

PRESS RELEASE

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DHARMA TAYLOR AWARDED THE SIXTH STUART HALL LIBRARY ARTIST'S RESIDENCY



Image: Dharma Taylor, 'Slipper Chair', 2023. Photography by Dudley Waltzer

iniva (Institute of International Visual Arts) and Stuart Hall Foundation are thrilled to announce that artist and maker Dharma Taylor has been selected for the sixth Stuart Hall Library Artist's Residency – a funded opportunity at Stuart Hall Library in London, UK, 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 visual artists the space and time to think about some of the key themes related to the work of iniva and the Stuart Hall Foundation, including the language of the diaspora, culture, identity and archiving.

This year, reflecting on Stuart Hall's paper 'Constituting an archive' (published by Third Text, Spring 2001), artists were invited to apply with research proposals that responded to the concept of "the living archive" and consider the

multiple ways in which an archive as a site may hold multiple narratives that are contested. The Stuart Hall Foundation and Iniva were particularly interested in working with an artist 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.

Selected artist Dharma Taylor is a multidisciplinary artist, combining textiles with woodwork to produce narrative-rich, design-driven works that seek to observe aspects of systems within which we exist and that allow her to explore her position within the Diaspora and contemporary British society. Her practice focuses on memory and the prehistory of prior conditions, interweaving flashes of hue and colour-stories to create new textiles using family history as inspiration. Through an abstract approach further inspired by diverse sources from technology and poetry to ancient civilisations and cultural plurality, Taylor constructs everyday objects of furniture; in particular chairs, rugs, and embroidered slippers, that offer support for the human form throughout life.



Image: "Rug, Furniture, Sculptures and Slippers", a solo exhibition in 2021 by Dharma Taylor.
Photography taken by Dan Weill.

Selected through an open call, Taylor's project 'Part of the Furniture' will focus on the radical act of craft, resulting in pieces of textiles or solid oak furniture inspired by Stuart Hall's 'interest in the experience of being alive during such disruptive times'. During the three-month residency, Taylor will be focusing her research on racialised labour, migration of textile workers, and examining the politics of cloth and explore what it means to be a craftsperson of colour today. Taylor will be sharing her research as part of a public event in the Autumn.

Dharma Taylor, Stuart Hall Library artist in residence said:

"During this residency I want to be able to research in a way that is not just about creating beautiful objects and the process of making but rather to engage and explore the issues of our time and do it in a way that redresses the balance

of equality and opportunity within the design industries, shining a light on an optimistic future.”



‘Harry Chair and Table’ inspired by Taylor’s great grandfather, 2021. Photographer: Andy Price

Beatriz Lobo (Curator) and **Tavian Hunter** (Library and Archive Manager) iniva's selection panel said:
“Dharma’s focus on the “radical act of craft” felt fresh and innovative for the work that iniva is doing to provide support for artists looking to integrate research-led approaches into their practices. We are looking forward to how Dharma develops an interdisciplinary practice linking woodworking to textiles through research into the concept of the living archive using resources held in Stuart Hall Library and iniva’s archives. We are excited to learn from Dharma’s experience as a maker as we expand the collection around her practice whilst she develops her own ideas.”

Roshini Kempadoo (Artist and SHF Associate), **Harriet Fleuriot** (Head of Programmes) and **Orsod Malik** (Programme Curator) on behalf of Stuart Hall Foundation's selection panel said,
‘Dharma’s application stood out as a stirring response to the here and now. Responding to Hall’s concept of the “living archive”, Dharma presented a well-rounded proposal that critically engages with the politics of materiality, how raw materials can be considered an archive in themselves, and how ideas of ‘origin’ and sustainability can be examined through the process of furniture-making. We were particularly captivated by Dharma’s interdisciplinary approach to research and artmaking as a way of exploring cultural entanglements. We are very much looking forward to seeing, hearing and experiencing the work as the residency progresses.’

The sixth Stuart Hall Library Residency is supported by Arts Council England.

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NOTES TO EDITORS

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 sixth Stuart Hall Library Artist's Residency commencing in May 2023 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. The selected artist will receive a total sum of £4,750 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 May to July 2023 and to spend four 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 Dharma Taylor

Dharma Taylor is a multidisciplinary designer and maker with a background specialising in menswear and textiles. She graduated from Rochester University for the creative arts with a BA in Fashion Design and the London College of Fashion with an MA in Menswear. She has developed her practice and explored working with new material, Dharma's way of combining textiles with woodwork produces works of great beauty and deceptive simplicity.

Over the past few years through research-based projects, she has sought to observe aspects of the society and systems in which we exist. Inspired by diverse sources, from technology and poetry to ancient civilisations and cultural plurality.

As an artist of dual heritage, she draws on her Caribbean and European lineage, creating work that allows her to explore her position within the Diaspora and contemporary British society. This perspective has long been the impetus behind her narrative-rich, design-driven, art methodology for making new work.

Since graduating she has worked on various artistic projects; they've been shown by a variety of national and international organisations and galleries including the Benaki Museum in Athens, the V&A and Tate Britain. She is currently a Lecturer in Fashion and Textiles at Central Saint Martins and splits her time between teaching and developing her practice. In an exciting development from her use of textiles, Dharma has approached working with wood in an organic way expressed through careful observation and respect of the natural material, paired with traditional carpentry techniques. The woodwork pieces are crafted in memory of her great grandfather tapping into the carpentry world that he had a passion for.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact: Harriet Fleuriot, Head of Programmes, Stuart Hall Foundation: harriet@stuarthallfoundation.org

About iniva

iniva (Institute of International Visual Arts) is a visual arts organisation whose artistic programme reflects the social and political impact of globalization, encouraging discourse and debate on issues surrounding the politics of race, gender and class.

Founded in 1994, under the leadership of renowned academic Professor Stuart Hall, iniva is a non-profit organisation based in London. It has established itself as a pioneering arts organisation in the in the UK and beyond.

With the Stuart Hall Library acting as a critical and creative hub for its work, iniva collaborates with artists, curators, researchers and cultural producers to challenge conventional notions of diversity and difference. The library holds a collection of over 10,000 publications, including artist books, monographs, exhibition catalogues, journals and zines, as well as an archive of iniva's history promoting the work of Black and Asian artists such as those from the UK Black Arts Movement.

iniva's programme supports artists and cultural producers 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.

iniva is an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation.

Twitter: @Iniva_arts

Instagram: @iniva_arts

Web: www.iniva.org

FURTHER INFORMATION about iniva

Contact: Nelle Williams, Communications Manager, iniva: nelle@iniva.org

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

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FURTHER INFORMATION about the Stuart Hall Foundation

Contact: Harriet Fleuriot, Head of Programmes, Stuart Hall Foundation: harriet@stuarthallfoundation.org