

LONDON DESIGN FESTIVAL ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL LANDMARK AND SPECIAL PROJECTS LINEUP

Discover projects that spark conversations around craft, material innovation and collaboration.

12-20 SEPTEMBER 2026

londondesignfestival.com

#LDF26



Above: Soul, by Mykola Kabluka, produced by Expolight. Visualisation: Expolight.

[London Design Festival](#) celebrates and promotes the city as the design capital of the world providing a global stage for innovation and creative exchange. This year's Landmark and Special Projects attest to this and explore dialogues around craft, design mediums, material innovation and collaboration, examining how these practices can inspire contemporary forms and ways of living. The works will be displayed across the city in iconic and notable locations such as the [V&A](#), the [Barbican](#), [Wapping Hydraulic Power Station](#), [Somerset House](#), [Strand Aldwych](#) and [St Paul's Cathedral](#).

"The commissioned special projects have become a key part of the festival's DNA. Our first was with Zaha Hadid in 2007 and since then we have created over 150 different projects. The works have all offered a new view of design, they utilise London's public spaces and landmarks, experiment with materials, and engage audiences with thought provoking ideas. This year continues that approach with a programme that needs to be seen." - [Ben Evans](#)
[CBE, London Design Festival Director and Co-Founder](#)

The London Design Festival is proud to announce the **Mayor of London** as Principal Supporter for 2026. The London Design Festival continues to be supported by **Bloomberg Philanthropies**, with **Bloomberg Connects** serving as the Festival's official digital guide. The free digital guide will feature content exclusive to Connects, including expert commentary, video highlights and curated routes across the city.

LANDMARK PROJECTS

The Point of Unity and Soul, both by Mykola Kabluka and produced by Expolight, at St Paul's Cathedral



Above: The Point of Unity, by Mykola Kabluka, produced by Expolight. Visualisation: Expolight.

Mykola Kabluka, Ukrainian lighting designer and contemporary artist, creative director and founder of **Expolight**, Ukraine's leading lighting design and media art studio, will transform **St Paul's Cathedral** during the London Design Festival, captivating visitors with an audiovisual installation **Soul** and immersive light sculpture **The Point of Unity**. Presented within the historic setting of St Paul's, the two works bring contemporary light and media art into dialogue with the Cathedral's longstanding role as a place of worship, gathering and reflection. Designed by Sir Christopher Wren in the late 17th century, the present St Paul's Cathedral stands on a site that has been home to a cathedral for more than 1,400 years.

Both projects continue the studio's exploration of light as an artistic medium for reshaping the perception of architecture, space and human connection. **Soul**, by Mykola Kabluka, explores the moment when an internal thought begins to take physical form, tracing the space between contemplation and action, the spiritual and the physical, and personal experience and its manifestation in the world. The visual and audio systems are informed by neurophysiological research into brain activity associated with daydreaming, inward attention and creative thought. Unlike conventional video projection, the imagery is not created in advance, instead emerging physically through the interaction of light, glass, movement and space. The resulting image is constantly changing, so no composition is repeated.

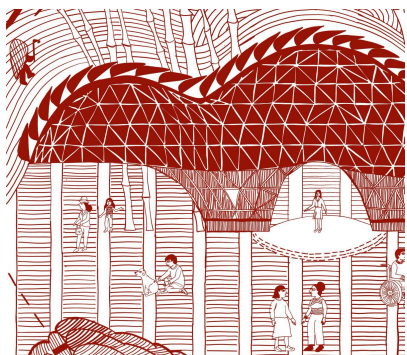
The Point of Unity, by Mykola Kabluka, will make its UK debut at St Paul's Cathedral following its first presentation at Burning Man last year. The immersive light sculpture explores human connection, presence and the interplay between aspiration and action. Conceived as a meeting point of earth and sky, the spiritual and the material, the installation invites visitors to feel themselves part of a larger, interconnected whole.

The sculpture works in tandem with its surroundings: by day, the mirrored surfaces reflect the sky, passing clouds and the landscape around it, while at night the 3,500 fibre-optic points transform the sculpture into a field of stars. Custom optical filters break white light into shifting spectral patterns that move through space, creating continuously changing compositions, accompanied by a curated soundtrack that draws on astronomical data.

