

IKON/60

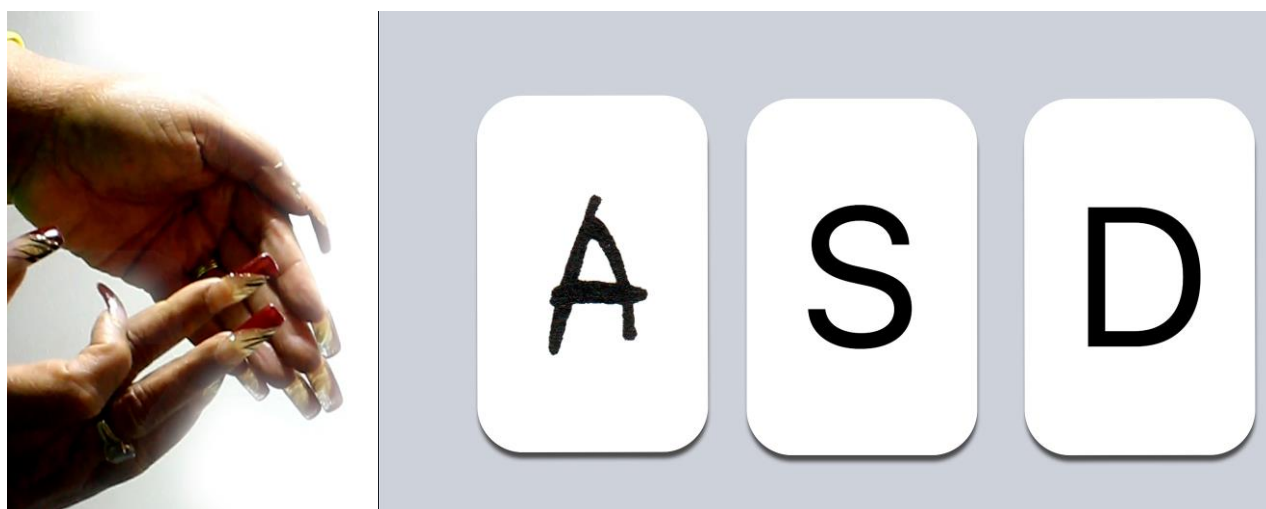
Ikon Gallery
1 Oozells Square Brindleyplace
Birmingham B1 2HS
0121 248 0708 / ikon-gallery.org
free entry / donations welcome
Registered charity no. 528892

EXODUS CROOKS

WE NEED 2 TLK

4 JULY – 2 NOVEMBER 2024

OFF-SITE COMMISSION, THE EXCHANGE



Exodus Crooks, *We need 2 tlk* (2024). Image still from moving image. Courtesy the artist.

Ikon and University of Birmingham present *We need 2 tlk*, a new moving image installation by Midlands-based artist Exodus Crooks as part of *AI FUTURES* at The Exchange, the University of Birmingham's city centre venue in Centenary Square.

Commissioned by Ikon and University of Birmingham, with support from Birmingham-based Vivid Projects, Exodus has explored public perceptions of AI and reflections on media and technology as outlined in the work of celebrated Jamaican-British academic and cultural theorist Professor Stuart Hall (1932–2014). Produced in collaboration with movement artist Chelsea Gordon, the artwork considers how developments in communication shift our behaviour in conversing with others. *We need 2 tlk* focuses on the haptics and gestures present in everyday phone use and the processing of information from the eye, brain and hands.

We need 2 tlk is presented in The Vaults, an exhibition space carved out from the old Municipal Bank's basement secure room. On each side of the room, a film shows a pair of hands in motion, the fingers bending and flexing as if typing on an invisible mobile phone keyboard. Through the variation in speed and intensity of movement, *We need 2 tlk* considers how technology mediates the tone and sentiment of the message originally conveyed through gestures of the body.

Opposite the entrance, Exodus presents a moving image installation comprising 13 mobile phones displayed horizontally to form the shape of a QWERTY keyboard. Each device displays 3 keys of an iPhone on-screen keyboard. Subtly, over a period of time, the key arrangement is distorted: each letter or symbol alternates between the Apple font SF Pro and a graphically rendered version that replicates the look of a handwritten letter. *We need 2 tlk* explores how we, as humans, talk to one another and how AI mimics human behaviour.

AI FUTURES runs from February to November 2024 at The Exchange and invites audiences to join the University of Birmingham on a journey into the brave new world of artificial intelligence. AI has the power to transform industries and enhance lives, yet it raises concerns about job displacement, privacy and security. Through a programme of exhibitions and events, vital questions are explored through the lens of University research.

The Stuart Hall Archive Project is a new research project that will expand public understanding and engagement with the work of celebrated Jamaican-British academic and cultural theorist, Professor Stuart Hall. The archive will be fully catalogued by the Cadbury Research Library team over the course of the project, which is split into three main strands: Conjunctures, Readings and Dialogues.

