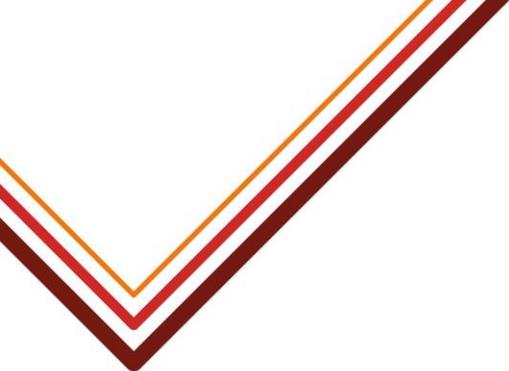




# Activism

Poppy Bienias

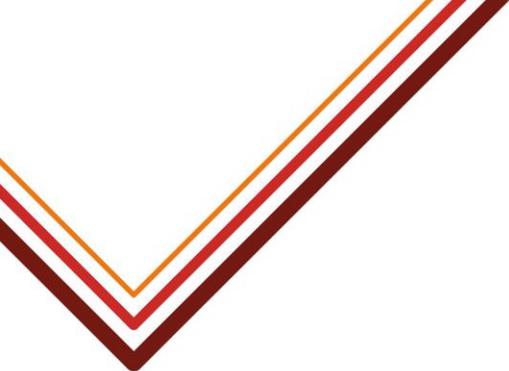


# Lesson 4: Activism Through Art

## Learning Intentions

*At the end of this lesson you will be able to...*

- Discover ways in which art can become activist statements
- Consider creative ways in which we can make activist statements



