

**NEW  
MUSEUM**

**KIDS  
MENU**

---

## MAKING SPACE

Lubaina Himid's pair of paintings *Three Architects* (2019) and *Close Up – Ideas for Development* (2019) inspires this activity. You can see images of these and other works in the 2019 New Museum exhibition "Lubaina Himid: Work from Underneath" and hear her speak about this painting [on our website](#).

### KEY WORDS

- **Dptych:** two paintings that are meant to be viewed together; sometimes the separate panels show different, but related scenes
- **Architect:** a person who designs buildings
- **Maquette:** An architectural model, built to study aspects of a design or to communicate design ideas; maquettes can be made of blocks, paper, wood, cardboard, foamboard, and other materials

### START WITH ART: LUBAINA HIMID



This is a part of a series of paintings that depict women architects. A pioneer of the British Black Arts Movement of the 1980s and '90s, Himid has long championed marginalized histories. Her drawings, paintings, sculptures, and textile work critique the consequences of colonialism and question the invisibility of people of color in art and the media.

- Look at the larger painting *Three Architects*.
- Describe what's happening. How are the architects standing in relation to one another?
- What do you think they are communicating and how do you think they are working together?

**Architects** create models of buildings, sometimes called **maquettes**, to share ideas. Why do you think it might be important to create maquettes before building something full-size? Himid imagined that these women were working together to design houses where women would want to live. Whose input would you want to request if you were designing a place where people live?

- Describe the space. Is this a place where you would like to work? Why, or why not? What colors do you see inside and outside of this work space? Do they affect your sense of the mood? Is your impression that the space is an energetic, peaceful, quiet, focused, uncertain, environment, or many feelings at once?
- Does the space feel private or public?
- Look at the smaller painting Lubaina Himid, *Close Up – Ideas for Development*. Together the two pictures form a **dyptich**. The smaller painting imagines zooming in on the scene to take a closer look at a

maquette created by the architects.

### **Hear from the Artist:**

Hear Lubaina Himid speak about *Three Architects* and the relationships she sees between making textiles, buildings, art and imaging a better world, or read some of her thoughts transcribed below.

[Cue to 50:25-55:20]

<https://livestream.com/newmuseum/himid/videos/193176733>

“I have always been interested in what is the perfect building...What is the perfect house for a woman?... It’s house that has plenty of space and plenty of light, and plenty of outside space, but outside space where you can’t be observed. Plenty of green and plenty of water... Round is better, and the ground floor rooms are the public rooms and there’s a courtyard with a garden in the middle and the private room and the working rooms, the studio rooms are on the second level. You can be in the courtyard and in the garden, but you can’t be observed by anybody, but on the outside, on the upper level are windows looking out to the sea... what is like to be inside a building, or a room and how quickly can you move that building, that place of shelter.

“I have a long relationship with textiles, cloth, and [architecture] those two things combined are asking, can you make your way of trauma, can you collaboratively make things, and give yourself time to contemplate, to dream, to forget, to remember things you didn’t know you knew in that process of making something of nothing. I think you can.”

“No matter however desperate the place you are in, or have been in, or your family, or ancestors, or forebears have been in, you have to at least have a way to imagine something better. And so human beings must have always done that. How else would we have come from those dark places we put each other in. It’s not so much a utopia as a fair normality.”

### **MAKE ART**

Let’s make a maquette of places that express how we want to work, live, and feel within them.

#### **Materials**

- Tape
- Assorted household recycled materials: boxes, packing supplies, and cardboard tubes

#### **Making**

1. Brainstorm a list like the one that Lubaina Himid describes as the perfect home for women, thinking about what a room you would need for you and others to work together and imagine better worlds together. Are there

windows, plants, or colorful walls? Is there furniture you sit, stand, or gather around? Are there supplies or objects that inspire? If there are windows, what do you want to see outside of the window? Sketch models of different kinds of buildings you are dreaming up.

2. Review your list and begin to build the elements you brainstormed. First imagine the overall shape and select materials you will cut, bend, or attach to build it.
3. If you are using one box for your overall structure, draw and cut windows out windows with a helper. If you are building the large shape, cut draw and cut windows before raising your walls and attaching them together with tape. Another option, is to create small drawings that shape of your windows that depict the view outside, or inside, and glue them to the interior and exterior walls.
4. Attach colored or patterned paper to your walls with glue, or color the walls with crayons and markers. Choose colors that would help create the mood you wish to have in our creative environment.
5. Create flooring by drawing and coloring patterns, rugs, or a solid color of construction paper, cut to size.
6. Add interior walls and room dividers with cardboard and tape. Or by placing smaller containers with in a larger structure.
7. Find small recycled materials to use as the furniture you need for your space, or build them by folding, cutting, and taping card board
8. Create people working in the room from cardboard or clay. Think about and include what they might wear in this space.
9. Use buttons, pipe cleaners, toothpicks, popsicle sticks, cotton balls, for any other details that would add inspire your creativity in this space.

## **REFLECTION**

1. Does your maquette reflect what you think you and other people need to imagine new worlds?
2. What moods and feelings do the shapes and colors express?
3. Give a tour of your space to a friend or family member and talk about how you imagine working in this room and what you make in it. Could they imagine working in it with you? What would they wish to change, add, or subtract to feel comfortable? How might feedback change or inspire new design?

## **FURTHER READING**

A pioneer of the British Black Arts Movement of the 1980s and '90s, Himid (b.1954, Zanzibar, Tanzania) has long championed marginalized histories. Her drawings, paintings, sculptures, and textile works critique the consequences of colonialism and question the invisibility of people of color in art and the media. While larger historical narratives are often the driving force behind her images and installations, Himid's works beckon viewers by attending to the unmonumental details of daily life. Himid examines how language and architecture generate a sense of danger or safety, fragility or stability. As a

curator, she has organized important exhibitions of Black women artists, who are underrepresented in museums as artists and organizers of exhibitions.

In *Three Architects*, Himid is specifically imagining Black women, who are underrepresented in design fields. Here are some links to learn about people who are changing spaces in our world, those they work in and design.

- [\*\*Architect Magazine\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Essence\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Now What Architexx\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Dwell\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Curbed\*\*](#)

---

Did someone forward this email to you? If you would like to receive these art activities directly, sign up [\*\*here\*\*](#).

---



---

**NEW**  
235 BOWERY  
NEW YORK NY  
10002 USA  
**MUSEUM**

IMAGE:

"Lubaina Himid: Work from Underneath," 2019. Exhibition view: New Museum, New York. Photo: Dario Lasagni

Our mailing address is:

New Museum  
235 Bowery  
New York, NY 10002

**Add us to your address book**

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [\*\*update your preferences\*\*](#)

---

This email was sent to <<Email Address>>  
[why did I get this?](#) [unsubscribe from this list](#) [update subscription preferences](#)  
New Museum · 235 Bowery · New York, NY 10002 · USA