

Media History Research  
Center Presents:

# Book Launch and Talk

by Jeremy Stolow

April 10. 5:30 - 7:00

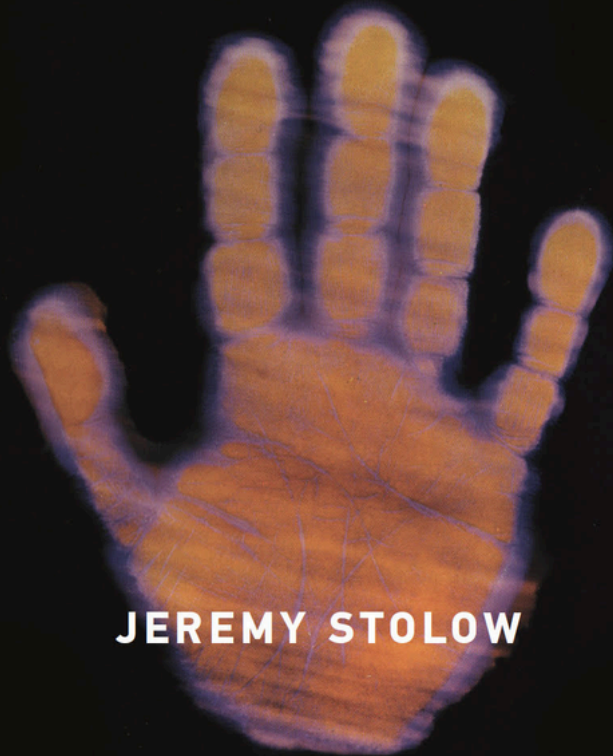
EV 11.705

1515 Rue St. Catherine

Reception to follow

## PICTURING AURA

A VISUAL BIOGRAPHY



Picturing Aura (MIT Press, 2025) offers a historical, anthropological, and philosophical study of modern efforts to visualize that hidden radiant force encompassing the living body known as our aura. This book chronicles the rise and global spread of modern instruments and techniques of picturing aura, from the late nineteenth century to the present day, exploring how its images are put to work in the diverse realms of psychical research, esotericism, art photography, popular culture, and the New Age alternative medical and spiritual marketplace. These sometimes complementary, sometimes conflicting histories – shaped by exchanges among professionals and amateurs, scientists and occultists, countercultural artists and entrepreneurs, metropolitans and hinterland figures – show how the aura operates as a boundary object: something ontologically plural and somehow serviceable to the varying tasks of making art, healing bodies, and mapping a hidden cosmos. My presentation will introduce a few of the book’s remarkable protagonists, technologies, and image migrations, while also reflecting on the very enterprise of picturing aura and the challenges it poses to settled assumptions about religion, science, and art.

Jeremy Stolow is Professor of Communication Studies at Concordia University, Montréal.

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