

Adelita Husni Bey

*Founder's room : third plenary session on the future of the institution (The Council, 2018)*



Dans le scénario proposé par Adelita Husni Bey à un groupe d'adolescents lors d'un workshop qui s'est tenu au Museum of Modern Art de New York en 2018, l'« institution » a perdu sa fonction première pour devenir un refuge ouvert à tous. Les étudiants, répartis en quatre groupes, se réunissent en un comité dont l'objectif est de poser les bases de la société future et des rôles de chacun. Ces quelques lignes traduites constituent l'introduction à leurs débats, qui ont été consignés par écrit et documentés par les photographies de l'artiste à travers la série *The Council*, dont est extraite l'œuvre exposée au CCC OD : *Founder's room : third plenary session on the future of the institution* (2018, impression sur dibond, 152 x 304 cm, courtesy of the artist and laveronica arte contemporanea).

(la retranscription des débats est disponible en intégralité ci-dessous, en anglais)

*In the scenario proposed by Adelita Husni Bey to a group of teenagers during a workshop held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 2018, the "institution" has lost its primary function, collecting and exhibiting works of art. The participants, divided into four groups, meet as part of a 'council' whose objective is to lay the foundations of a future society. These few lines constitute the introduction to their debates, which were recorded, transcribed, and documented by the photographs of the artist.*

*(the transcription of the debates is available below, in English).*

extrait / excerpt

« Membres du Conseil, bienvenue à notre première séance plénière. Après l'effondrement du marché causé par l'élévation du niveau de la mer et la vague de chaleur, nous avons ouvert ce bâtiment aux habitants de la ville. Comme vous le savez tous, les gens habitent, utilisent et visitent le bâtiment depuis des semaines. Nous avons deux motions à adopter aujourd'hui : la première concerne le nom de notre institution, maintenant que le Musée d'art moderne a cessé d'exister, nous devons trouver un nouveau nom pour cet endroit. J'invite chacun d'entre vous à proposer un

nom pour ce nouvel espace, sur papier. Je lirai ensuite les suggestions, nous en débattons et nous voterons un nouveau nom pour l'institution. »

*“Council Members, welcome to our first plenary session. After the market crash caused by sea level rise and heat wave we have opened this building to the city. As you all know, people have been inhabiting, using and visiting the building for weeks now. We have two motions to pass today: the first motion regards to the name of our institution now that the Museum of Modern Art has ceased to be, we must find a new name for this place. I invite you all to proceed individually to suggest a name for this new space, on paper. I will then read the suggestions, we will debate the suggestions and proceed to vote on a new name for the institution.”*

### transcription intégrale / full transcript

1

Adelita Husni-Bey, The Council Introduction (The Council, 2018)  
Courtesy the artist and Laveronica arte contemporanea, Modica, Italy  
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Bianca: Council Members, welcome to our first plenary session. After the market crash caused by sea level rise and heat wave we have opened this building to the city. As you all know, people have been inhabiting, using and visiting the building for weeks now. We have two motions to pass today: the first motion regards to the name of our institution now that the Museum of Modern Art has ceased to be, we must find a new name for this place. I invite you all to proceed individually to suggest a name for this new space, on paper. I will then read the suggestions, we will debate the suggestions and proceed to vote on a new name for the institution.

I remind you all that the institution now hosts a holistic healing center called the Glass Dome, it is also the home of a self-sustaining commune, it hosts a library, archives and weed growing operation. Art is being produced in the building using people who have come in looking for shelter. Those operations are currently being funded partially through the luxury apartments on the top floors and the profits made by the Glass Dome. Operations are also happening in the basement although these are not entirely clear to the whole Council. The institution is now currently run by an AI called “Möma” [Mooma].

You have five minutes to propose your motions individually, we will proceed to debate your motions at 6:25pm...Do I have everybody's? Anybody's missing? Alright, so I that, how this is going to work is that I'll just read some of them and then we'll discuss freely what your favorite one's are, I guess, and then we can actually start voting. Alright, so here we go...The Project (number one). Pee Wee's Playhouse. Happiness and Home. The Place to Stay. Center for Home. The Home Project. The Commune/People's Commune. Möm, Möma, I don't know the accent, got that double dot on the “o”. Space. The Project. The Institution. Namaste. Four You, um, four, the number 4 and U. Bio-refuge or Biosphere. What do you guys think?