Created by a Ukrainian artist amid Russia's ongoing war against Ukraine, the works carry a perspective shaped by a society living through rupture, uncertainty and profound transformation. Without depicting the war directly, they address questions that are acutely relevant to Ukraine and increasingly universal: how to preserve one's inner light in times of darkness, transform hope into action, and find strength through human connection.

The Pangolin Shield by Studio Saar and Atelier One, supported by Secure

The Pangolin Shield will encourage visitors to reflect and examine the relationship between context, innovation and craft, in its exploration of movement, protection, colonial legacies and power. Inspired by the pangolin, the world's most trafficked mammal, the project by **Studio Saar** and **Atelier One**, supported by **Secure**, consists of a bamboo grid shell covered with traditional Indian police shields made from cane and bamboo, and woven rain shields or 'knups' traditionally used by farmers in north-eastern India. The installation takes the police shields and knups out of its original context of authority and instead presents them as a protective shelter, to bring people together in a place to feel safe, explore and connect.



Above: First and Third Images: Presentation Drawing of The Pangolin Shield by Studio Saar and Atelier One, supported by Secure. Second Image: Traditional Rain Shield, forming The Pangolin Shield. Fourth Image: Traditional Police Shield, forming The Pangolin Shield. Second and Fourth Image Credit: Studio Saar/Atelier One

Studio Saar is driven by an ambition to make spaces for life to thrive, underpinned by a belief in cross-cultural sharing of ideas and creating sustainable solutions by collaborating across the UK and India to bring its considered projects to life. They developed the pavilion in collaboration with structural engineers Atelier One, one of the most innovative engineering practices in the UK. The bamboo was sourced from three Indian states, namely Meghalaya, Punjab and Karnataka, speaking to the breadth of the country's vast landscape and how the installation seeks to bring people together. The project blends traditional materials with technology and innovation, and The Pangolin Shield seeks to bring awareness to the technical abilities of bamboo as a construction material. The pavilion will be located on **Strand Aldwych**, the pedestrianised public space behind the Indian High Commission in the West End, close to the bust of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first Prime Minister. Bringing together people from all generations, the pavilion seeks to spark conversation and curiosity about culture, heritage and advanced material innovation, during the London Design Festival.

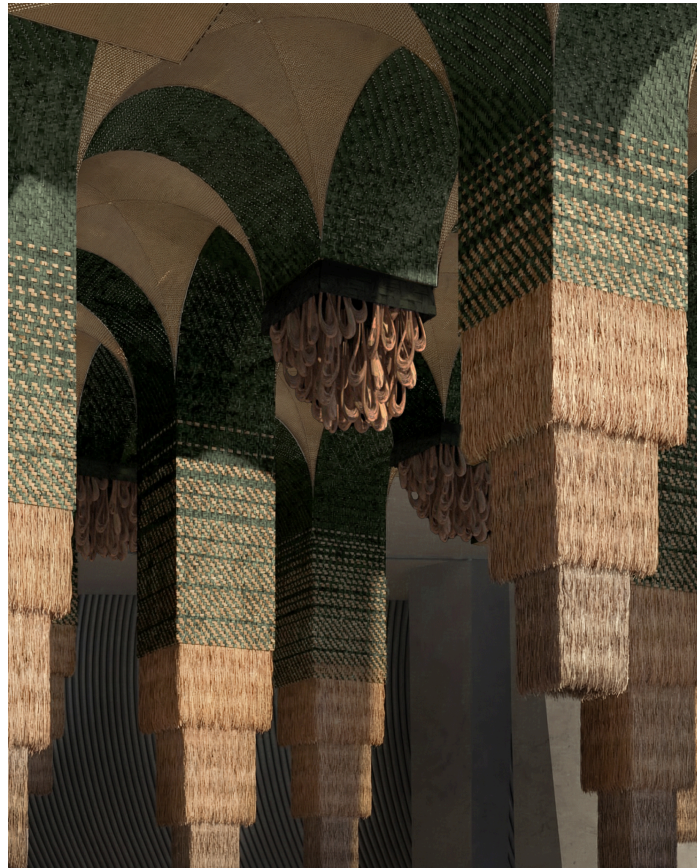
SPECIAL PROJECTS

The Speaking Oasis, by Azaz Architects sponsored by the Ithra Palm Initiative

The Speaking Oasis explores innovative approaches to palm weaving across art, architecture, and product design. The project demonstrates how this traditional craft can evolve into a contemporary creative discipline, extending its reach to new audiences and contexts. Set to be showcased at **The Lavery in Cromwell Place**, a recognized hub for the international art community, the project conceived by architect **Shahad Alazzaz**, founder of **Azaz Architects**, creates a space for dialogue between tradition, sustainability, and the future of global design.

