Shunt collective, famous as an early pioneer of the immersive theatre movement. There is a textile and fashion museum by Zandra Rhodes and the headquarters of influential online arts network IdeasTap. There is also a glassblowing studio with a blazing furnace in which goods are made to sell in a gallery shopfront. To the left and right are side streets where the entrances are plastered with the names of small creative businesses – architects, web designers and theatre companies alike.

A cabal of hip restaurants has arrived to cater for the boom, many of which belong to award-winning Spanish chef José Pizarro. His mini Bermondsey empire includes tapas bar José; he also part-owns traditional pub The Woolpack. All this is not to say that the charm of the older Bermondsey has been banished by an influx of switched-on diners; at M Manze on Bermondsey High Street, graphic designers and tradesmen rub shoulders over hot plates of pie, mash and liquor. Even on Bermondsey Street a traditional fry-up can be found at Al’s Cafe.

If you were to keep heading east at this point you’d encounter Southwark Park jutting out from the riverside before reaching the border with Rotherhithe, an area that – inevitably, due to its riverside locale – has experienced much change since Charles Dickens described it as “the filthiest, the strangest, the most extraordinary of the many localities that are hidden in London”. Instead, double back past Guy’s and cross Borough High Street, meeting Union Street.

Liberty and Licence

At Union Street’s junction with Redcross Way, a glance to the left or right won’t reveal more than a primary school and a builder’s yard. But explore a little further and you’ll come across one of those surprising oases of serenity that London serves up from time to time. Redcross Garden’s gentle lawns and peaceful ponds, bounded by a strip of small cottages, were founded by 19th-century social reformer Octavia Hill with the purpose of providing an “open-air sitting room for the tired inhabitants of Southwark”. Restored and reopened in 2006, it continues to offer a small corner of almost rural tranquility. How different from when the area was a den of villainy so dangerous that one surveyor was warned by the police that they rarely dared to venture there and certainly wouldn’t walk there alone.

Like the Liberty of the Clink to the north, in days of old this area had certain unusual freedoms. Known as the Liberty of the Mint (due to a short-lived money-printing base established here by Henry VIII), it offered sanctuary for debtors who fled here to avoid being locked in a debtors’ prison. The victory of making it here often proved hollow: with no way to get past the debt collectors camped on the perimeter, fugitives would often die of malnutrition or be killed amid the total lack of law enforcement.

In the 1990s, during Jubilee Line extension work, contractors on Redcross Way excavated a strange graveyard. The Cross Bones Graveyard, as it became known, was a burial site for “single women”: a euphemism for prostitutes. The Bishop of Winchester licensed them (they were also known as “Winchester geese”) but this tacit endorsement did not go as far as a decent burial: Cross Bones was unconsecrated, shallow and haphazard. It later widened its remit to include all paupers. Local playwright John Constable claimed to have been so struck with this place that the work he penned in response, *The Southwark Mysteries*, was written more or less involuntarily. He holds a monthly vigil at the graveyard gates on the 23rd day of each month with performances from his alter ego: “South London shaman” John Crow.

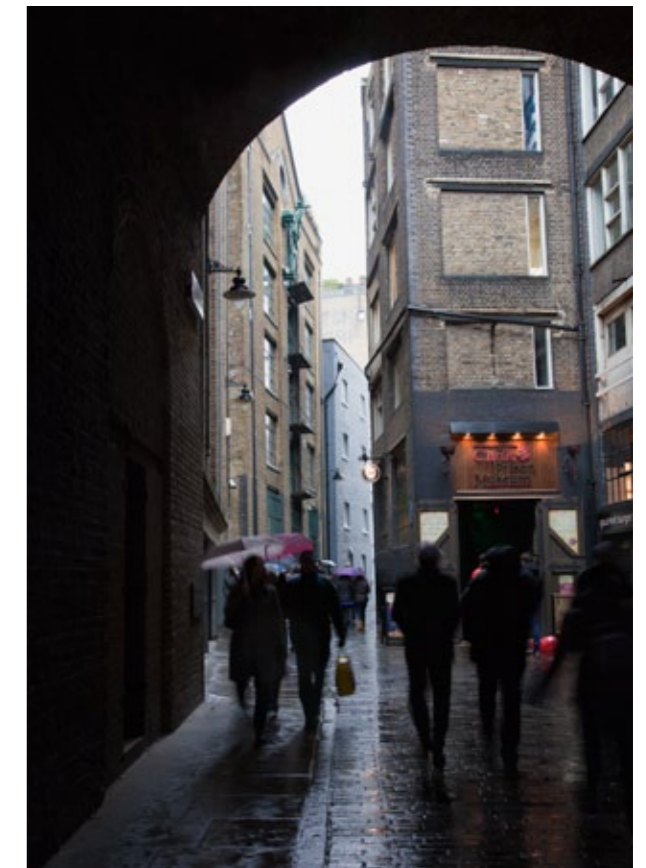


Above: Redcross Gardens is one of Southwark’s hidden delights; right: the Clink Museum is a reminder of the borough’s past

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At M Manze on Bermondsey High Street, graphic designers and tradesmen rub shoulders over hot plates of pie, mash and liquor

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Given the absence of the Thames and its tourists, Union Street feels strangely at one with the riverside whose path it echoes and perhaps this is due to the way it also hosts cultural experiences worthy of a day trip. Here the establishment grandeur of Tate Modern and The Globe are replaced by the intimacy and energy of smaller premises. Most visible is the Jerwood Space, the flagship London premises of the Jerwood Foundation, with a mission of “supporting and nurturing the arts”. Located in a refurbished Victorian school and offering a respected contemporary art gallery, its café is always packed, often with those using the subsidised rehearsal space that the building provides.

From the fringe Union Theatre set behind a giant pair of wooden doors to an old French horn shop and a small gallery specialising in “works displayed on paper” (belonging, it turns out, to a resourceful paper-supplies company), the cultural organisations here are discreet, which only enhances the thrill of seeking them out. A railway arch at 100 Union Street, for example, has been quietly hosting pop-up happenings for years: a physic garden, a lido and an urban orchard among them.

Whether you are passing Georgian houses or warehouses or even traversing

the underside of railway lines, there is a constant sense of expression in Southwark, especially of the theatrical kind. Even when you are alone there will be faded traces of creativity on the walls: traces of murals, disintegrating theatre posters or single-sentence proclamations (“I Know I Have Lost,” says one line in gloss-white paint on Rose Alley). This area was levelled during the Blitz so most glimpses of older Southwark are framed by postwar housing estates, but these estates are leafy and proud and have a tangible sense of community.