# Key Vocabulary

Societal change

emotion

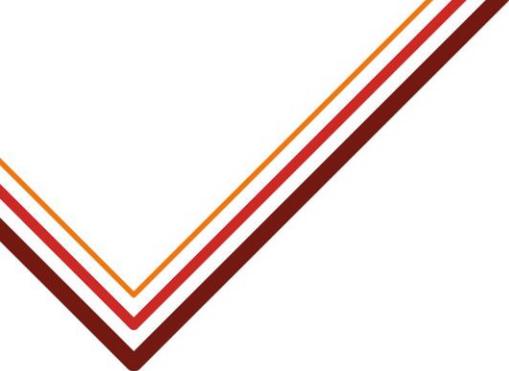
Activist

Activism

Artistic activism

representation

symbol



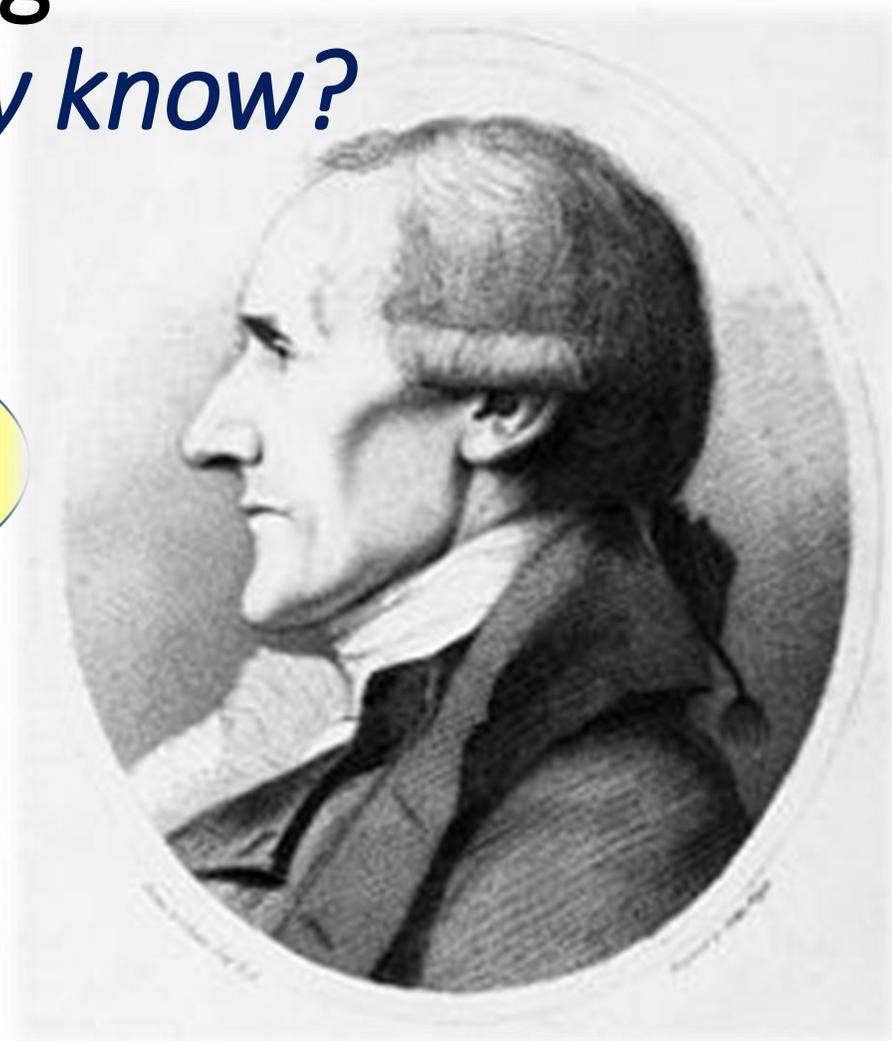
# Prior Learning

*What do we already know?*

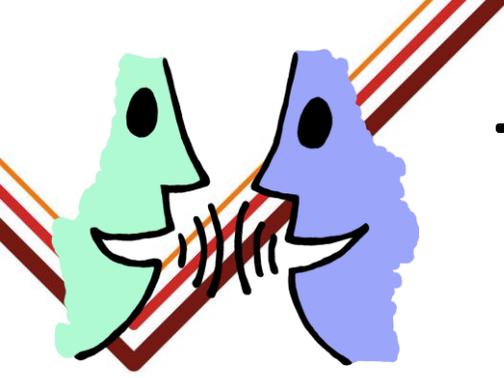
Activism



Working for every child



 **Hackney**



# Talk to your Partner: Do you think art can be a form of Activism?

Artistic Activism is a practice combining the **creative power of the arts to move us emotionally** with the strategic planning of activism **necessary to bring about social change.**



Art has the power to make us feel a specific way. This can prompt us to want to make societal changes

# Art Activism



Lubaina  
Hibid

Today we are going to look at the artwork of **two female artists**. We are going to be asking ourselves:

**Why** the artist chose to produce specific pieces of art

**To what extent** their art work can be considered **activism**



Sonia  
Boyce

# Art Activism – Lubaina Hibid



Lubaina Hibid is a **British artist**. She was born in **Zanzibar** in 1954 but moved to the UK with her mother when she was only four months old. Her mother was a **textile designer**. Growing up with a mother who was an artist taught her a lot.

Himid was part of **the Black Arts Movement in the 1980s**. This movement included different Black British artists trying to create **opportunities and encourage other black artists** to show their work. Lots of Lubaina Hibid's artworks are about the strength of Black people throughout history and things they have done for Western culture.

## Lubaina Himid, *Ankledeep*, 1991

*Ankledeep* shows two Black women standing behind a black shape. The black shape covers most of the women's bodies. Almost like a sheet.

There are pieces of shredded paper dropping from one of the women's hands.

What do you think the story in this painting is about?

Why do you think one woman has shredded some paper?

Do you think this image is one which represents generating change?



## Lubaina Himid, *The Carrot Piece*, 1985

The artwork called *The Carrot Piece* tells another interesting story about Black history. It shows a white man trying to tempt a Black woman with a carrot. The Black woman is not falling for his trick and is walking away. Her hands are full with everything she needs.

What do you think the story in this painting is about?

What does this painting teach you?

How does this painting make you feel?

**Lubaina Himid, Naming  
the Money, 2004**

‘Naming the Money’ is an installation made up of 100 life-size painted cut-out figures. They represent slaves, servants, immigrants and asylum seekers. Each cut-out has a real name and each one is able to say who they are, where they came from and what their new job is.

Do you think this installation is art activism? Why/why not?

Do you like this installation? What is striking about it?



Why do you think Lubaina Himid made this piece of art?

# Art Activism – Sonia Boyce



Sonia Boyce was born in London in 1962 to parents from the **Caribbean countries of Barbados and Guyana.**

She received her art school training at Stourbridge, graduating in 1983, then returning to London, where she has continued to live and work since that time.