This new commission is supported by University of Birmingham and Ikon Investment Fund. It is the latest in a series of collaborations between Ikon and The Exchange, including Foka Wolf, *Why Are We Stuck in Hospital?* (2023) and Vanley Burke, *A Gift to Birmingham* (2022-23).

We need 2 tlk is presented as part of Ikon's 60th anniversary year. It follows Exodus Crooks' exhibition *Epiphany (Temporaire)* at Ikon Gallery (9 February – 21 April 2024), commissioned by Ort Gallery and International Curators Forum (ICF), and curated by Orphée Kashala.

Associated Event:

Opening up

AI Futures/Exodus Crooks/Stuart Hall Archive Project

Thursday 25 July, 6-8pm

The Exchange, Centenary Square, B1 2DR. Free, no need to book, just drop in

Join Ikon and University of Birmingham at The Exchange for an evening of talks, exhibitions and creative workshops that open up conversations between artists and academics around *AI Futures* and the Stuart Hall Archive Project. Hear Exodus Crooks talk about *We need 2 tlk* (2024) with Cathy Wade, Artist Facilitator, Vivid Projects, and participate in a creative text-based workshop led by artist Sadie Barnett. Listen to Dr Nick Beech and Dr Rita Gayle introduce live projects that expand access to the archive of Professor Stuart Hall (1932–2014).

For more information visit ikon-gallery.org

For more information, press appointments, high-res images and to request interviews please contact Rebecca Small by email r.small@ikon-gallery.org or call Ikon on 0121 248 0708.

@ikongallery #IkonGallery @ace_national @aceagrams @ace_midlands @bhamcitycouncil
@exoduscrooks @unibirmingham

IKON/60

Ikon Gallery
1 Oozells Square Brindleyplace
Birmingham B1 2HS
0121 248 0708 / ikon-gallery.org
free entry / donations welcome
Registered charity no. 528892

Notes to Editors:

1. **Exodus Crooks** is a British-Jamaican multidisciplinary artist and educator whose practice centres on the relationship with self. Observing the results of fractious domesticity and longing, their art tends to appear as questions of self-actualisation. Their breadth of experience in visual and performance art and education can be found in their work with the International Curators Forum, iniva, The New Art Gallery Walsall and The National Gallery, London. exoduscrooks.com
2. **Ikon** is an internationally acclaimed contemporary art gallery, situated in Birmingham's city centre. Established in 1964 by a group of artists, Ikon celebrates its 60th anniversary in 2024. It is an educational charity with free entry for all and works to encourage public engagement with contemporary art through exhibiting new work in a context of debate and participation. The gallery programme features artists from around the world and a variety of media is represented. Ikon's off-site programme develops dynamic relationships between art, artists and audiences outside the gallery. Projects vary enormously in scale, duration and location, challenging expectations of where art can be seen and by whom. Education is at the heart of Ikon's activities, stimulating public interest in and understanding of contemporary visual art. Ikon aims to build dynamic relationships with audiences, enabling visitors to engage with, discuss and reflect on contemporary art.
3. **Ikon** is open Wednesday – Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays, 11am-5pm. Free entry, donations welcome. Ikon is supported using public funding by the National Lottery through Arts Council England, and Birmingham City Council. ikon-gallery.org
4. **The Exchange** is the University of Birmingham's city centre venue in Centenary Square, Birmingham's 'civic heart' that is home to many of our city's most iconic locations such as the Library of Birmingham, the International Convention Centre, Symphony Hall and the REP theatre. The Exchange was constructed in the early 1930s and is of historic importance to the city of Birmingham as it was formerly the headquarters of the Birmingham Municipal Bank. The Exchange brings together the University's research, teaching and networks to create a place of curiosity, celebration, collaboration and change. Through free public exhibitions and community engagement programmes our ambition is to enable people from the city and wider region to get involved in the University's work to address the complex challenges of our time. Open Monday – Saturday, 10am-4pm, free entry. birmingham.ac.uk/the-exchange
5. **Vivid Projects** is a non-profit company in Birmingham supporting media arts practice. Founded in 2012, the company actively seeks out under-represented artists, contemporary practices and cultures, and invests in the risk taking, early stages of development towards ambitious work. Resources include mentoring, open source, free to use digital technologies, a library, audio-visual presentation equipment and a media archive. vividprojects.org.uk
6. **Arts Council England** is the national development agency for creativity and culture. ACE have set out their strategic vision in *Let's Create* that by 2030 they want England to be a country in which the creativity of each of us is valued and given the chance to flourish and where everyone of us has access to a remarkable range of high-quality cultural experiences. From 2023 to 2026 ACE will invest over £467 million of public money from Government and an estimated £250 million from The National Lottery each year to help support the sector and to deliver this vision. artscouncil.org.uk
7. **Birmingham City Council** is the local government body responsible for the governance of the City of Birmingham, UK. It is the most populated local council area in the United Kingdom (excluding counties) with 101 elected councillors representing over one million people, in 69 wards. The council headquarters are at the Council House, Victoria Square in the heart of the city centre. The council is responsible for running nearly all local services, with the exception of those run by joint boards. For more information visit birmingham.gov.uk