Local architect Benedict O’Looney has talked of the “jumps of scale” that characterise Southwark. He was mainly talking about the buildings (how true since The Shard arrived) but he could equally have been talking of setting (that utter contrast when you step away from the river), wealth (luxury and poverty have always lived side by side here) or sound (few areas see tranquillity give way to raucousness so completely and so often).

Perhaps this variety, packed so densely into a relatively small area, explains Southwark’s theatre-loving tendencies. A sign above The Globe said “the whole world’s a playhouse”. In Southwark, that must have seemed literal; in many ways it still does. ■

Above: Southwark’s urban landscape begs to be explored; right: The Shard is the newest edition to the borough’s skyline



10 THINGS TO DO IN SOUTHWARK

WRITER
Seb Emina

PHOTOGRAPHER
Damon Cleary

THEATRE

01 Southwark Playhouse

The powerhouse of the area's theatre revival, Southwark Playhouse was founded in 1993 in a disused workshop before moving to a vault underneath London Bridge Station in 2006. Productions range from new works to Anton Chekhov classics and it is the one of the few fringe theatres in London that can be counted on for quality time and time again. 2013 sees it move premises once again, this time to a warehouse between Borough and Elephant and Castle. Southwarkplayhouse.co.uk

02 Shakespeare's Globe

The Globe is not just an architectural restoration but a fully fledged re-enactment of the most exciting time and place theatre has ever known, namely 17th-century Southwark. The only things missing are roast peacocks and terrible teeth. Audiences in the circular playhouse can watch the likes of *Twelfth Night* and *Richard III* while rowdily standing in the yard or perching on wooden benches up in the gallery. Shakespearesglobe.com

Also visit: Bookshop Theatre, Menier Chocolate Factory, the Old Vic, Shunt, Unicorn Theatre, Union Theatre, the Young Vic.

ART

03 The Tanks

The hulking Bankside Power Station building that is now home to Tate Modern once stored oil in a series of large tanks near the turbine hall. As of 2012, these subterranean chambers have been reinvented as The Tanks, the world's first museum galleries entirely dedicated to performance, installation, film works and live art. Tate.org.uk

04 Poppy Sebire Gallery

All Hallow's Church, just off Union Street, has quite a history. Partly destroyed during the Blitz it now has a "secret garden" that has been nurtured for decades by nearby residents. In the 1980s it was repurposed as a recording studio; Depeche Mode recorded their debut here. Today the vaulted white-walled church hall is the gallery of Poppy Sebire, one of London's most ambitious contemporary art curators. Poppysebire.com

Also visit: Bankside Gallery, Gallery@OXO, Jerwood Space, Purdey Hicks, Wapping Project Bankside, White Cube Bermondsey.

SHOPPING

05 Maltby Street Market and the Spa Road Terminus

To the east of Tower Bridge you'll find a network of railway arches and storage hangars stretching from Maltby Street to Spa Road. On Saturday mornings these become a sprawling trail of outlets for the capital's most discerning food producers, including St John, Neal's Yard, Monmouth Coffee and Bea's of Bloomsbury. Try the Ropewalk market near Maltby Street for first-rate street food, artisanal produce and antique furniture. Maltbystreet.com

06 Bermondsey Street

This attractive Georgian terrace is the centre of gravity for Bermondsey's creative industries and an array of small, eclectic shops has sprung up to serve those who are involved with them. There is now enough in the way of fashion, floristry, gifts, furniture and affordable art to attract visits from further afield, too.

Also visit: Bankside Mix, Borough Market, Tate Modern, OXO Tower Wharf.



HISTORY

07 Open-City walks

The organisation behind the ever-more popular Open House event has extended its remit to a series of regular walks exploring the stories behind London's most fascinating and beautiful architecture. Tales of Southwark are explored as part of the Bankside and Beyond stroll, hosted by architect Benedict O'Looney. Open-city.org.uk

08 Kirkaldy Testing Museum

At the Blackfriars end of Southwark Street is a non-descript building, the words "Kirkaldy's Testing and Experimental Works" inscribed in stone above its double-doorway. On first glance you might assume that it's just an ornate remnant from the industry that once occupied the area. In fact, this vestige of Clerkenwell's Victorian past is still a working museum. David Kirkaldy's enormous machine, an incredible 47-feet long, was built to test the strength and breaking point of various materials and is available to visit on the first Sunday of every month.

Also visit: Clink Prison Museum, Cross Bones Cemetery, Redcross Garden, The Rose Theatre, Southwark Cathedral.

RESTAURANTS AND NIGHTLIFE

09 The Table

This restaurant on the taxi-heavy thoroughfare that is Southwark Street doesn't offer many clues to how good it is. The seating is informal and the name unremarkable; you'd be forgiven for expecting a standard central London eatery serving midbrow fare. The reality is that it's a total gem, serving some of the best modern Italian food found anywhere in the capital, and – for those setting out on a Southwark daytrip – some of the finest brunch, too. Thetablecafe.com

10 The Lord Nelson

Set into a brutalist cube of a building amid the idiosyncratic businesses on Union Street, The Lord Nelson is an excellent pub, its walls and tables plastered with a collage of neon, vintage comics and counter-culture poster art. The clientele is creative and occasionally weird but always friendly. The chef has a penchant for unusual meats, with zebra, llama, ostrich and camel making regular appearances on the menu. Lordnelsonsouthwark.com

Also visit: Brindisa, Constancia, Eliot's Cafe, Founder's Arms, The Garrison, The George Inn, José, The Market Porter, The Woolpack, Zucca.

The Bookshop Theatre hosts plays, musical performances, film screenings and literary readings



Shakespeare's Globe is a thrilling example of Southwark's theatrical pedigree

THESE WOODEN O's

The description of Shakespeare's Globe in 'Henry V' is an appropriate catch-all for Southwark's thriving theatre district.

WRITER
Seb Emina

PHOTOGRAPHER
Damon Cleary

Several decades ago, archaeologists in Southwark made an intriguing discovery. Not the customary clay-pot fragments or battered old coins, but a weapon. It was a trident – the kind that would, in the days of the Roman Empire, have belonged to a gladiator. It begged a question: was Southwark once the site of an arena or circus?

It would make sense. Ever since Britain's most powerful city was established on the north bank of the Thames its citizens have crossed the river to escape its rigid laws and power structures and find something a little different. Hence the theatre boom of the 16th and 17th centuries, when Newington Butts Theatre (believed by many to have been the first of the period), The Globe, The Swan, The Blackfriars Playhouse and The Rose formed a raucous theatre scene that was a platform for William Shakespeare; it also served the satirical dramas of Ben Jonson, the city comedies of Thomas Middleton and the bleak tragedies of Christopher Marlowe.