Boyce's artwork addresses issues of race and gender in the media and in day-to-day life. She expressed these themes through **large pastel drawings and photographic collages.**

## Sonia Boyce, Lay Back, Keep Quiet and Think of What Made Britain So Great, 1986



In this artwork, the background shows wallpaper used to commemorate the 50th year of Queen Victoria's reign, but it is interweaved with black roses and thorns. In each of the first three panels sits a large Christian cross, inside of which are scenes from Australia, South Africa, and India. In the final panel is a self-portrait of Sonia Boyce looking at us.

In one corner is the word "Changing". Why do you think Sonia Boyce has included this word?

What message do you think Sonia Boyce is trying to share in this piece of work?

What is the expression on Sonia Boyce's face in the artwork? Why do you think she has depicted herself this way?



## Sonia Boyce, Big Women's Talk, 1980

In this colourful, vibrant piece, a young girl can be seen leaning on her mother's knee. She seems to be thinking deeply about something. The woman is wearing a dress made up of different patterns. The background to the piece is also made up of a textured fabric.

What do you think is the story this artwork is trying to portray?

Why do you think the girl is looking so thoughtful? What could this mean?

Do you think this art could be viewed as activism? Why? Why not?

***Sonia Boyce, I'm with Her Too, 2019***

I'm With Her Too references a found placard from the New York Women's march in response to the results of the 2016 United States presidential election. The edition includes the written statement 'I'm with her' as a call for solidarity, celebrating the positive energy generated in movements of social and collective action.

Why do you think Sonia Boyce made this piece of artwork?

Do you think this artwork has the power to create change?

To what extent could this piece of work be considered activism? Why?



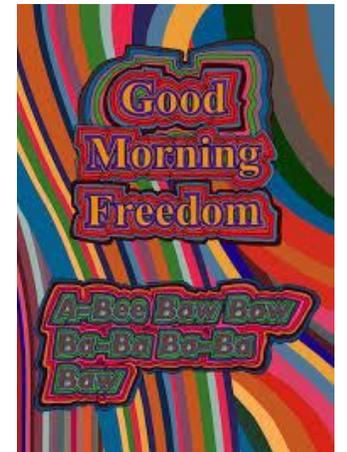
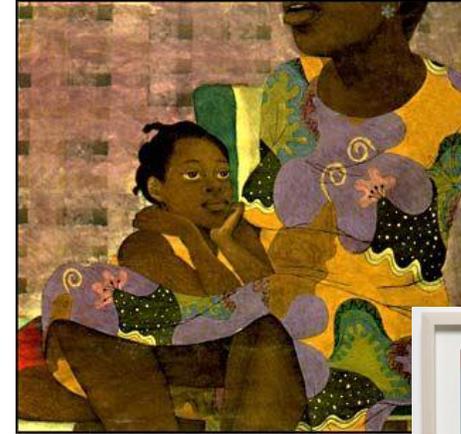
# Task

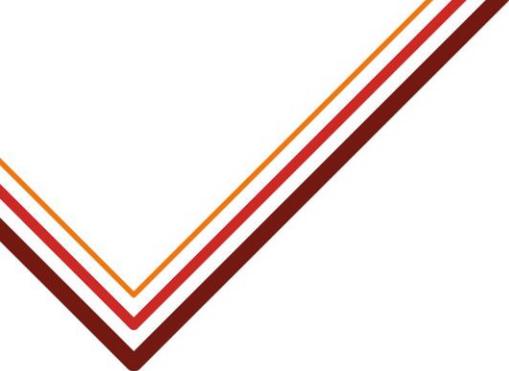
Let's think back to the changes that you would like to see in your local community.

**We are going to think of ways we can be creative activists. We will create an art gallery in the classroom of our art activism.**

**We need to consider the following questions when planning our activism art.**

- 1. How will we get our message across to the public?*
- 2. How we make members of the public feel a certain way in order to join our movement?*
- 3. How will we present our ideas? (Magazine collage, portraits, photography, sketching, digital tools?)*





# Further Research

Lubaina Himid

<https://lubainahimid.uk/2010s/>

<https://www.ft.com/content/55e4d96e-d9e2-11e7-9504-59efdb70e12f>

<https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2017/sep/24/lubaina-himid-turner-prize-2017-interview>

Soniya Boyce

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/sonia-boyce-obe-794>

<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/name/sonia-boyce-ra>