Alazzaz has drawn particular inspiration from the al-Hasa Oasis, the largest natural date palm oasis in the world and one which has long shaped movement and exchange, to reimagine this natural resource through contemporary design to explore symbols of heritage, resilience and innovation. Alazzaz has been recognized in Architectural Digest ME 100 and holds a BA in Architecture from the Manchester School of Architecture and an MA in Architectural Management and Design from IE Business School in Madrid. She serves on the Advisory Board for the King Salman Charter for Architecture and Urbanism and the

Riyadh Region Municipality, and has served as a juror for the King Salman Charter Award, anchoring her practice firmly within Saudi Arabia's rich cultural and architectural identity.



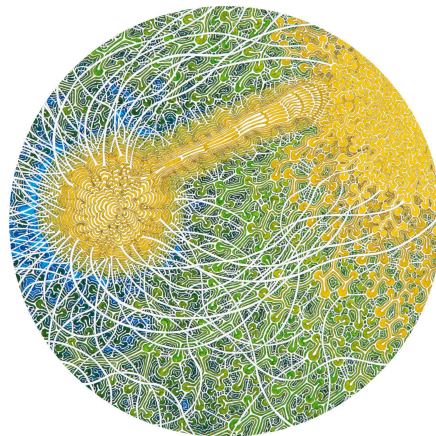
Above: The Speaking Oasis, by Azaz Architects sponsored by the Ithra Palm Initiative

The project is sponsored by the **Ithra Palm Initiative**, launched by the **King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture (Ithra)**. Ithra is the flagship citizenship initiative of Aramco and a cultural and architectural landmark in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. Ithra enriches communities through impactful cultural and creative programming. Through the Ithra Palm Initiative, leading designers and local artisans come together to explore the creative potential of the date palm, celebrating traditional craft, contemporary design, and Saudi Arabia's cultural heritage on a global scale.

The Art of Sound at Wapping Hydraulic Power Station: *Feeling is Structure* by Max Cooper and *Trent Falls* by Chris Watson, spatial sound installations powered by L-Acoustics, hosted by Glass Castle Foundation

London Design Festival will be collaborating with the pioneering professional audio brand **L-Acoustics** to present an immersive sound experience at the **Wapping Hydraulic Power Station**.

The multi-disciplinary artist **Max Cooper** has been commissioned to present **Feeling is Structure**, a 20minute spatial sound experience originally developed through an invitation to perform live at London's Royal Albert Hall. **Feeling Is Structure** investigates the relationship between physical form, perception and emotional experience. Across sound, architecture, biology and visual culture, Cooper considers structure not simply as an organising principle, but as something that actively shapes how we sense, interpret and feel. Reconfigured here as a spatial audio installation, the work moves beyond the conventions of music to become an inhabitable sonic environment. Sound unfolds across and around the listener, foregrounding the spatial, material and architectural qualities embedded within the composition. Max Cooper's PhD in Computational Biology and collaborations with the likes of scientists, mathematicians, architects and directors inform his explorations at the intersection of music, science and art. His audio-visual pioneering work has seen him collaborate with Zaha Hadid Architects, Royal Albert Hall and the Barbican, and exhibited at museums including the Pompidou Metz, Museum Wave Seoul and The Science Museum London.



Above: Left and Right Images: Wapping Hydraulic Power Station, owned by Glass Castle Foundation. Photo Credit: Philippa Gedge, Middle Image: **Feeling is Structure** artwork by Daniel Zeller, Max Cooper's installation part of The Art of Sound at Wapping Hydraulic Power Station, spatial sound installations powered by L-Acoustics, hosted by Glass Castle Foundation.

The artist **Chris Watson** will present **Trent Falls**, a spatial sound installation guiding listeners on a journey down the Humber estuary.

