

“A street of mistrust and fear”: Malcolm X in Smethwick

Black Country Living Museum, Tipton Road, Dudley DY1 4AL

Saturday 8th February 2025, 10am – 5pm : <https://tickets.bclm.com/106382>

“Behind its placid facade, Marshall Street is a street of mistrust and fear – a microcosm of Smethwick’s running sore, the racial problem.”

Birmingham Post, 8 December 1964

2025 marks sixty years since Malcolm X – revolutionary, Muslim minister, African American human rights activist – visited Marshall Street in the Black Country town of Smethwick. He was invited by local anti-racist campaigners in response to a proposed segregation scheme for the street, which built on years of prejudice and discrimination in “the most racist town in Britain.” This study day brings together experts on Smethwick, the politics of race and racism in post-war Britain, and on Malcolm X to provide the context for his visit and to better understand the important place this event holds in Black Country, British and global history.

Speakers

Jagwant Johal (Birmingham Race Impact Group)

MX60: life, legacy, lessons

Dawn Carr and **Garry Stewart** (Black Heritage Walks Network)

The settlement of people of colour in the 1960s

Dr Marc Collinson (University of Bangor)

The Road to Smethwick’s 1964 contest: activism, candidates, and elections

Jagdish Patel (Coventry University) and **Savita Vij** (University of Warwick)

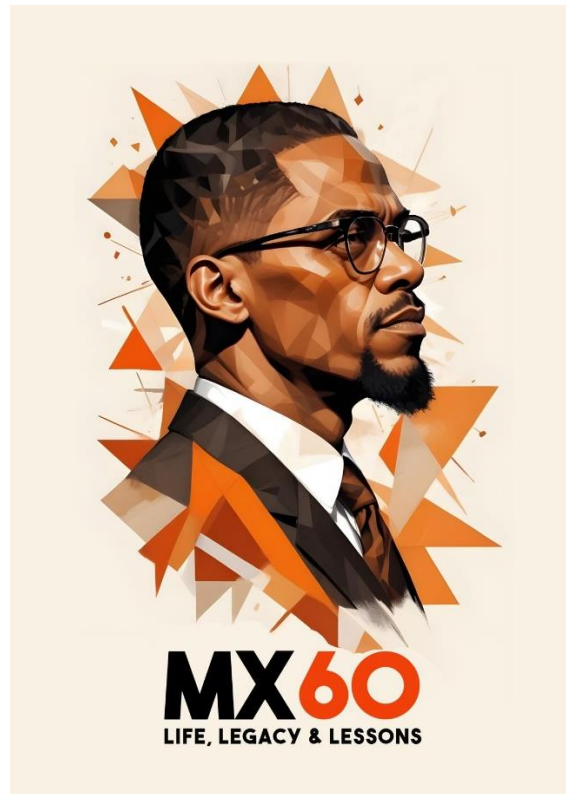
1964: Making History – reflections on arts, heritage and the archive

Stephen Page (filmmaker)

Screening of *Malcolm X: A Day in Smethwick* (2005) with Q&A

Dr Martin Glynn (Birmingham City University)

Noir Birmingham



This study day forms part of the MX60: Life, Legacy, Lessons season of events to mark Malcolm X's visit to the West Midlands. For more information see <https://www.mx60.uk/>.

Event information is correct at the time of publishing. Line-up may change prior to the event.



Presenters

Jagwant Johal is a co-founder of the Birmingham Race Impact Group. He has led the Birmingham 'All Different All Equal Partnership', set up the Birmingham Race Action Partnership (now BRAP) and the Black History Foundation, and part of the committees of the Race Relations Unit at Birmingham City Council, SIA National Black Voluntary Sector, Community Development Foundation and National Council of Voluntary Organisations.

Dawn Carr is the Operations Director of Legacy West Midlands, and co-founder and lead historian of Black Heritage Walks Network, developing walking tours, educational workshops and school programmes. She received the Society of Architectural Historians' inaugural scholarship in 2021 to research the preservation of the Caribbean "Front Room."

Garry Stewart has been instrumental in commemorating Malcolm X's historic visit to the West Midlands. In partnership with Nubian Jak, Garry helped install a blue plaque in 2015 to honour this significant moment in British history, marking Malcolm X's impact on the local civil rights movement. As the founder of Recognize Black Heritage & Culture CIC, Garry continues to bring attention to pivotal Black historical events and figures. His work as a consultant on various heritage projects, including his involvement with the Black Country Living Museum and media appearances on ITV and BBC Radio 4, further amplifies his role in preserving and promoting the rich legacy of Black history in the UK.

Dr Marc Collinson is Lecturer in Political History at Bangor University. He is currently completing a monograph exploring the political and urban history of Smethwick, seeking to better understand the 1964 election result.

Dr Savita Vij is an educator, researcher and decolonised curriculum designer. She worked on the workshops exploring the histories of the Indian Workers Association (IWA) and the Smethwick elections of 1964. Over the last 20 years, she has been a journalist and researcher in docu-dramas, policy and wellness. She has previously set up new media platforms, including CultivAsian and History Trunkies.

Jagdish Patel is a multidisciplinary artist and writer. He is a PhD candidate at Coventry University's Centre for Memory, Arts and Community, where he has researched the intersections between social practice art and anti-racism. His work



centres on visual art, archives, and performance, with an interest in analysing their role in relation to care, anti-racist practices, political science, and Black studies.

Stephen Page is community artist, film maker, actor and musician originally from Darlaston. His 2005 documentary *Malcolm X: A Day in Smethwick*, featuring previously lost footage, was shortlisted at the Black International Film Festival.

Dr Martin Glynn is senior lecturer in criminology at Birmingham City University. He is a Winston Churchill Fellow, a member of the Crime Writers Association (UK), criminologist, dramatist, screenwriter, children's author, data storyteller and TedX speaker with over 40 years' experience of working in criminal justice, public health, and educational settings.