

MEDIA RELEASE

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ROHAN AYINDE AWARDED THE FIFTH STUART HALL LIBRARY ARTIST'S RESIDENCY



iniva (Institute of International Visual Arts) and Stuart Hall Foundation are thrilled to announce that artist and poet **Rohan Ayinde** has been selected for the fifth Stuart Hall Library Artist's Residency – a funded opportunity with support from Arts Council England that builds on Professor Stuart Hall's unique contribution to intellectual and cultural life.

Building on the distinct connections between iniva and Stuart Hall Foundation, the residency allows a visual artist the space to think about some of the key themes related to the work of Iniva and the Foundation, including the language of the diaspora, culture, identity and archiving. This year marks the 70th anniversary of Professor Stuart Hall's arrival in Britain from Jamaica in 1951 and in commemoration, the residency invited an artist to respond to the concept of 'arrival' and its capacity to transform and trouble notions of fixed cultural identities.

Selected through a richly competitive open call, Rohan Ayinde will be resident for three months at the Stuart Hall Library in London, UK, from September to December 2021. The panel selected Ayinde for his dynamic and imaginative proposal that brings a multidisciplinary and nuanced critical approach to grappling with the shifting landscape of race and black radical politics.

Ayinde's work oscillates between abstract drawings, audio-visual poetry, performance and sculpture, and is interested in the ways that abstraction can function as a method for thinking about black radical thought as a form, or a poetics. His research during the residency will take Stuart Hall's description of "diaspora identity" with the work of Frank Bowling as a starting point from which to develop a grammar for thinking a contemporary poetics of blackness/fragmentation. Through this research, Ayinde aims to create a series of audio-visual poems that "weave through the journey that black radical thought takes us on, seeking to give space and credence to the fracture it gives voice to and hopefully arguing that the fracture is a generative place into, and out of which, to make art".

On being selected, Ayinde said, *"This feels like a moment of alignment and serendipity. I am ready to engage in dialogue with Stuart Hall's legacy, and I feel a deep sense of gratitude for being given the space and time to do so by iniva and the Stuart Hall Foundation."*

As part of the residency, Ayinde will be sharing his research as part of a public event that will take place in 2022.

Sepake Angiama, Artistic Director at Iniva, said, *“The panel was unanimous in the decision to select Rohan Ayinde for the Stuart Hall Library Residency. His practice opens up new ways of thinking of the spatial relation between the spoken word and the image. We are beyond excited to see how the time in the Stuart Hall Library will continue to support Rohan's practice and thinking.”*

Maria Amidu, artist and trustee of the Stuart Hall Foundation, said, *“Rohan presented us with an original and beautifully written proposal. Offering him this opportunity to use the library's collection to focus on developing his ideas around a new language in relation to Stuart's work on 'diaspora identity' and the dissonance this experience provokes is also a very important opportunity for us. Rohan's thinking is in close correspondence with the Stuart Hall Foundation's #reconstructionwork programme and we are very much looking forward to seeing how his residency progresses.”*



Image: rohan performance_v6, Fractal Horizons/A poetics of the Black Hole, Version 6, at 6018| North, Chicago

Notes to Editors

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About the Stuart Hall Library Artist Residency

The Stuart Hall Library Artist Residency was established in 2017 as a collaboration between iniva (Institute of International Visual Arts) and the Stuart Hall Foundation. The fifth Stuart Hall Library Artist's Residency commencing in September 2021 is supported by Arts Council England. This residency is a funded opportunity for an artist based in the UK to be in residence at iniva's Stuart Hall Library in London, UK, over a three-month period from the September to December 2021. The selected artist will receive a total sum of £4,500 and given support to pursue their research in the library.

Building on the distinct connections between both organisations, the residency offers a visual artist the opportunity to develop their practice by excavating the ideas contained within the library, taking the writings of Professor Stuart Hall as a starting point. The residency is particularly aimed at working with artists or artist collectives whose practice is informed by perspectives on politics, identity and activism; who is interested in the language of the international and ideas around diaspora; and whose methodology may relate to notions of archiving and the archival.