A music-hall scene sprang up during Victorian times, with establishments such as the Raglan Music Hall and the Winchester Music Hall offering escapism from the dense poverty – and thick smells – that characterised the area (in fact, it also included at least one circus).

Then there's today's booming playhouse scene, where the old and the new, the mainstream and the fringe, combine to inspire a growing realisation that Southwark is London's most important theatre district outside the bright lights of the West End.

Where theatre is the subject and Shakespeare is relevant, it seems churlish not to begin by considering that he, and Shakespeare's Globe – so well-judged in its restoration – is the closest thing Southwark has to a time machine. Those who enter its open-air auditorium (described by Shakespeare in the prologue to *Henry V* as “this Wooden O”) have the rare opportunity to imagine London's past not just by examining the architecture for traces and clues but by witnessing ►

it as part of an audience watching a living, breathing cultural form. There are period costumes, bygone accents and music interludes featuring all-but-forgotten instruments such as shawms and sackbuts. The audience stands in a pit up close to the players, as if at a rock concert.

Excavation work presently taking place to revive Shakespeare's other old favourite, The Rose Theatre near Southwark Bridge, looks set to expand this re-enactment of Elizabethan theatre. It's worth taking the time on a Saturday (the only day it's open) to wander down Park Street and take a look around the Rose's gallery. There are occasional productions in a small playing space, although the

audience by offering everything from Gilbert & Sullivan musicals to politically edgy comedies.

Southwark's fringe scene is led by the Southwark Playhouse. One of the theatre's founders, Turkish producer and director Mehmet Ergen, is said to have improved his English upon arriving in London in 1989 largely by listening to audiobooks of Shakespeare plays. Four years later he was teaming up with Juliet Alderdice and Tom Wilson to found Southwark Playhouse in what was then a relatively untrodden part of town. Every year the cavernous, 250-capacity room (soon to be transplanted to a new site near Elephant and Castle) has brought together two productions, past

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If Shakespeare was alive today he'd be found in the rich contemporary and fringe scene of the streets surrounding Southwark Station and London Bridge

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ambition is for much more. Directly opposite you can also see the commemorations that surround the original site of The Globe.

Of course, if Shakespeare was alive today he wouldn't be found working with the beautiful but well-trodden material that is performed in Shakespeare's Globe but in the rich contemporary and fringe scene of the streets surrounding Southwark Station and London Bridge. The original Bard combined the masterful use of language with crowd-pleasing storytelling so it's not far-fetched to imagine that his contemporary equivalent would be writing musicals.

The intimate but comfortable 180-seat Menier Chocolate Factory is a natural starting point. It has long been the testing ground of choice for new productions – *Sweet Charity*, *A Little Night Music* – before they transfer to long and lucrative runs in the West End. Alternatively, The Union Theatre in a former paper warehouse amid the pubs and galleries of Union Street has created a fiercely loyal

examples of which have ranged from a stage version of the gloriously surreal Japanese fantasy movie *Howl's Moving Castle* to the world-premier of Philip Pullman's *The Scarecrow And His Servant*. The latter, a fantastical and allegorical adventure, would not have been out of place at the Unicorn Theatre, just round the corner and famous for staging theatre for young people that has grown-up production values.

Southwark Playhouse is currently resident in a Bermondsey archway directly beneath a station platform. When historians look back at arts and theatre in the early 21st century they'll notice a movement away from conventional seated venues towards less conventional spaces: disused commercial buildings, tunnels and even car parks. Take Peckham, further towards Southwark Borough's southern edge. Once a suburb associated mainly with *Only Fools And Horses* it is now the centre of gravity for south-east London's artist community. The event of the summer ▶



The Union Theatre is a former paper warehouse that hosts a variety of plays and musicals



“
If the West End is about huge budgets and A-list stars, Southwark is about energy, intimacy and a determination to realise an authentic dramatic vision
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is the annual reopening of Frank’s, a Campari bar, sculpture park and performance space on the roof of a semi-derelict multi-storey car park above the old multiplex cinema.

The appetite for this kind of reclamation was whet by what happened in the previous decade, back towards the riverside. In 2004, theatre company Shunt took Southwark Playhouse’s exploration of unorthodox theatre spaces even further, gaining stewardship of a sprawling set of vaults beneath London Bridge Station. Visitors accessed the Shunt Vaults through a small door near the Jubilee Line entrance and were plunged into a world of theatre performances, art installations, live music and film screenings. The constantly revolving programme took place in a series of rooms and sat somewhere between immersive theatre, nightclub and avant-garde cabaret.

Today, although it no longer inhabit the Vaults, Shunt is still very much part of the fabric of Southwark; you’ll see its old signs on fences and tunnels throughout the area. Its latest show, *The Architect*, “inspired by *Labryinth* and the horror it contains”, takes place in a former biscuit factory in Bermondsey. It is presented in partnership with the National Theatre, just west of Southwark but still part of that south-of-the-river continuum.

Of course, not every theatre has to be an experimental venue and not every audience needs to be involved in a play’s storyline. Both the Old Vic and its youth-oriented sibling the Young Vic, right on the border between Southwark and Lambeth, are traditional theatres in that they provide fixed rows of seats and a stage in purpose-built structures

The Young Vic gives opportunities to promising young actors and directors

(for the experimental, immersive stuff you need to go the Old Vic Tunnels under Waterloo Station). The Old Vic is one of the few repertory theatres that is a bona fide household name. While this is probably not harmed by Kevin Spacey’s presence as artistic director it has, since 1818 when it was founded, been synonymous with dramatic excellence. Resident players at the Old Vic Company have included stellar names such as John Gielgud and Laurence Olivier but it is a stoic supporter of new talent, not least thanks to the Old Vic New Voices scheme in partnership with the Bermondsey-based arts charity Ideastap.

The boundless variety of Southwark’s theatre scene is dizzying. What can Shakespeare, site-specific theatre and grassroots musical productions have in common? What about the Bookshop Theatre (literally a theatre in a bookshop) on The Cut, or the outdoor performances in front of London’s only remaining galleried pub, The George? Perhaps it’s best to look at them in contrast to the West End. If the West End is about dazzling production values, huge budgets and A-list stars, Southwark is about energy, intimacy and a determination to realise a dramatic vision with as much authenticity as possible. It was true of the Globe and the Swan in the 1600s and it’s true of Southwark Playhouse and the Old Vic now. There is a place for both these kinds of theatre in London; indeed, the two feed into each other. It’s not just a one-way stream of transfers from Southwark to the West End: there are a number of West End musicals adapted for more intimate surroundings.

