

[Dancing In The Ellipsis // A Cartographer's Black Hole](#)

An exhibition by **Rohan Ayinde**

Tuesday 10 May – Friday 29 July 2022

iniva, Stuart Hall Library, 16 John Islip St, London SW1P 4JU



Rohan Ayinde, photographs, 2022. Image courtesy of the artist.

iniva (Institute of International Visual Arts) presents ***Dancing In The Ellipsis // A Cartographer's Black Hole***, a site-specific installation at iniva's Stuart Hall Library showcasing the work of artist **Rohan Ayinde**.

On display is a series of five drawings and three photographs hung in between bookshelves. In the informal library area, audiences can listen to *Freedom*, a call and response song created in collaboration with Ayinde and musical artist Hector Plimmer, which weaves together music and poetry. This exhibition highlights the multidisciplinary processes within Ayinde's practice of drawing, sound, photography, performance and sculpture, and is accompanied by a limited edition pamphlet featuring poetry and text by Ayinde exploring the artist's research whilst in residence at the Stuart Hall Library in 2021.

The exhibition title, *Dancing In The Ellipsis // A Cartographer's Black Hole*, connects to Ayinde's background in writing through an exploration of spoken and unspoken language, and movement and dancing as a way to explore the potentials of blackness outside of the confinement of maps, borders, and classifications. In Ayinde's words he is exploring "*the ellipsis as a space that somehow carries with it the crossing over/the beyond/the translation/the idea of that which moves between two places - the ellipsis as bridge, as pause, as place for rumination, as movement.*"

The works in this exhibition are manifestations of Ayinde's investigations into his own identity as a black man living in the UK, who is from Guyana via Africa but has lived almost a third of his life in the USA. Within this entangled personal history, Ayinde explores his self as a translation of the many contexts and places he has belonged to. He relates this to his work within abstraction as an expression of blackness, home, and place.

Mark making within Ayinde's drawings is birthed from thin white lines on black paper which morph into geometric shapes and expanses. In some instances, these lines lead to eruptions of blues and greens. These colours point us to a monumental place for Ayinde, Jamaica, a place where the artist has been able to examine his relationship to home through three significant visits to the country during his lifetime. Ayinde says: "*Home is the place we are from and the place we came from. And somehow there is no stability to either. What does it mean to belong? And, then, what does it mean not to belong?*" These questions take us

on a journey around the library where we encounter large photographs of Jamaica, with its bright green landscapes of trees, grass, and moss.

Ayinde uses poetry, sound, and writing within this exhibition to create a picture of an ever-oscillating relationship between what is and what could be, especially within spaces outside of our perceived knowledge. We are urged by the artist to find comfort and pause in a space that is in between, hybrid, and offers new potentials.

Tobi Alexandra Falade, 2022.

NOTES TO EDITORS

EXHIBITION EVENTS

There will be a programme of public events taking place at iniva to accompany the exhibition.

[Special Viewing](#)

Tuesday 10 May 2022, 5:30-7:30pm

Please join us to celebrate the opening of *Dancing In The Ellipsis // A Cartographer's Black Hole*, with artist Rohan Ayinde and curator in attendance. Ayinde will give a short speech about the works on display. Refreshments will be provided.

Rohan Ayinde Artist Talk with Sepake Angiama

Date and time to be posted on [iniva's website](#)

Rohan Ayinde is joined in conversation with curator and iniva Artistic Director Sepake Angiama to discuss Ayinde's new exhibition and wider practice. There will be a collective listening of a call and response song created in collaboration with Ayinde and musical artist Hector Plimmer. Refreshments will be provided.

[Rohan Ayinde in Conversation with his parents](#)

Tuesday 27 July 2022, 5:30-7:30pm

Rohan Ayinde is joined in conversation with his parents to discuss his upbringing in London and the influence of Caribbean and black culture on his identity. Refreshments will be provided.

ABOUT ROHAN AYINDE

[Rohan Ayinde](#) is an interdisciplinary artist based between London and Chicago. His work is centered 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. The landscapes his work explores are formed through the lens of a black radical imagination committed to describing freedom as a horizon of possibility. They are an archive of the journey there; maps/scores under continuous construction and refusals to acquiesce to the dominant structures of thought that frame the world we live in.

Ayinde's work oscillates between abstract drawings, audio-visual poetry, photography, 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. He talks about his work as being "in a constant negotiation with itself, trying to understand the role it plays in building the worlds it is invested in imagining." Recently, much of his work has been shaped by a dance around the possibility opened up by the (il)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 BA in Cultural Studies from the University of North Carolina (CH), and his MA in Visual and Critical Studies from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (2019). As Gallery Manager for Blanc (Chicago) he has launched an artist residency program, curated solo and group shows, and held space for emerging and established artists in Chicago.

He was the 2021 Stuart Hall Library Artist-In-Residence.

ABOUT THE STUART HALL LIBRARY ARTIST RESIDENCY

The Stuart Hall Library Artist Residency was established in 2017 as a collaboration between iniva and the Stuart Hall Foundation. The fifth Stuart Hall Library Artist's Residency which commenced in October 2021 is supported by The Stuart Hall Foundation and 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.

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.

ABOUT INIVA

iniva (Institute of International Visual Arts) is an evolving, radical visual arts organisation dedicated to developing an artistic programme that reflects on the social and political impact of globalisation. With the Stuart Hall Library acting as a critical and creative hub for their work, iniva collaborates with artists, curators, researchers and cultural producers to challenge conventional notions of diversity and difference. iniva engages a wide audience, particularly young people, in discourse and debate on issues surrounding the politics of race, class and gender. iniva's programme supports artists at different stages in their careers, offering residencies, commissioning new work and promoting practice which enables artistic ambition and development. By cultivating innovative thinking, iniva is committed to disseminating research across a wide cultural spectrum and geographical network. Their ambition is to build a greater body of knowledge around each of the artists with whom they work to ensure the legacy of their practices for future generations of researchers and audiences. www.iniva.org

Press information

For further press enquiries and images please contact:

Jemima Yong, Communications Manager, jemima@iniva.org