Amirah: I don't like "The Project."

Billy: I don't either.

Amirah: It sounds very experimental and why "my project?"

Anatola: My favorite was, I mean out of a few, but I enjoyed "The Center...The Center of Home" what is it?

Bianca: The Center for Home.

Anatola: The Center for Home because it makes it seem like... "Center" makes it seem like real or like just a good place that knows what it's doing and "Home" in the place of apocalyptic times is nice. And I also liked "The Place to Stay", just like those titles that brought about a sense of welcoming, like "come here."

Emily: What if it's just home?

Carol: I like home, I like "The Home Project." I like that because it's proposing a new way of living.

Bianca: Five, six, seven...Guys it looks like "Home" won.

Amirah: I object.

Bianca: Yeah, Yeah, but I'm saying, like, "Home" won but you guys were like, hesitant, so...

Amriah: I think "Home" sounds very bland.

Bianca: I think you guys need to start making more suggestions.

Amirah: How is it a home if people are being killed?

Yared: Because you can stay here.

Amirah: Okay but...a home is supposed to be like where you love and...

Yared: Well I stay home, but people are being killed outside, that doesn't mean it's not my home anymore.

Billy: Like, home has, like, a complex.

Bianca: We really make the rules here, so we can do whatever we all want.

Amirah: Alright I vote for "Home."

Eric: Yeah Home for the building I think as a whole. It's very welcoming; it's straight to the point.

2

Adelita Husni-Bey, Structure of the Institution (The Council, 2018)  
Courtesy the artist and Laveronica arte contemporanea, Modica, Italy  
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Bianca: Dome on top wind turbines on the Sculpture Garden, that seems to be the decision.

Carol: Yes, I concur.

Jocelyn: We still haven't done the fifth floor, right?

Bianca: Yeah, fifth and sixth are still abandoned.

Eric: Which is the Club?

Billy: Six is the Club.

Amirah: So, I just want to backtrack...So the whole purpose of the Dome was not only to function as something that is architecturally beautiful but something that's educational and has a VR system attached to it

Eric: I think that should be it's own separate floor.

Anatola: So I have an idea for the Glass Dome...So you know how the event happened, so in addition to whatever else we have on the Dome, on the Glass Dome floor we have, like, computer systems, like you can Google, just like a very... like an internet lab and you can look up anything online...

Yared: Yeah but isn't that the Research Center's purpose?

Anatola: Like WiFi might be hard to come by.

Yared: Isn't that the purpose of the Research Center?

Billy: In the Commune we had second and third as a kind of alternative school. So if it's a library we can use the third as a school.

Carol: So the third could be a school...Like the Learning Center.

Bianca: So third floor Learning Center? Is everyone on that?

Group: Yeah, yes.

Bianca: Learning Center for whom?

Group: For all, for all. Those who want to learn.

Ava: There's like highly intelligent computers and stuff, so I feel like anyone can learn.

Carol: And I feel like this could also... I think originally in our Commune plans we also include a studio space.

Maya: Yeah we had that included as well.

Emily: We had that in T1 and T2 to include a performance space but, like, what if we included that...

Maya: We could use the gallery space as studio space.

Winnie: The only place we have wildlife is down in the basement, so we need to put more plants...

Ava: So it could be like a wildlife art space.

Carol: The Sculpture Garden could also be wind turbines and plants.

Winnie: I mean because it's not natural to be around too many people so there should be less people space and more wild space.

Amirah: So this is the finalizations?

Eric: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Carol: Yes, so first T1 and T2...T1 is the hydroponic garden and T2 is the project lab and they are restricted only for workers and people who need to know what going on. The first floor is a check in slash wellness center, and ....Where's Möma housed?

Eric: I still think the Education Center.

Jocelyn: The building over... isn't it the basement of the other building?

Bianca: The basement of the Education Building.

Carol: Okay, so the second floor is the Learning Center, the third floor is the Library and Research Facility, the fourth floor is the Holistic Healing space, the fifth is the studio slash art space, and then the terrace is for plants, and the sixth floor is for food slash Club, and the Dome is above that, am I correct or is the seventh floor a separate floor?

Bianca: It's separate floor.

Eric: It's a separate floor.