In New York they use the term “off-Broadway” and in London, the term “off-West End” is beginning to catch on in relation to many of Southwark’s venues. But it feels a shame to define Southwark purely in terms of it not being somewhere else. If the West End is London’s theatre district then perhaps Southwark should be acknowledged as its raucous, historic and imaginative cousin – or, put simply, London’s playhouse district. ■

Theatre is still considered to be a social rather than a commercial pursuit by the majority of people in London. But with its ability to bring businesses together and open up new markets, the performing-arts sector could provide Southwark's economy and residents with...

A WORKSHOP NOT A SHOPFRONT

WRITER
Alice Cicolini

PHOTOGRAPHER
Damon Cleary



▶ We are at the stage where research supports the proposition that Southwark has a wealth of contemporary theatre practice and industry (both commercial and subsidised) as well as a rich and significant performance heritage. We also know that the concept that a visible clustering of creative practice supports regeneration is bolstered by international examples from diverse places and contexts. As a result, the next stage is for a project such as Union to answer the needs of potential stakeholders and audiences so that it will lift the theory off the page and put it into practice on the street.

Futurecity approached a small sample of practitioners and businesses in Southwark: major institutions, established theatre companies, experimental practitioners, individual designers and commercial theatre businesses. The idea was to gauge whether the idea of a theatre district has any immediate value or “stickiness” for people working in the industry at broadly differing levels of access and experience. We wanted to stimulate a debate about where the gaps were and how they might be met by this kind of approach.

Dimitri Launder
and Helen Galliano
of the Arbonauts,
a Peckham-based
experimental
theatre company

“
Southwark has a wealth of contemporary theatre practice and industry (both commercial and subsidised) as well as a rich and significant performance heritage
”

A unifying thread of conversation focused on the nature and visibility of artistic work in theatre. It also covered whether opening up theatre practice to audiences in the way that the visual arts has achieved through Open Studio programmes, “in-progress” exhibitions and opportunities to watch artists at work in gallery contexts might contribute to a better public understanding of and connection to the theatre economy. “If a theatre district idea could make the work of theatre more visible,” suggested Director of the Jerwood Space (jerwoodspace.co.uk) Richard Lee, “then this might constitute a narrative thread that could stitch the concept together but equally provide a valuable service to the businesses and practitioners it unites.”

Of course, many major institutions already programme valuable outreach work that is considered and sustained. That includes the Young Vic’s rich programme of work with young people aged 8-25 and Southwark Council’s STEP initiative, which links theatre companies and the education sector across the borough to broaden access to the theatre for the borough’s young people. Equally, new kinds of theatre practice – such as the immersive landscapes explored by companies such as Shunt (very much a part of Southwark’s theatre ecology), and the innovation of opening up the development process to audiences modelled by Battersea Arts Centre – have already begun to widen access through the work itself and to build a consequent buzz around the act of theatre making.

What Union might offer for Southwark is a complement to this activity by providing a unified platform for it. It would be a means for this sense of “openness” or “open house” to extend out to the many different kinds of creative and economic practices and opportunities that theatre already provides behind closed doors for the borough’s residents and businesses. In doing so it affords the potential to make links between audiences and theatres; theatre businesses and individual practitioners; theatre-makers, theatre institutions and private companies; people with space and people who need it; and critically, according to many interviewees, between the established creative district of the borough’s northern riverfront and its emerging creative districts in the south.

“There’s something really important in the idea of mapping this territory,” says experimental theatre-maker and producer Helen Galliano. She and partner Dimitri Launder are the Arbonauts (arbonauts.org), a young theatre company based in Peckham, part of an increasingly vibrant community of practitioners transforming the cultural landscape of this part of interior Southwark. Mapping, they suggest, can emphasise a critical mass that an industry hasn’t previously identified, lending it a hitherto unarticulated validity.

At the same time geography, says Launder, “can be a potent tool to create identity for new projects,” providing fertile territory for exploration. This could include curated walks, guides by theatre practitioners, the identification of temporary, hireable spaces for the presentation of new work and the creation of mentoring opportunities that connect the experience and reach

of established theatres to the energy and experimentation of younger companies. These are all ways in which the umbrella of a theatre district, creating new links through the framework of geography, could add value.

Equally, for practitioners working in allied fields such as design (of costumes, lighting, scenography and theatrical space), the suggestion of inviting industry and the general public into their spaces and business might present new opportunities, both for promotion and for experimentation. “There is a commercial imperative for individuals and companies working on the design side to get involved,” suggests recent Wimbledon College of Art costume-design graduate Grace Nicholas (gracenicholas.co.uk). “It’s unusual for costume designers to have the opportunity to make their work ▶



Grace Nicholas, a recent Wimbledon College of Art costume-design graduate

“
Might a theatre district in Southwark contribute to a better understanding of the strong commercial role that theatre plays in London’s local economies?
”

public, to initiate performance from a costume standpoint and to be able to sell work directly, so it feels as though there are a number of potential ways in which this kind of project could be beneficial.”

“The geographical implications of London for audiences can’t be underestimated,” suggests University of the Arts Business Relationship Manager, Elizabeth Cameron (arts.ac.uk). People circulate most actively around their place of work or their homes and the population of the area around Waterloo Station is expected to grow, across both residential and commercial communities, by 30 per cent over the next 15 years. Initiatives that create opportunities for animated, accessible open spaces, leisure and active social interaction – and particularly ones that identify ways in which they can become self-sustaining – will become increasingly critical to contributing to the experience of living and working in Southwark and neighbouring Lambeth.

At the same time, suggests Ben Melchior-Cooper, hub manager at Ideas Tap (ideastap.com) on Bermondsey Street, “If you can give people multiple reasons to visit somewhere they are more likely to want to go there.” An umbrella such as a theatre district that can collect together a multiplicity of “offers” for London-wide audiences under one marketing initiative could contribute to increased economic opportunity for Southwark’s businesses.

The marketing platform for this kind of initiative, in the form of a permanent web presence, could also be a creative one for its industry

stakeholders. A digital platform might offer innovative ways of exposing the work of theatre that add value to independent, publicly funded theatres and theatre businesses. This would act as an additional space for the presentation of new work in an increasingly multi-platform practice context. Some of Southwark’s most important creative industries sectors are leisure software, publishing and media; these are all skills that could be drawn into the project and could facilitate experimentation with a digital-practice platform that a theatre district might provide, taking Southwark’s theatre from productions in the round to theatre process all around.

