



Long Live Southbank
Elizabeth House, 39 York Road
London SE1 7NQ

Shân Maclennan (Creative Director, Learning and Participation)
Southbank Centre
Belvedere Road
London SE1 8XX

Ref: LLSB-SBC-26
14th March 2014

Dear Ms Maclennan,

Word Search

It has come to our attention that you have produced educational literature as part of Southbank Centre materials titled 'Word Search', which is displayed in the poetry library and distributed to school groups. And which features the following;

"Where skateboarders are delinquent swans on a concrete lake"

Of course you are aware that delinquent means;

'(typically of a young person) tending to commit crime, particularly minor crime.

Synonyms: lawless, lawbreaking, criminal, offending'

We are shocked that you – as Creative Director of Learning and Participation - would sign off such a statement to be deemed appropriate for including in educational resources distributed by the Southbank Centre and given to school children of primary school age. And furthermore, that you have used this opportunity to have a yet another dig at the skateboard community and continue to demonise them.

It is very telling that, with all the poetry at your disposal, this phrase from John Agard was selected for inclusion as influence and reference in an 'educational' capacity. We noted that the section on the skate area of the Southbank Centre was the only section to have a negative statement and all other sections in the booklet contained positive or neutral statements or phrases. That you have decided to additionally accentuate the word 'delinquent' by placing it in a larger font, further confirms your deliberate intention to be inflammatory and cause offence and provocation.

I'm sure you will agree that influencing children to perceive and believe that the present resident skateboard community are 'criminals' and the activities held in the QEH Undercroft over the past 40 years are 'illegal' is wholly unacceptable, no matter how guised or veiled your attempts.

You may be unaware that the Undercroft is regularly visited by school groups and students independently of the Southbank Centre and none of these groups perceive the community as 'criminals'. On the contrary, the schoolchildren find the space and the skateboarders exciting and magical. Long Live Southbank has

received vast support from teachers, primary school children and comprehensive school students, and further education students alike.

We request that you remove all of the materials from use with immediate effect and ensure any future editions given for public use do not contain this offending phrase against the skateboard community.

We await your confirmation that this has been done.

Kind regards,

S Blayney

On behalf of Long Live Southbank members and supporters