Carol: Okay so the seventh floors is a separate floor and that's where the Glass Dome is. Also there are wind turbines in the Sculpture Garden.

Eric: Are we including the wildlife or not?

Bianca: Umm, once we tear down that wall, right?

Emily: We didn't say anything about the technological stuff but I feel like that's like on the seventh floor.

Amirah: What type of wildlife?

Anatola: Also the Glass Dome?

Emily: Yeah what kind of wildlife are we talking about?

Bianca: I guess we can discuss that during another plenary session. I think we're done for this one.

3

Adelita Husni-Bey, *Accessibility and labor* (The Council, 2018)  
Courtesy the artist and Laveronica arte contemporanea, Modica, Italy  
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Eric: Wait, Amirah...Think of it like a hotel. You can't just let people in, even if it was free, you can't just let people in because you need to keep track of people who are coming in. You can't have too many people inside the building, that's a fire hazard. First of all, then...Yeah, so we have a lot of stuff, the whole building is worth a lot, it's pretty much like, in this like, apocalyptic area, the building is all we have so if we lose control of it in any way, too many people, too many bad people, too many good people...

Jocelyn: I don't think we should keep track of whether they're good or bad people, I think just knowing what they're for, because if people are going for the Commune, it would make sense to have them check in...

Maya: Or if they're here for the Public Garden...

Yared: Okay so there are a lot of people living in New York, there are a lot of people staying in New York...There are millions of people. Let's say about two thirds of them get killed off by whatever the hell happens here, that's a lot of people that are going to be outside your door for whatever we have here, whether it's food or anything here, you want to make sure that the people we want in are in and the people we don't want in are out.

Ava: No, but I don't think...

Jocelyn: No, I don't agree with that.

Ava: We don't necessarily know people that we don't want in are gonna come. I think everyone should be welcome, you just have to sign in. No matter who you are, you could be an expert or... and you just have to sign in....You could be an ax murderer...

Amirah: But why do you have to get and ID code? Why do you have to get an ID number?

Yared: Because you don't know when someone's gonna come back.

Ava: I think you could just put your name, you could say your name.

Amirah: I feel like ID number, ID code is a little...

Carol: Seeing it as an almost like a refugee center. Like for people who have been affected by the event, so it's not like the ideal situation to be outside because there's nothing, there's not much outside, so you ideally you wanna be in like a safe shelter...that how I'm viewing this.

Amirah: But the Garden isn't... like it's off MoMA's property, it doesn't have that big wall, um, and...

Eric: We could change that.

Amirah: We could. Like we could put security outside. It's not impossible; I don't think that the Glass Dome should be outside. I think people need, um, an environment where they can go outside and just breathe. It's too much artificial, like, stuff going on, and...

Billy: I feel like if you put the Dome, if you don't have protection, the Garden won't exist because of what happened and like, we need some sort of protection for the Garden to function.

Anatola: I think that, the sun, like the sun still exists and wind and rain and stuff.

Yared: Yeah, I assume this all going to be a lot a worse so...

Eric: But the Dome is retractable. So we can get sun.

Anatola: We don't wanna retract the Dome every time we need to get sun...

Yared: We could have retractable days...

Amirah: Yeah, we're totally down for retractable days, so like you could look at the stars at night and stuff and actually remember what the outside world looks like. But to make it kinda like this artificial way of living ...that's not sustainable in my opinion, because after, after everybody gets over the event you want them to live this new type of lifestyle, I don't...I don't.



Yared: I mean how long do you expect people to be able to live here? That's the real question...

Amirah: It's not about how long people are expected to live here, it's about sustainability regardless. Because even if it's a year, ten years, twenty-five years, a century, you don't want things to be so disconnected from the actual ways of living. If that's the case, then what's the point of humanity?

Bianca: Does that mean that the housing is separate per group, or per, like, what you're coming for?

Ava: I think there should just be housing for everyone.

Emily: But then if people come in, they're joining us are they gonna be, are they automatically part of the Commune? Like will that be the governing system?

Bianca: That's what I was trying to get at...

Jocelyn: I don't think so because the public garden wanted to be a space where people could just come in, right? I think that part could still be part of the building, like people can still just enjoy the space.

Carol: Okay, if you work in the Garden you can live in the Communes.

Billy: But it's the same in exchange for teaching yoga or running, help running the library...