Implying that this approach might have creative as well as marketing potential also implies that it’s a project that requires creative direction. “These things need someone with a passion to run them,” says Richard Lee. “Creative spaces are successful when they are intensely programmed.” A Southwark theatre district would be no different: to succeed it would require both dedicated and visionary staff but equally the investment and belief of its constituents. Identifying partners and stakeholders willing to engage with the idea, and investors willing to provide initial support to resource it, would be part of the challenge of lifting this idea off the page.

There are different models on which to draw outlined in the following pages, some of which – surprisingly perhaps – are funded solely through private investment (individual or consortium) because they fulfill a need in the market that its immediate beneficiaries recognise and are therefore prepared to contribute to. However, developing a viable business plan for Union is the next stage; the first stage is persuading local communities, companies and institutions of its possibilities.

What makes the idea of opening up the work of theatre particularly appealing, beyond its benefits to the businesses themselves (theatrical and otherwise), is that the act of making its economy visible also suggests that its economy is viable and proposes that theatre is a practice in which people might be able to make a living. It opens up the possibility that there are economic as well as creative opportunities to be had in this sector, even though popular perception continues to insist that it has more of a social than a commercial imperative. Theatre’s social and personal developmental role is increasingly better understood as its practitioners deepen their relationships with schools, communities and companies through workshops and outreach projects.

Might a theatre district in Southwark contribute to a better understanding of the strong commercial role that theatre plays in London’s tourism and local economies? Could it thereby model increased self-sufficiency but equally open up the possibilities of a performative environment and a life in performance to a far wider audience? There’s only one way to find out...

Futurecity spoke to Richard Lee (Jerwood Space), David Rosenberg (Shunt), Gavin Green, Ian Strickland and Jon Woodley (Charcoal Blue), Elizabeth Cameron (University of the Arts, London), Grace Nicholas, Helen Galliano and Dimitri Launder (The Arbonauts) and Ben Melchior-Cooper (Ideas Tap). We would like to thank them for their time and investment of ideas.

CASE STUDIES

These case studies emphasise the potential of the Union concept, assessing the success of similar initiatives around the world and proposing models that can deliver the best results for Southwark's theatre industry.

CENTQUATRE, Paris

In October 2009, a new cultural venue for Paris was opened in the traditionally poor 19th arrondissement, the beneficiary of a €100m investment that transformed the city's former funeral parlour into an artists' studio space of over 39,000 sq m. The aim was to revitalise a flagging arts scene and infuse a troubled neighbourhood with funding; Centquatre's success in doing this demonstrates the potential in opening up process to audiences.

The city council provided the capital investment, plus €560,000 for the first round of new commissions. Ten private sponsors (including a major bank and a private healthcare group) donated €1m each. The city is also committed to supporting an annual operating budget of €8m but the centre itself is obliged to raise 30 per cent of its budget through commercial hires and leasing.

Over 4,000 sq m accommodates 18 artists and 6,000 sq m has been developed for rentals and seminars, plus a larger space for events at scale such as art fairs. Artists who occupy the Centquatre get studios and spaces in which they can live and work for free for between 3-10 months. The condition is that the work they produce will be on view at the centre for at least five years with the option to renew for another five, after which the pieces remain the property of the city and enter its collection.

What differentiates Centquatre from most artists' studios is the fact that the raison d'être of the building is the opening-up of the artistic process to audiences. Occupants are obliged to interact with the public and therefore need to consider accessibility as part of their creative thinking. Although there are complex artistic questions to be answered in terms of the impact on creative practice (answers to which will take longer to emerge), early attendance figures suggest that the general public is interested in being involved. There were 60,000 visitors on opening night; 131,000 unique visitors to the 104.fr website in the first two months; and packed open rehearsals for well-known directors such as Jean-Michel Ribes.

"The idea is to not to have a place to show finished work: it's a place to enter into a process. So, it is difficult for audiences at first... [but] it is working," says director Frédéric Fisbach. "People are interested in following artistic process." *104.fr*

SOUTH LONDON ART MAP

The South London Art Map (SLAM), launched in 2011, lists 112 galleries across three south London hubs: Deptford, Peckham and Bankside. It provides an excellent example of the way a map can catalyse creative networks, create marketing collateral and enhance perceptions of an area's cultural offer, as well as how geographical clustering can transform an area's profile.

The South London Art Map builds on the strong concentration of visual-arts organisations, temporary projects, artist studios and art schools in the three hub areas. Founded in collaboration between participating galleries, including big-hitters such as the Tate Modern, South London Gallery and Goldsmiths, it creates a user-friendly guide for audiences. This increases knowledge, awareness of and interest in visual-arts activities in the area as well as promoting lesser-known galleries and artistic talent that are under the radar.

Three maps form the core of the project. The maps pinpoint galleries and other cultural opportunities as well as travel interchanges and good places to eat. They can be viewed online or picked up in print form from galleries. Online activity and events including listings, gallery blogs and a magazine ensure the map stays relevant and up to date.

SLAM's "Last Fridays" event encourages audiences to pick a location and visit more than one gallery in an evening. This regular event develops audiences and encourages networking between galleries. Visitors to South London galleries have trebled since SLAM was launched in 2009, due in part to the success of SLAM Fridays and SLAM tours. The fact that it is sustained by a consortium of small-scale, independent private-sector businesses suggests that the industry has recognised the economic benefit of cross promotion to their individual businesses, outweighing any potential concerns about a loss of individual identity or direct competition.

The South London Art Map emerged from the place-specific Deptford Art Map, which was launched by BEARSPACE gallery in 2009 listing 15 local galleries and art spaces. Its expansion into a regional map incorporating the whole of London's south-east quarter has been a powerful force behind the growth of a creative district now said to challenge East London's claim to the title, a fact evidenced by the growth of SLAM galleries from 70 to 150 in three years.

Now working on a SLAM app for mobile devices, as well as a SLAM art boat to bring audiences down river from the Tate Modern, the organisation continues to find innovative ways to attract visitors and has contributed substantively to the changing perceptions of this part of the city. *Southlondonartmap.com*



The Camberwell Press project for the Brompton Design District's London Design Festival programme

BROMPTON DESIGN DISTRICT, London

Leading design shops, exhibition spaces, museums and institutions on and around London's Brompton Road joined forces in 2007 to become the Brompton Design District. Initiated by South Kensington Estates (*ske.org*) in collaboration with local partner organisations, it has helped encourage new design in an area renowned for its exclusive retail and historic links with design and education since the founding of the Victoria and Albert Museum and Royal College of Art 150 years ago. As a privately led creative district model, the Brompton Design District could be a potential structure for Union, and demonstrates that this approach has economic value for stakeholders.