Beginning at Goole docks by Trent Falls, where the rivers Trent and Ouse combine into the estuary, the piece follows the ebbing tide through the reeds and booming bitterns of

Faxfleet nature reserve and rattling rail freight past the now disappeared Oxmardyke gate box. The estuary flows under the thunderous expansion joints of the Humber bridge and then alongside Kingston upon Hull accompanied by the frenzied screams from Hull Fair, the sonorous tones of the cathedral bells and the cheers of Craven Park during a Hull Kingston Rovers home game. As the estuary broadens out, wading birds probe the mudflats, their calls merging into the distant 'pipe' music of Saltend Chemical Park. At Spurn Point where the estuary flows into the North Sea the haunting siren songs of grey seals drift along with the rolling wave wash.

Chris Watson specialises in works that incite a strong sense of space and has a particular interest in recording the sounds of animals, habitats and atmospheres to enrich and contextually drive his pieces. His installations have been commissioned by notable institutions such as The National Gallery, London, The Louvre in Paris, the Aichi Triennial in Japan.



Above: Spurn Point, the conclusion, where the Humber estuary flows into the North Sea, of the Trent Falls installation by Chris Watson, part of The Art of Sound at Wapping Hydraulic Power Station, spatial sound installations powered by L-Acoustics, hosted by Glass Castle Foundation. Image is courtesy of the artist.

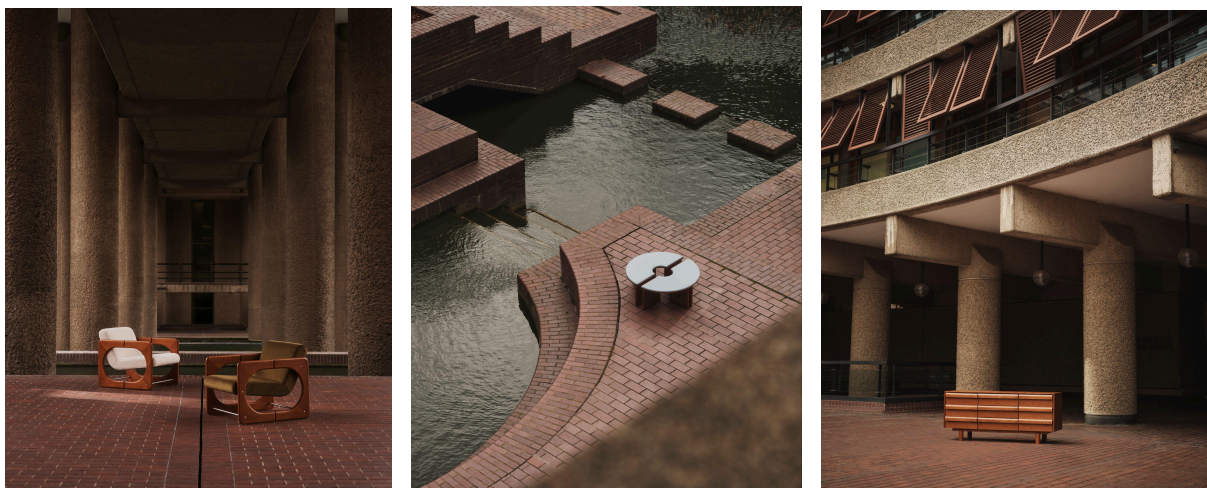
Spatial sound works **Lengua Desollada** by **Hollie Buhagiar** and **A Decade is a Long Time** by **Helen Lyon**, a collaboration between L-Acoustics and the **Alliance for Women Film Composers**, will be selectively featured throughout the programming.

Originally built in 1890, London Design Festival's sound installations mark the first cultural programming at Wapping Hydraulic Power Station since this historic space has been under the custodianship of **Glass Castle Foundation**. Having been closed to the public for the last 13 years, this is a rare opportunity to explore one of the city's most remarkable industrial spaces.

MADE x Barbican

MADE will unveil its new interiors collaboration with the **Barbican** at the London Design Festival, alongside an immersive installation in the iconic institution's Level G Hub Space. Featuring hero pieces from the *MADE x Barbican* collection, the installation explores the architectural and cultural influences behind the designs.

Drawing on exclusive access to the Barbican Archive, **MADE** has translated the building's original vision, history and distinctive brutalist architecture into a collection of bold, functional designs. The work of Miriam Howitt, whose pioneering approach to the Barbican's residential interiors balanced sophistication with functionality, also informed the collection and the archive imagery that inspired the collections will be part of the installation. The *MADE x Barbican* collection is available to shop at [MADE.COM](https://www.made.com).