Carol: Yeah, if you teach

Jocelyn: Oh, so like the workers live there.

Emily: You can trade your labor for...

Carol: For housing...

Emily: For a stay... A lot of what we're talking about in the Glass Dome was like people who aren't doing well are gonna be here too, it's not like the healthy people are coming in. So it's like, hypothetically, let's say I want to join but like I don't have any skill I can contribute. Like I don't, I can't teach yoga, I can't farm, I can't do whatever, but I still want to like, be part of the education, be part of like, this...

Carol: If you're enrolled in a class....

Emily: I mean like how do I become part of like an accessible, like, environment?

Carol: What if you were enrolled in a class in the Learning Center, not even as a teacher but as a student?

Anatola: But then when it's over are you kicked out?

Jocelyn: Yeah, that's true.

Carol: I think as long as you stay, you keep learning, you're allowed to stay.

Anatola: If there's a membership fee...Is there a membership fee?

Group: No. I say no. No.

Anatola: Because then, it's like as long as you....

Jocelyn: No because I think the whole payment is that you're working.

4

Adelita Husni-Bey, *The Riot (The Council, 2018)*

Courtesy the artist and Laveronica arte contemporanea, Modica, Italy

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Anatola: So how will the institution respond to this riot? Let's have a short debate. Because some members on that floor are demanding better conditions, like there have been so many complaints about the things that are happening on floor two.

Ava: But it's an educational floor...

Anatola: They're really unsatisfied with the education we're providing. They have banded together to riot. What are we doing wrong?

Emily: We should just send them all to the basement.

Anatola: If we're providing for the people, and the people are disappointed, should we listen to the people or should we install, like, order?

Billy: I think we should meet with these people.

Emily: I agree.

Jocelyn: I think we should listen to the people or else we look like dictators.

Khachoe: I think we should bring back the microphone and the whisper box. I know I wasn't present when this was going on, but um...

Anatola: Why do you think...

Khachoe: But since it's in the atrium, there's a microphone and a whisper box, so to avoid future riots maybe we can have someone monitoring all the concerns that the public is bringing to the microphone.

Anatola: Or a suggestion box? Like suggestions...

Ava: If people are really that upset about conditions they're still gonna riot.

Khachoe: But have we given them a chance to suggest?

Emily: Yeah, we haven't given them the floor yet, I think.

Billy: Are we that out of touch with our community?

Emily: Yeah, that's a good question.

Amirah: Are we?

Carol: How involved are we with our community?

Emily: If there's a riot, I think we have to be a little out of touch, I guess.

Carol: A suggestion box is not going to fix a riot.

Anatola: Yeah what about fixing the second floor solution.

Ava: We could also kick them out.

Jocelyn: People will be afraid of talking to us if they see the way we handle problems is just kicking them out.

Ava: Well, if they're rioting...

Eric: Then the whole building would riot!

Jocelyn: But there has to be a reason...

Carol: Send them to the Lab.

Khachoe: We should hear them out.

Bianca: We should, Billy suggested a, oh I'm sorry, William suggested a town hall.

Carol: Give them what they want.

Eric: Yeah.

Anatola: What do think it is that people want?

Emily: Not to play devil's advocate, but to play devil's advocate, but if we give them what they want then every time something shitty happens it's like, okay, let's riot and then it becomes like...

Ava: They step all over us...

Jocelyn: I think allow communication so that this thing doesn't happen again.

Khachoe: That's the thing. Exactly. We have a town hall...and we have a town hall where people come and speak. Do we have people who are there monitoring and listening to what the concerns of the people are?

Jocelyn: I guess not. Maybe we should be more present.

Yared: Yeah. Right. We need a town meeting to make them know that riots aren't okay.

Anatola: What if it's saying something about us and our performance?

Khachoe: I like the idea that Anatola brought earlier about a party that says we appreciate what you're doing here, so a date for everyone...

Amirah: I think that we should should try to do the union idea per floor, but also I think the party idea can be great in the long run, but right now I, I don't think it's gonna solve much. So maybe like once a month have a...Instead of like a super professional, like, type of meeting, have, you know, like a lunch or a dinner discussion at a table and have certain rules, like these are the guidelines: you can express how you feel but we need to maintain the peace.

Anatola: Let's listen to every single idea we've had so far...and then we have to vote soon. So we're gonna read about it, we could digest and then vote.