The programme, curated by leading design curator Jane Withers, has included temporary installations in vacant buildings, shops and shop windows by Ron Arad, Tom Dixon, Studio Glithero and Martino Gamper among others. There have also been pop-up galleries by curators Rachael Barraclough, The Future Laboratory and Libby Sellers; a temporary bar designed and run by RCA students; and an extensive programme of events and exhibitions by emerging designers during the annual London Design Festival (LDF).

The collaboration extends to Brompton's established design shops, showrooms and institutions, including B&B Italia, Bisazza, Mint, The Conran Shop, Skandium,

the Royal College of Art, Serpentine Gallery and the Victoria and Albert Museum – all of which contribute presentations and designer exhibitions to the Brompton programme for LDF. Its permanent face is a website that is updated with new events, temporary pop-ups and events by permanent members; it has extended the events programme to include Christmas retail openings.

Brompton Estates are custodians of their portfolio and so have a long-term vision of the quality of the environment they aspire to; they are keen to make South Kensington and Brompton a vibrant destination. The company's investment in the design sector as a means of branding a district extends to the management of their property stock and the standards they expect of tenants.

Indeed, their careful selection of tenants is considered in line with their overall vision for the area. SKE have focused on introducing brands that feel independent (such as Gail's Bakery) while at the same time ensuring that established independent businesses that are aligned with SKE's vision can remain and flourish. The company's success has been in deploying a creative practice so firmly rooted in the cultural assets of the area as to shift long-held perceptions of the environment around South Kensington Station as transitory and lacking any sense of the "local". *Bromptondesigndistrict.com*

THE CREATIVE DISTRICT PROFILER

The Futurecity/BOP Creative District Profiler is a tool to identify the strengths that any neighbourhood can draw on to become a Creative District with an exciting cultural life that attracts visitors and investors. The Profiler also highlights any weaknesses. To run the Profiler, we first define the neighbourhood as a circle extending for half a mile around a central point; this is a 10-minute walk. Then we score the neighbourhood from 0 to 5 against eight factors associated with successful Creative Districts. We derive the scores from robust national and London data sources.*

- 
Creative Residents
 The proportion of residents who have creative jobs (Experian)

- 
Younger Residents
 The proportion of residents in the key 25-34 age group (Experian)

- 
Ethnic Diversity
 The proportion of residents who belong to ethnic-minority groups (Experian)

- 
Cultural Offer
 The number of cultural venues (Culture24 and Experian)

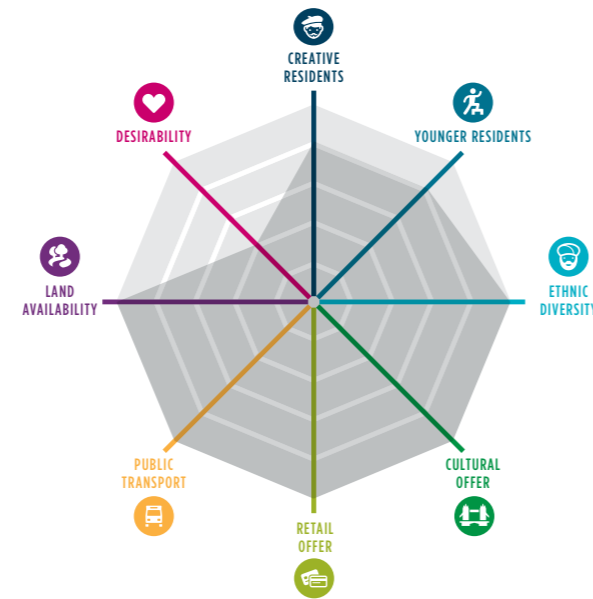
- 
Retail Offer
 The strength of the neighbourhood's retail offer (Venuescore)

- 
Public Transport
 How good the public transport links are (Transport for London PTAL data)

- 
Land Availability
 The area of land that is available for redevelopment (National Land Use Database)

- 
Desirability
 The number of residents in the AB social class who have chosen to live there (Experian)

Example: Shoreditch and Spitalfields



The scores are mapped onto a grid to reveal the neighbourhood's unique profile. This profile can be compared to other Creative Districts. For example:

- Established Creative District – Albertopolis
- Organic Creative District – Shoreditch and Spitalfields
- Planned Creative District – Kings Cross Central
- Emerging Creative District – Deptford

The Profiler is based on robust data sources and it draws on Futurecity/BOP's many years of experience with major regeneration projects. However:

- The Profiler does not provide the final word on any neighbourhood. It provides a rapid initial analysis to kick off more detailed planning.
- The Profiler should always be used with a walking tour of the neighbourhood. This will add rich qualitative detail. For example, the Profiler assesses the strength of the local retail sector, but only a site tour will reveal the unique mix of shops and the experience of using them.

* The profiler uses a unique combination of commercial and government data to establish an objective indicator of creative potential. Datasets include the national Experian demographic database, the retail ranking survey Venuescore, Transport for London's Public Transport Accessibility Level, and the Department for Communities and Local Government's National Land Use Database.

NORTH SOUTHWARK CREATIVE DISTRICTS

Gathered outside the formal City, the parishes of St Mary Magdalen, St Saviour and St Mary Newington that combine to make up the London borough of Southwark were home to many of London's disorderly trades. It was where you'd find bustling businesses in food, spices, coffee and tea alongside the illegal trade of clothing, furniture and rags, as well as the proliferation of infamous prisons and poorhouses.

Immortalised in the serialised novels of Charles Dickens (one of which, *Little Dorrit*, was set within the borough) and the bawdy canvases of Hogarth (*Southwark Fair*, 1733), Southwark became a focus for activities that

were banned within the City itself, inextricably linked with all forms of illicit entertainment: everything from bear-baiting and prostitution to Elizabethan theatre.

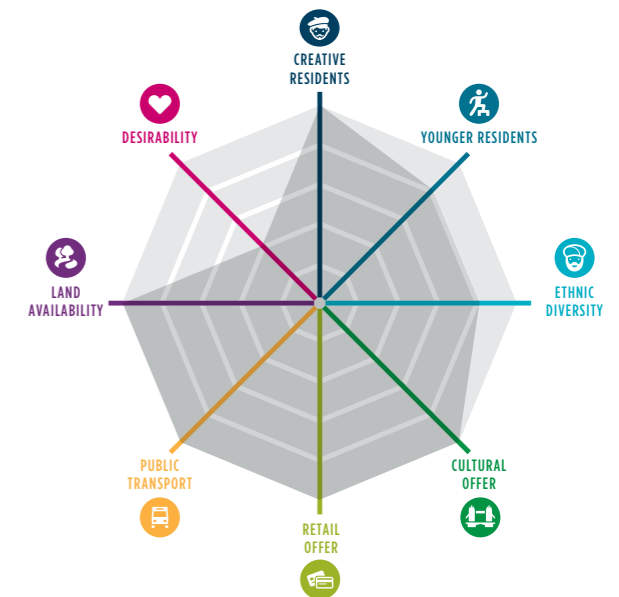
However, after a long period of post-industrial decline the regeneration of North Southwark is almost complete. Culture has played a significant part in this, from the Festival of Britain in 1951 through to the Tate Modern, which is now the most visited modern-art gallery in the world. The wider area of North Southwark can be seen as four separate Creative Districts, each with their own distinct character and charms: the South Bank, Bankside, Bermondsey Street and Elephant & Castle.

