

Today's challenge from Sam Hale

Friendship and Strength



During the pandemic we have all found ways to sustain ourselves through very demanding times. Our collective creative endeavour and the friendships forged through Still Lively have sustained and inspired me. I would like us to explore the idea of strength and friendship this week.

As a starting point you might like to look at the work of Lubaina Himid, one of the artists featured in *Stellar: Stars of our Contemporary Collection*, on show at Wolverhampton Art Gallery until 17th January 2021. The exhibition presents an overview of recent, current and ongoing developments in British Art, through the lens of Wolverhampton Art Gallery's collection.

The Tate website says that Himid "wants to tell us beautiful stories about friendship and strength."

Lubaina Himid CBE (b. 1954) is a British artist and curator. She is a professor of contemporary art at the University of Central Lancashire. Her art focuses on themes of cultural history and reclaiming identities.

Himid was one of the first artists involved in the UK's Black Art movement in the 1980s and continues to create activist art which is shown in galleries in Britain, as well as worldwide. Himid was appointed MBE in June 2010 for "services to Black Women's Art". She won the Turner Prize in 2017 and was made a CBE in the 2018 Queen's Birthday Honours, "for services to art."

Born in Zanzibar, Himid moved to the UK with her mother when she was only four months old. Her Mother was a textile designer. I'm particularly interested in what she says about looking:

"I was living with a woman who was constantly looking at the colour of things, at other people's clothes. And we were constantly in shops, and we weren't at shops buying things. We were in shops looking."

Looking at her work you might want to ask yourself:

- What do the different elements in the works symbolise?
- Is there a theme in the works? What stories are they telling?
- Why has she chosen these particular materials or techniques?

I'd now like you to make a piece of work; it can be a drawing, painting, collage or piece of writing using any media of your choice. Your work can be in response to Lubaina Himid's art or you can respond to the themes of friendship and strength directly.

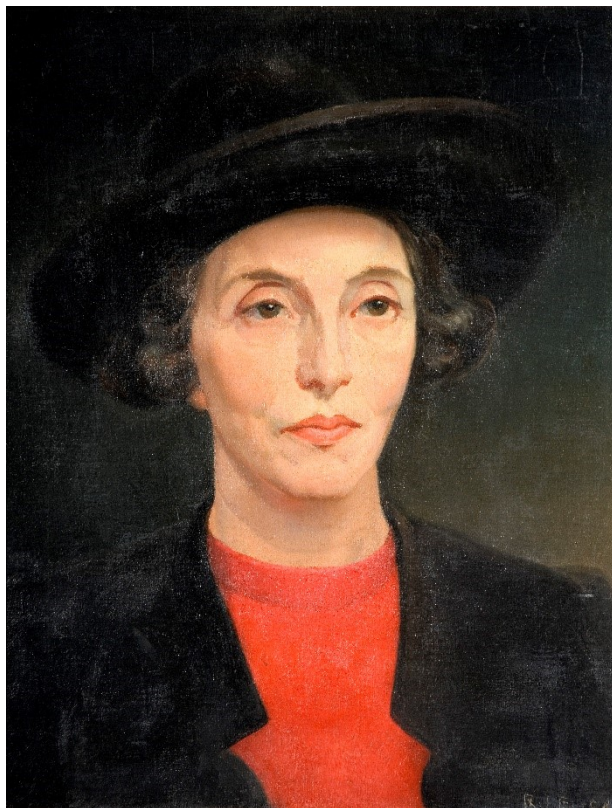
Click on these links to find out more about Lubaina Himid:

<https://lubainahimid.uk/>

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/lubaina-himid-2356>

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/lubaina-himid-2356/yes-but-why-lubaina-himid>

This portrait, by Robert Jackson Emerson, depicts his friend and colleague Mary Gibson. Like Emerson, she was a teacher at the Wolverhampton School of Art and a successful artist. Emerson both respected and admired her. He captures her confidence and powerful presence, evoking her important position in the region's artistic community.



Portrait of Mary Gibson

Robert Jackson Emerson (1878 – 1944)

Oil on canvas

c. 1910 – 40

Wolverhampton Arts and Museums

Please click on this link for more details about Still Lively:

<https://www.creativehealthcic.co.uk/older-people/>