Yared: Since we've talked about unions and all that, why don't we just hold an election? We've been talking, we've talked about unions, we've talked about representatives at every floor.

Anatola: Election.

Yared: Represent, select a representative.

Anatola: Like its own government...Like the United States. Like each floor is its own state?

Yared: Each floor is its own state...

Anatola: And then we're the whole united, we're like the country, national government.

Yared: And since that way they don't feel like they have a hierarchy, they can represent, they can elect their representative by themselves and can come to us with their problems.

Anatola: How would the second floor communicate with the Dome?

Khachoe: Then how does that...that doesn't work.

Amirah: No.

Anatola: It's one building...

Jocelyn: Why don't we...

Anatola: It's also a building...

Bianca: Where's the "Möma" in this?

Maya: Penelope suggests that the rioters visit the Lab. Maochi suggests that the microphone whisper box be brought to the rioters so we can understand why they are rioting. A suggestion box was then suggested. A town hall, but changed to be more open to hearing people's opinions. A representative for every floor was then, um, suggested. And a survey of other's experiences was suggested. A union for each floor, um, to minimize conflict. An evening or feast to show appreciation and then those two were both merged into union and a once a month feast. Um, and then the feast would have guidelines. And then, an election for the Council by each floor.

Anatola: Is there one that most people...wanna just, like, say what you're most interested in out of those?

Emily: I think the union and then...

Anatola: I like the union...town hall thing.

Khachoe: I think the union/town hall/party/microphone all could be together.

Anatola: I do too, I like that option.

Jocelyn: I strongly oppose having a party. I think it's really condescending for us to be, like, throwing a party.

Carol: It's so elitist.

Khachoe: It's not a party, it's not a party...

Ava: It is a party. Even if it's not a party.

Emily: Yeah, no, you're right.

Jocelyn: It's like, oh thank you so much for, like, listening to me while we're having this party.

Maya: Is it an adequate way to spend our funds?

Carol: It is not.

Eric: If I get invited to some event and it's like, oh come here and hang out, and then what's that going to do for me?

Anatola: Let's get back to um, representatives?

Amirah: Representatives or just people?

Anatola: Or surveys? Or parties?

Khachoe: But that destroys the idea of a town hall. A town hall is something where everyone can come.

Anatola: Yeah, go for it.

Emily: I feel like the workers vote should count more than everyone else's.

Eric: I feel like...

Khachoe: But see, like, that's the thing, the workers can come to the town hall and speak up.

Anatola: Would the worker like to share their thoughts?

Eric: I feel like if I go to the town hall, it would be just way too many suggestions.

Anatola: What about right now? You're at a sort of town hall, so like your opinion would be able to be heard.

Khachoe: What would you say that would make the working conditions better?

Emily: Damn, you killed us.

Eric: It's not about, okay, it is about the work conditions, but I'm saying like, as a...like, I think I need a representative because that way it'll collect not just one, but let's say maybe two or three, it'll get all of like, me and everyone else...

Carol: But okay, representatives will, like, it doesn't get everything, it's just generalizing all these ideas, so why not voice these opinions yourself? Why not get it directly to the source? Why do you need another medium?

Anatola: So town hall?

Carol: Why do you need another medium? Why can't you directly influence these changes?

Anatola: We're about to have a town hall, y'all.

Billy: I think the representative also experiences what the worker experiences and is able to prioritize as a group what they need in a certain month or whatever.

Khachoe: I think that, I think the workers can organize within themselves, so you're talking about a union in that sense...

Anatola: We have voted. It's, it's eight to four town hall to representative.

Yared: But a town hall has to...if you have a town hall how are you going to sort through everyone's needs? Thousands of people that are not able to speak in a town hall because you have a line of how many hundreds of people are up there...that's gonna cause a lot of discord.

Anatola: But they have the opportunity...But with none, there's no opportunity...that's why the riot happened.

Carol: Why do you have to go through another medium?

Anatola: Also, the call is to put an end to riot. That's it.

Maya: What if we made a town hall for every floor once a month and everybody throughout the building can visit each town hall so we can be in communication with each other?

Anatola: I like that.

Eric: So it's not way too crowded in to one.

Emily: Phoebe for the win.

Group: Meme. Meme.

Anatola: Yeah, that was a great end, thank you for uplifting us.