THE SOUTH BANK Established Creative District

Millions of visitors enjoy themselves on the South Bank every year. Indelibly associated with the arts, it is home to the ever-popular Southbank Centre, National Theatre and British Film Institute, as well as County Hall's myriad entertainment venues and the London Eye. These major arts venues are supported by a lively calendar of festivals and open-air events, not to forget the wealth of hotels, bars and restaurants. Many cultural suppliers and creative businesses are based here, feeding off the creativity of the place and utilising the excellent transport links.

The South Bank area is not as densely populated as many parts of London with only around 6,900 households. This can be attributed in most part to the scale of the area's non-residential cultural institutions and businesses, and the breadth of the riverside pathway.

Local residents include a high proportion of young, ethnically diverse and creative people. There is still an unusually generous amount of land available for regeneration, particularly compared with other established Creative Districts such as South Kensington and Covent Garden. Some schemes in the pipeline have proposed luxury residential units that will have a hugely positive impact on the dynamics of the resident population. The most prominent scheme is the Shell Centre, to be redeveloped by Canary Wharf Group and Qatari Diar. Their 400,000 sq m mixed-use development will include two office blocks and three residential blocks, with retail space and a public square plus 1,900 sq m for culture and leisure uses, thus reinforcing the cultural identity of the South Bank.



BANKSIDE

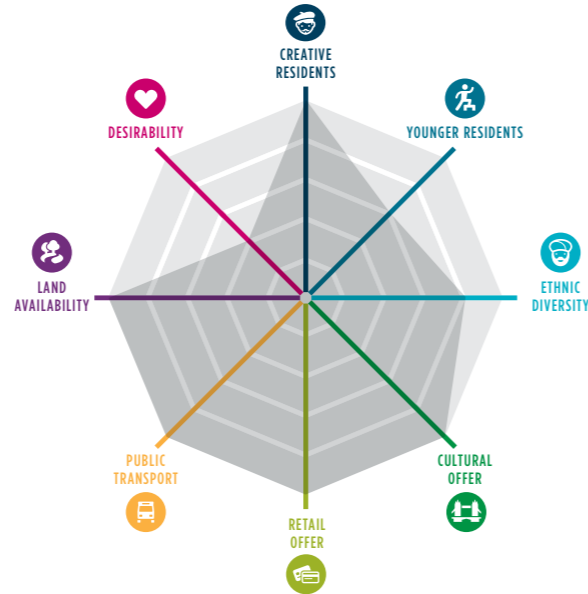
Planned Creative District

Culture continues to be the main driving force behind the ongoing and substantial regeneration process in Bankside. The centrepiece is the Tate Modern, the most popular modern-art gallery in the world that is undergoing a major expansion. A cluster of heritage attractions has sprung up along the river towards London Bridge: Shakespeare's Globe, HMS Belfast, the Clink Prison, the Golden Hinde replica ship and the ever-popular London Dungeon. Southwark Cathedral and the newly expanded Borough Market sit a short way back from the river.

Yet despite the popularity of all these attractions, Bankside remains a work in progress. Most visitors tend to stick to the river rather than browse through the wider area and many people passing through London Bridge station and its surrounds find it to be gritty, congested and difficult to navigate.

Bankside has a similar demographic profile to its neighbouring South Bank area: not that densely populated and home to many young, ethnically diverse and creative residents. However, Bankside is intensifying business use and residential development. The most visible developments are the Neo Bankside residential towers behind Tate Modern, More London and the 310-metre tall Shard tower. The Shard will cater for 55,000 sq m of new offices plus a luxury hotel and very expensive apartments.

Meanwhile, major improvements are underway at London Bridge Station (partly funded by the developer of The Shard) and in the surrounding streets and public realm. In the near future, Bankside will have more residents, workers and visitors, as well as more coherence and, through The Shard, a new focal point that is visible from across the whole of London.



Blackfriars Road Policy Context

North Southwark forms part of London's Central Activities Zone, with two Opportunity Areas: Bankside, Borough and London Bridge [Bankside]; and Elephant and Castle. The Bankside Opportunity Area is the main employment and business district in Southwark. It contains 32% of the borough's businesses, employs over 90,000 people and produces 63% of Southwark's wealth. Between 2003 and 2007 57% of new jobs created in Southwark were in the riverside wards of Cathedral and Riverside¹.

Southwark's Core Strategy makes clear that most new development will be in the opportunity areas. Southwark's draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for Bankside notes that the area shares a special relationship with Elephant & Castle: the two will grow together. The Blackfriars Road will therefore be an

important bridge, and Southwark's plans foresee livelier, more populated neighbourhoods along the Road. More office workers in developments towards its north end, combined with more students and a growing 'evening economy' at the southern end, suggest that demand for culture is likely to grow. Southwark's Local Economic Assessment concluded that cultural and creative industries were an important part of the borough's economy. They accounted for 13% of total employment in 2007. The largest creative industries subsectors were publishing (25%), architecture and engineering (18%), specialist design (19%) and gaming & electronic publishing (13%) and 58% of this creative industries employment is located in the north of Southwark.