Above: the *MADE x Barbican* collection. Photographer credit: Felix Speller

Craft x Tech Tokai Project

The second edition of **Craft x Tech** returns to London Design Festival, bringing together artisans from Japan's Tokai region - which holds a unique position in the history of Japanese making, spanning Aichi, Gifu, Mie and Shizuoka prefectures, it has long been shaped by the relationship between natural resources, skilled production and trade - and internationally

acclaimed designers to explore the future of traditional craft. Founded by **Dr Hideki Yoshimoto** of Tangent and curatorial direction by independent curator **Maria Cristina Didero**, the exhibition examines how inherited Japanese techniques can evolve through contemporary design. It will be presented at the Medieval & Renaissance, Room 64b, The Simon Sainsbury Gallery in the **V&A**, reflecting the museum's longstanding connection to Japanese art and design.



Above: Left: Grid Unwoven - Mino Washi x Lanzavecchia + Wai. Photo Credit for Left Image: Noritoshi Kuroki, Middle: Yamollo - Iga Kumihimo x Atang Tshikare, Right: Fushi - Mino Yaki x David Caon. Craft x Tech Tokai Project. Photo Credit for Middle and Right Images: Masayuki Hayashi

Following its Japan debut earlier this year, Craft x Tech Tokai Project will be presented to an international audience at the London Design Festival. The collaborations include ceramic artisan **Yohei Ito** of Fudogama has been paired with Australian industrial designer **David Caon** for *Fushi*, a console and lighting piece using modular ceramic elements inspired by Mino Yaki; **Takanori Senda** of Warabi Paper Company with design studio **Lanzavecchia + Wai** on *Grid Unwoven*, a contemporary reinterpretation of the Japanese shoji through the material qualities of Mino Washi; **Hiroyuki Murase** of Suzusan has collaborated with British designer **Bethan Laura Wood** for *Kataginu*, creating illuminated sculptural works from the colour and texture of Arimatsu Narumi Shibori; **Shigeyuki Ando** of Ando Cloisonne has paired with British-Canadian designer **Philippe Malouin** for *Kasane* to explore the architectural potential of Owari Shippo cloisonné; **Mayuki Kato** of Shingama with Japanese contemporary artist **Eugene Kangawa** of **EUGENE STUDIO** experiment with the brushwork and tonal variation of Seto Sometsuke Yaki in *For Chair in Japanese Nuki and Dami style, The Everyday at the Atelier (Standard / Child Scale)*; **Tomoyuki Matsuda** of Itogo and South African designer **Atang Tshikare** have created *Yamollo*, a sculptural lighting work informed by the structure and colour of Iga Kumihimo braided cords. Together, the works celebrate

the meeting of cultures, materials and techniques, demonstrating how inherited craft can inspire new contemporary forms. The Craft x Tech Tokai Project will be on display until the end of September 2026.

Reviving Craft: Reflection of the Mind, by Sun Media Group



Above: Highlights from Reviving Craft: Reflection of the Mind - Left: The Picture of Nine Perfections, by Yao Jianpin, Middle: New Stonewear by Wu Haoyu, Right: Ming Yellow Embroidered Wedding Dress with the Pattern of the Twelve Symbols and Auspicious Swastika by Rosalie Huang. All part of Reviving Craft: Reflection of the Mind, by Sun Media Group

Reviving Craft: Reflection of the Mind, presented by **Sun Media Group**, will bring together more than 60 local and international artisans and designers to explore traditional craftsmanship through a contemporary lens. Curated by **Su Dan**, Deputy Director of the Chinese Traditional Culture Museum (CTCM) and Professor at the Academy of Arts & Design, Tsinghua University, alongside **Yang Lan**, Chairperson of Sun Media Group, the third edition of the exhibition will be presented at Somerset House.

Centred on the relationship between humans and the self, the exhibition is divided into three sections: *Clear the Mind*, *Nourish the Mind*, and *Refine the Mind*. The artists' designs blend form, symbolism and materiality with heritage and modern expressions of contemporary design. Drawing upon a variety of sources and materials, including porcelain, hand-woven silk, salvaged furniture, bamboo-woven jars, Chinese Xuan paper and ramie fibre, Reviving Craft: Reflection of the Mind showcases new possibilities of traditional craftsmanship. The works draw deeply on traditional Chinese symbolism and philosophy, while reinterpreting them through a contemporary lens.

