

# 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).

**6pm**            **Arrival**

TALKS (BANKING HALL)

**6.10pm**        **Welcome and Introduction to *AI Futures***

Simon Cane, Director of Public and Cultural Engagement, University of Birmingham

**6.20pm**        ***We need 2 tlk***

Exodus Crooks, Artist, and Cathy Wade, Artist Facilitator, Vivid Projects

With support from Vivid Projects, Exodus Crooks has developed *We need 2 tlk* (2024), a moving image installation co-commissioned by Ikon and University of Birmingham, which explores public perceptions of AI in relation to Professor Stuart Hall's reflections on media and technology and how developments in communications have shifted our behaviour in how we converse with others. Exodus reflects on the development of the commission with Cathy Wade.

**7pm**            **Break**

**7.10pm**        **Introducing the Stuart Hall Archive**

Dr Nick Beech, Academic lead on the Stuart Hall Archive Project,  
University of Birmingham

Professor Stuart Hall, born in Jamaica in 1932, lived in Britain from 1951 until his death in 2014. For over fifty years he spoke powerfully on public platforms, in print, on radio and television, intervening in the important questions—on politics, society, culture, media and the arts—of his and our time. Following his death in 2014, Hall's personal papers were deposited at the Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham. Using Hall's biography, Dr Nick Beech introduces the contents of that archive, and some thoughts on what Hall himself might have wanted for it.

**7.35pm**        **Break**

**7.45pm**

**Introducing *Conjunctures***

Dr Rita Gayle, Research Fellow on the *Conjunctures* strand of the Stuart Hall Archive Project, University of Birmingham

*Conjunctures* is a programme concerned with extended Caribbean cultural and social diasporas to platform new questions, knowledges, practices and methods of teaching informed by the work of Professor Stuart Hall. With a focus on the world around us, and existential challenges facing communities in the 21st century, it will utilise the critical lens of Hall's conjunctural approach to identify issues in dialogue with individuals and organisations. Dr Rita Gayle explores what it means to think about 'conjunctures', defining what it is and how this is a useful concept for Birmingham today.

**8.10pm**

**Closing remarks**

Linzi Stauvers, Artistic Director (Education), Ikon, and Julia Habeshaw, Head of Public Programmes, University of Birmingham

All talks are BSL interpreted by Gurmail Narwain and Joy Lear-Bernard.

WORKSHOP (SOUTH ENTRANCE)

**6-8pm**

**Would a computer get it?**

Sadie Barnett, Artist, Writer and Facilitator and Regan McDonald, Public Health Research Officer, Ikon and Birmingham City Council

Ever wondered how an AI understands the 'messy, fleshy stuff' of being a person? Inspired by the Exchange's *AI Futures* and the Stuart Hall Archive Project, artist Sadie Barnett invites participants to create collages, from a pre-selected set of words and phrases, based on the prompts a computer would understand. Participants then go on to represent their 'true' self, using text, stamps and stencilling.

EXHIBITION (THE VAULTS)

**6-8pm**

***We need 2 tlk (2024)***

A moving image installation by Exodus Crooks. Commissioned by University of Birmingham and Ikon as part of *AI Futures* at The Exchange.

With support from Vivid Projects, the artist 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.

## BIOGRAPHIES

**Sadie Barnett** is a Birmingham-based visual artist, writer and facilitator. Barnett runs workshops which encourage personal reflection, focus on the process of healing and explore the transformative power of arts and crafts. Barnett explores themes of mental health, queerness and romance in her illustrations published under the moniker [bitsketchyinit](#).

**Dr Nick Beech** worked for Stuart Hall from 2011 until his death in 2014. He subsequently prepared Hall's papers for deposit at University of Birmingham, Cadbury Research Library, and is a co-lead, with Professor Pat Noxolo and Assistant Professor Becky Roach on the three-year Stuart Hall Archive Project.

**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. Ikon hosted Exodus Crooks' solo exhibition *Epiphany (Temporaire)* (February – April 2024), commissioned by Ort Gallery and International Curators Forum (ICF), and curated by Orphée Kashala. [exoduscrooks.com](#)

**Dr Rita Gayle** is the Postdoctoral Fellow for the *Conjunctures* strand of the Stuart Hall Archive Project. She is based in the Department of Geography at University of Birmingham. Gayle's PhD thesis was concerned with the Millennial Generation of Black British Feminists who had formed creative collectives between 2013-2020.

**Regan McDonald** is a Public Health Research Officer jointly engaged by Ikon and Birmingham City Council. He is developing a methodology based in co-design, from problem formulation through to the dissemination of findings, across three thematic partnerships: libraries, universities and prisons.

**Cathy Wade** is an artist and writer who investigates how practice can be created and distributed in collaborative partnerships and through the creation of commons. Their work seeks to understand the experience of contemporary conditions through direct exchange with others. They are course leader for MA in Arts Education Practices at Birmingham City University; alongside facilitating Vivid Projects' focus on long-term artist development.