



THE FACES OF PLACES

New Museum Kids Menu provides families with activities to learn about contemporary art and ideas at home.

Jordan Casteel's 2017 series "Nights of Harlem" inspires this activity, which focuses on remembering and acknowledging places, people, and labors of care that make up our communities. How might we continue to feel connected to people and places in our community during a time of distance?

You can see more images of Jordan Casteel's work and hear her speak about the New Museum exhibition "Within Reach" [on our website](#).

KEY WORDS

- **Facade** - the face of a building: the building's exterior or outside, usually the side with the front door
- **Streetscape** - the visual elements and appearance of a street; a work of art depicting a view of a street
- **Contrast** - a focus on difference, which can be shown in elements like light and dark, large and small, near or far

START WITH ART: JORDAN CASTEEL



Amina (2017) displays artist Jordan Casteel's interest in small businesses as places where personal rituals are performed outside the home.

“I realized I felt seen and heard and comfortable in Harlem in a way I hadn’t felt anywhere in New York yet. *Amina* is an echoing of all the spaces and places that I have walked by and thought about, or seen community being built and wanting to share that with others.”

—Jordan Casteel ([listen to more here](#))

- What do you see and read on the signs on this facade? Why do you think the business is named Amina?
- Where do you see contrast in this image? How has Casteel used different colors, light and shadow, and textures on different surfaces?
- Notice the phrase “makes a difference” in the painting. Who might this refer to, and why?

LOOK AROUND

- What are some businesses or other places in your neighborhood where people work?
- Is there a place you feel makes a difference in your neighborhood? How do you or people in your family feel when they go to that place, or pass by, as part of your routine?
- Take a walk (in person, or online using a street view map) and a look at facades: the faces of the buildings from the sidewalk. How do businesses affect your experience of the streetscape? Does it change if it is night or day?

MAKE ART

Let's create a streetscape focusing on a storefront that makes a difference to your feeling of community.

Materials

- Pencil (a no. 2 pencil works well; if you have colored pencils, those can be used too)
- Paper

Making

1. Take notes about a facade in your neighborhood that makes a difference to you. What does it look like? What do you notice? If today is an indoor day, search for images or look up places on an online street view map to help remember details.
2. On another sheet of paper, use a pencil to draw your streetscape, focusing on this special place. Consider what time of day you want to display. Will this streetscape, like Casteel's, be at night with lights glowing, or will it be during the day with light from the sun?
3. Practice using different pressure on the pencil—strong pressure for darker areas, less pressure for areas with more light—to create contrast. Other ways to create contrast includes building up and layering more lines close together to create darker areas, and keeping lines far apart to represent lighter areas. Leave whole shapes without marks to indicate the brightest sources of light.
4. Include details you think are important: the name of the business, signage, objects in the windows, or details outside that identify this place and offer clues about how the people who work there make a difference.
5. Optional Care Package: write a letter or a simple message with your picture that communicates why this place and the people who work there are important to you and your community. Mail it, send a digital image, or post your image and message near the business to share with the people in the business what they mean to you. If you want to share with us too, tag your image with @newmuseum on social media!

REFLECTION

1. Why did you pick this facade? Do you remember something special about the people, or someone particular who works there?
2. Does your picture capture what feels familiar about the streetscape?

3. How did it feel to express the ways this place and the people there make a difference to you and the community?

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NEW YORK NY
10002 USA
MUSEUM

IMAGE:

Jordan Casteel, *Amina*, 2017. Oil on canvas, 90 x 78 in (228.6 x 198.1 cm). Rennie Collection, Vancouver. Courtesy the artist and Casey Kaplan, New York

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New Museum
235 Bowery
New York, NY 10002

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