Highlights include **Chen Qingqing's** *Lightly Stepping* creates a garment using natural plant fibre ramie to interweave folk culture and classical Chinese symbolism. The four-panel folding screens of *The Picture of Nine Perfections*, by **Yao Jianpin**, uses Suzhou embroidery

and the symbolism behind the number nine (jiu) and the koi fish (yu). Bamboo artisan **He Hongbing**'s *Dragon and Floral Motif Jar* draws on traditional Chinese notions of auspiciousness, while **Wang Huaqing**'s *Entrance* reimagines the traditional red-lacquered Chinese gate as a conceptual threshold between past and present. **Wu Haoyu**'s *New Stonewear* explores the Eastern philosophical symbolism of the circle to present a living, organic structure. **Rosalie Huang**'s *Ming Yellow Embroidered Wedding Dress with the Pattern of the Twelve Symbols and Auspicious Swastika* incorporates traditional motifs associated with virtue and prosperity, taking 36,435 hours to be made by 25 craftspeople.

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Notes to Editor:

For further information, please contact ldf@bacchus.agency | [Bacchus](#)

For all images and assets, please download [here](#)

About London Design Festival | <https://londondesignfestival.com/>

Established in 2003 by Sir John Sorrell CBE and Ben Evans CBE, London Design Festival celebrates and promotes London as the design capital of the world. London Design Festival has since earned the reputation as a key calendar moment of London's autumn creative season, alongside London Fashion Week, Frieze Art Fair and the London Film Festival, attracting the greatest thinkers, practitioners, retailers and educators to the capital, in a citywide celebration.

About Global Design Forum | <https://londondesignfestival.com/gdf>

Global Design Forum is a curated thought leadership programme, celebrating design and the minds shaping its future. Across three days design will be inspected, explored and unpacked through the words and works of diverse practitioners in design and beyond. Earlier this year, the Global Design Forum Istanbul 2026, a new international platform for design, launched in collaboration with People Places Ideas, took place 13–16 May 2026. New global locations to be announced for next year's edition.

About Bloomberg Philanthropies

Bloomberg Philanthropies invests in 700 cities and 150 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on creating lasting change in five key areas: the Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's giving, including his foundation, corporate, and personal philanthropy as well as Bloomberg Associates, a philanthropic consultancy that advises cities around the world. For more information, visit bloomberg.org, sign up for the [newsletter](#), or follow on [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), [Threads](#), [Facebook](#), and [X](#).

About Bloomberg Connects | <https://www.bloombergconnects.org/>

Bloomberg Connects is a free digital platform connecting audiences with more than 1,500 cultural organisations around the world. The platform is part of Bloomberg Philanthropies' longstanding commitment to supporting digital innovation in the arts. From world-class museums and botanical gardens to historic houses and outdoor sculpture parks, Connects makes it easier than ever to access and engage with arts and culture anytime, anywhere. Available in more than 50 languages through Google Translate, Connects helps cultural institutions reach new and diverse audiences globally.

About The Standard, London | www.standardhotels.com/london

Housed in the former Camden Town Hall Annex in London's thriving King's Cross neighbourhood, the 1974 Brutalist building has been meticulously restored and sets the perfect stage for The Standard's first hotel outside the United States. The Standard, London has 266 rooms, ranging from Standard King Interior Rooms to terraced suites with outdoor bathtubs overlooking the dramatic St Pancras Station.

On the ground floor, Double Standard, a street-facing bar and restaurant, serves a legendary selection of American diner and British pub favourites. Next door, The Library Lounge features a carefully curated collection that pays homage to the building's original use, alongside Sounds Studio, home to live radio shows and podcasts. Isla offers an approachable seasonal menu, complemented by a brand new wine and cocktail list. The 10th-floor restaurant, Decimo, showcases Chef Paola Arenas' live-fire cooking, surrounded by 360-degree views of London, accessible via the iconic exterior red pill lift.

For seasonal fun, The Rooftop is the perfect summer spot for drinks, bites, and beats.