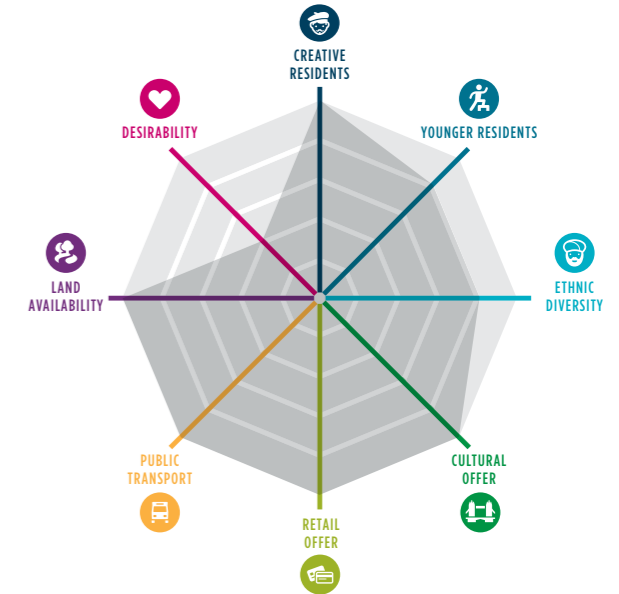
¹ Shared Intelligence (2010) Southwark Local Economic Assessment

BERMONDSEY STREET

Organic Creative District

Bermondsey Street's creative strengths have evolved through low rents for artists, small creative businesses and the gradual colonisation and re-use of former industrial buildings. The cultural offering has become more visible through the establishment of venues such as Zandra Rhodes' Fashion and Textile Museum and the White Cube Gallery, one of the largest commercial galleries in the world. The latter's relocation marks the likely emergence of Bermondsey as South London's answer to Hoxton.

More about edginess and authenticity than its South Bank and Bankside neighbours, Bermondsey Street is supported by large numbers of independent businesses with a strong sense of place and style that use the arts to create a symbiotic link between the customer, the business and the area. Bermondsey Street residents include a very high proportion of people in creative jobs even by London standards: 55 per cent. The Bermondsey Street Festival brings together and showcases the area's creative talent every year.



ELEPHANT & CASTLE

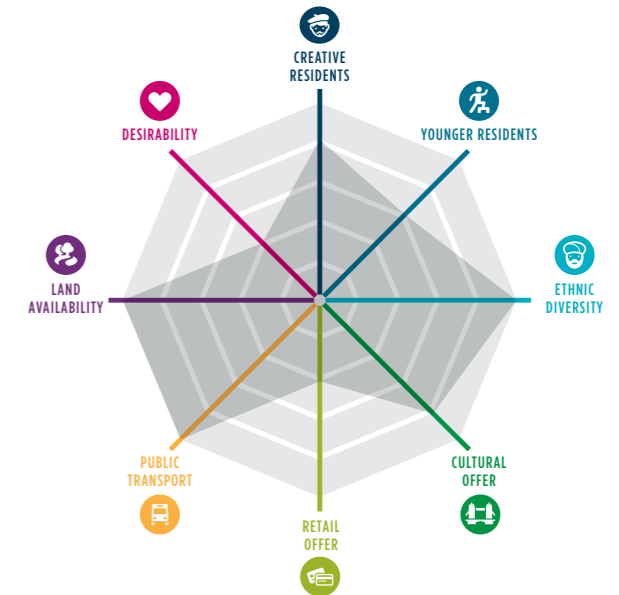
Emerging Creative District

The ethnic diversity of Elephant & Castle is well known; perhaps most visible are the resident black African and South and Central American communities. In Elephant & Castle shopping centre a variety of businesses operate that capture the essence of Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia and Peru, among other countries.

Regeneration of the shopping centre and surrounding housing estates has long been proposed. Many of the 1960s buildings are deteriorating and features that were innovative in the '60s, such as subways and raised walkways, are now seen as creating a hostile environment. The regeneration process is underway, led by Southwark Council and its commercial partner Lend Lease. Plans include 2,800 new homes and a commitment to net zero-carbon growth.

The Elephant is still developing its cultural offer. Its cheapness has long attracted artists and young Londoners from a huge diversity of backgrounds, similar to nearby emerging Creative Districts such as Peckham and Deptford. But Elephant & Castle also offers cultural permanence through the Imperial War Museum and London College of Communication, long-established nightclub spaces such as Corsica Studios and several lively artist-studio projects.

Community and grassroots cultural organisations are active in the area and seek to imprint the creativity of local people on the regeneration of the Elephant. For instance, NEON (the New Elephant Open Network) organises Elefest, an annual free film festival providing local filmmakers with an opportunity to showcase their work on the big screen. Elephant & Castle is thus emerging as a cultural destination for those in the know; however, it is not yet on the map for the majority of Londoners or tourists.



ABOUT FUTURECITY

People. Culture. Place.

The burgeoning interest by world cities in culture, commerce and regeneration demands a new approach to placemaking beyond conventional masterplanning. Futurecity is the UK's leading culture and placemaking consultancy, working in our urban centres, evolving culture and placemaking strategies into deliverable outcomes. Futurecity believe that culture should be embedded in planning for new developments from the outset, in line with government strategies on sustainable communities and the rise of the knowledge and creative economies. Futurecity's culture and placemaking strategies promote the use of arts and culture to provide authentic and memorable places.

Futurecity has developed 'creative district' culture and placemaking strategies for the Earls Court redevelopment scheme (Hammersmith & Fulham and the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea), Vauxhall Nine Elms & Battersea Opportunity Area (Wandsworth & Lambeth), Convoys Wharf for Hutchison Whampoa in Deptford (Lewisham), Wood Wharf (Canary

Wharf Group), the City Arts Initiative (City of London), Vision Wembley (Brent) and a ground breaking placemaking vision document for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. Futurecity have worked extensively in Cambridge and other cities around the UK and have recently begin work on 'CreArt' (an EEC funded cultural programme) promoting cultural exchange between 12 European cities.

Futurecity are producers and curators involved in numerous public realm arts and culture projects including the Crossrail arts programme for 8 new stations, a major new sculpture by Richard Wilson RA for Heathrow T2 in Autumn 2013 and over a 100 cross-disciplinary projects involving artists and other disciplines.

Futurecity ideas on the public realm and the rise of the creative district can be seen at www.futurecity.co.uk and the Futurecity blog. Futurecity have also produced a cultural master-planning toolkit, which provides place-making and cultural advice, and is currently being promoted through the RIBA CPD programme.

Slipstream, Richard Wilson RA. The sculpture has been commissioned by BAA for the new entranceway of the Terminal 2 building 'Covered Court' at Heathrow airport. Richard Wilson was awarded the commission in 2010 following an international competition curated by Futurecity.



Supported by Linden Homes.

Lead Consultant: Alice Cicolini, Futurecity; Mark Davy, Founder and Director, Futurecity; Nicky Petto, Project Manager, Futurecity.

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Designed by Jeremy Timings
www.jeremytimings.com

Statistical research: Alex Homfray, Chris Gibbon, Mattieu Prin, Burns Owen Partnership: <http://bop.co.uk>

FUTURECITY

Futurecity Ltd.
57 Clerkenwell Road
London EC1M 5NG
T: + 44 (0) 20 7407 0500
F: + 44 (0) 20 7407 3636
E: info@futurecity.co.uk
www.futurecity.co.uk

FUTURE\CITY