

NEW
235 BOWERY
NEW YORK NY
10002 USA
MUSEUM

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PRESS CONTACTS
Paul Jackson, Communications Director
Nora Landes, Press Associate
press@newmuseum.org
212.219.1222 x209
Andrea Schwan, Andrea Schwan Inc.
917.371.5023
info@andreaschwan.com

NEW MUSEUM TO PRESENT THE FIRST SOLO EXHIBITION IN A US MUSEUM BY TURNER PRIZE–WINNING BRITISH ARTIST LUBAINA HIMID



Lubaina Himid, *Le Rodeur: The Exchange*, 2016. Acrylic on canvas, 72 x 96 1/8 in (183 x 244 cm). Courtesy the artist and Hollybush Gardens. Photo: Andy Keate

New York, NY...The New Museum is pleased to present an exhibition of works by Turner Prize–winning British artist Lubaina Himid (b. 1954, Zanzibar), on view in the Museum's Fourth Floor Gallery from June 26 to October 6, 2019. "**Lubaina Himid: Work from Underneath**," marks the artist's first solo museum exhibition in the United States and debuts an entirely new body of work.

A pioneer of the British Black Arts Movement of the 1980s and '90s, Himid has long championed marginalized histories. Throughout her over thirty-year career, Himid's works in drawing, painting, sculpture, and textile have critiqued the consequences of colonialism and questioned the invisibility of people of color in art as well as the media. While larger historical narratives are often the driving force behind her images and installations, Himid's works beckon the viewer through their attention to the unmonumental details of daily life. Her paintings are often bright, graphic, and rich in color and symbolic referents, and draw from history painting as well as eighteenth-century British satirical cartoons

In many works, the presence of language and poetry—sometimes borrowed from writers such as Audre Lorde, Essex Hemphill, or James Baldwin—punctuate the silence of her images with commands, instructions, and utterances that are both stark and tender. While Himid’s practice is grounded in painting, she has also referred to herself as “a political strategist who uses a visual language to encourage conversation, argument, and change.”

“Lubaina Himid: Work from Underneath” will debut an entirely new body of work in sculpture, painting, and sound. The exhibition’s title borrows from the dictums of health and safety manuals but doubles as a subversive proclamation, and the works on view will examine how language and architecture inform a sense of danger and safety, fragility and instability.

The show’s centerpiece, *Old Boat / New Money* (2019), is composed of thirty-two painted wooden planks, each fifteen feet in length, which will lean against the gallery’s longest wall at incremental angles. This sculptural installation evokes a phantom shipyard or a ship caught mysteriously in the building’s architecture. Adorned with cowry shells, once a dominant currency in the transatlantic slave trade, the work speaks to the often invisible legacies of colonial exploitation that can remain inscribed in architecture or other physical surroundings. In the gallery, a new sound work by Magda Stawarska-Beavan, created in collaboration with Himid, will be audible, but at a volume so faint that it registers as a kind of mirage of maritime sounds. On two large canvases created for the exhibition, Himid juxtaposes clothing and architecture in scenes depicting male and female figures—women working industriously to design places of refuge and men gathered closely as they fashion garments to shelter the body.

Himid will also debut nine new paintings on metal that will appear as if embedded in the wall. Centering on tools and hardware such as pulleys, chisels, ladders, or hinges, these works draw from the style of her “kanga paintings,” which are inspired by the designs of East African textiles but play on the poetics of health and safety manuals, offering instructions for survival. In the gallery’s rear stairwell and window bay, another audio composition will feature Himid’s spoken ruminations amid a soundscape of tools, and along with the other works on view, will invite visitors to reflect on creative action as a means of escape.

A fully illustrated catalogue published by the New Museum accompanies the exhibition. The catalogue includes an interview with Lubaina Himid, conducted by Natalie Bell, and newly commissioned essays on the artist’s work by Jessica Bell Brown and Fred Moten.

“Lubaina Himid: Work from Underneath” is curated by Natalie Bell, Associate Curator.

PUBLIC PROGRAM

Lubaina Himid in Conversation

Saturday June 29, 4:30 PM

New Museum

ALSO ON VIEW: SUMMER 2019

Mika Rottenberg: Easypieces

June 26–September 15, 2019
Second Floor

Marta Minujín: Menesunda Reloaded

June 26–September 29, 2019
Third Floor

Diedrick Brackens: darling divined

June 4–September 8, 2019
Lobby Gallery

Melanie Crean, Shaun Leonardo, and Sable Elyse Smith: Mirror/Echo/Tilt

June 18–October 6, 2019
Fifth Floor

Sydney Shen: Onion Master

April 30–September 1, 2019
Storefront Window

ABOUT NEW MUSEUM

The New Museum is the only museum in New York City exclusively devoted to contemporary art. Founded in 1977, the New Museum is a center for exhibitions, information, and documentation about living artists from around the world. From its beginnings as a one-room office on Hudson Street to the inauguration of its first freestanding building on the Bowery designed by SANAA in 2007, the New Museum continues to be a place of experimentation and a hub of new art and new ideas.

SUPPORT FOR “LUBAINA HIMID: WORK FROM UNDERNEATH”

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