There are no expectations on a fixed outcome of the residency and the prime focus is the process of research itself. However, the artist is usually expected to produce a digital output of their choice (e.g. short film, sound, blog post, animated presentation etc.) for archival purposes and to co-organise a public event which allows sharing of reflections or work in progress from the residency. The form of the digital output and the event is agreed with the artist during the residency as appropriate to their practice and research undertaken.

The artist is expected to be in residence over a three-month period from mid September to mid December 2021 and to spend at least five days per month researching in the library. As the library is in constant use, the artist will be unable to have a studio/production space on site. The residency does not include accommodation.

About Rohan Ayinde

Rohan Ayinde is an interdisciplinary poet based between London and Chicago. His work is centred around creating "otherwise" potentials (Ashon Crawley), and in so doing breaking down and simultaneously reconfiguring the ideological architectures that shape our daily and generational lives. Most recently, his work is shaped by a dance around the possibility opened up by the logics of black holes, specifically when read in conversation with the historical and material conditions of blackness.

Ayinde is one half of the wayward/motile collaborative duo i.as.in.we, with friend/producer/dancer Yewande YoYo Odunubi. He received his MA in Visual and Critical Studies from SAIC (2019). He is the gallery manager for Blanc (Chicago), is a curatorial fellow with ACRE, and has curated shows at Blanc, ACRE Projects, and NOW Gallery.

More about his work can be found [here](#), [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).

About iniva

Iniva is an evolving, radical visual arts organisation dedicated to developing an artistic programme that reflects the social and political impact of globalisation. With the Stuart Hall Library acting as a critical and creative hub for our work, we collaborate with artists, curators, researchers and cultural producers to challenge conventional notions of diversity and difference. We engage a wide audience, particularly young people, in discourse and debate on issues surrounding the politics of race, class and gender.

Through our programme we work predominantly with British-born and British-based visual artists of African and Asian descent supporting them at different stages in their careers. We offer residencies, commission new work and

promote existing practices enabling ambition and artist development. By cultivating innovative thinking, we are committed to disseminating research across a wide cultural spectrum and geographical network. Our ambition is to build a greater body of knowledge around each of the artists with whom we work to ensure the legacy of their practices for future generations of researchers and audiences.

Founded in 1994, under the leadership of renowned academic Professor Stuart Hall, Iniva is a non-profit organisation based in East London. It has established itself as a pioneering arts organisation in the artistic environment in the UK and beyond. Iniva has worked with internationally renowned artists and curators early in their careers including David A Bailey, Sonia Boyce, Sheela Gowda, NS Harsha, Isaac Julien, Steve McQueen, Chris Ofili, Yinka Shonibare, Kobena Mercer, Okwui Enwezor, and Guy Brett.

Iniva is a registered charity and an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation and is generously supported by individual donors, trusts and foundations.

www.iniva.org

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About the Stuart Hall Foundation

The Stuart Hall Foundation was established in 2015 by Professor Stuart Hall's family, friends and colleagues. The Foundation is committed to public education, addressing urgent questions of race and inequality in culture and society through talks and events, and building a growing network of Stuart Hall Foundation scholars and artists in residence.

The Foundation works collaboratively to forge creative partnerships in the spirit of Stuart Hall; thinking together and working towards a racially just and more equal future. It strives to fulfil their commitments through two streams of activity:

- Providing scholarships and creative opportunities for students and artists from disenfranchised and underrepresented backgrounds; building connections among them and with our partner institutions.
- Promoting critical thought and understanding through a public programme of events, residencies, commissions and conversations that foster an intergenerational creative exchange, enrich political debate, and create space for new ideas

Stuart Hall Foundation is a registered charity in England and Wales. Charity number: 1159343. Stuart Hall Foundation is supported by individual donors, trusts and foundations (Arts Council England, Unbound Philanthropy, and Hollick Family Charitable Trust).

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