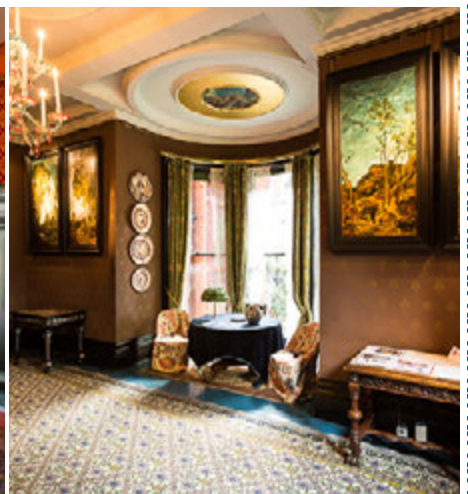


# Create & MAKE

Located on the edge of Holland Park in Kensington, Leighton House Museum is the former home and studio of the celebrated Victorian artist, Frederic, Lord Leighton (1830-1896). The house combines studio, living and entertaining space, and a lovely garden. Leighton House is now regarded as one of the most remarkable buildings of the nineteenth century, not least because of the extraordinary domed and tiled Arab Hall on the ground floor. Today it contains an exceptional collection of paintings and sculpture by Leighton and his contemporaries, hosts temporary exhibitions, special public events and an extensive learning programme, and is also regularly used for photography and film shoots.







With this Create and Make you will learn the story of Clytemnestra , discover Leighton's painting, do some research and be inspired to create your own paintings and drawings.

You will need art & craft materials such as paper and pencils, colouring pencils, chalks and paints.

Also, access to the internet for research and a printer, if you'd like to keep this booklet.

Parents, guardians and carers might want to read through first and consider whether the content of this story may upset younger or more sensitive children.

Look at this painting by Frederic, Lord Leighton



**The woman is standing very still and staring ahead intently. What do you think she might be looking at?**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birds flying in the sky | <input type="checkbox"/> Traffic on the roads |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Her children playing    | <input type="checkbox"/> Her garden           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The sea in the distance |   |



**Look at her face, the way she is standing and her clenched hands. How do you think she is feeling in this picture?**

- |                                  |                                    |                                  |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Happy   | <input type="checkbox"/> Serious   | <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excited | <input type="checkbox"/> Impatient | <input type="checkbox"/> Joyful  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Angry   | <input type="checkbox"/> Tense     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sad     |

**This is Clytemnestra. She is waiting and watching out for her husband Agamemnon to return from the Trojan War. When the boats of his fleet are spotted on the horizon a bonfire will be lit as a signal. She looks very determined, doesn't she?**



**She hasn't seen her husband for many years. Do you think Clytemnestra is looking forward to seeing Agamemnon?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No



## The Story of Clytemnestra

To understand why Clytemnestra is so angry with Agamemnon and why she is definitely not looking forward happily to seeing him again, we have to take a step back in her story. There are lots of names to get used to!

Clytemnestra and her sister Helen were the daughters of King Tyndareus of Sparta. Clytemnestra married Agamemnon, the king of Mycenae and Helen married his brother Menelaus, the king of Sparta. Clytemnestra and Agamemnon had three children - Iphigenia, Electra and Orestes. Helen, spoken of as the most beautiful woman in the world, was kidnapped and taken to Troy by Paris. Agamemnon wanted to help his younger brother, so he decided to lead the Greek army to Troy to fight and bring her back - and so started the Trojan War.



Whilst the Greek army was preparing to set sail, Agamemnon went hunting. He killed a sacred white stag.

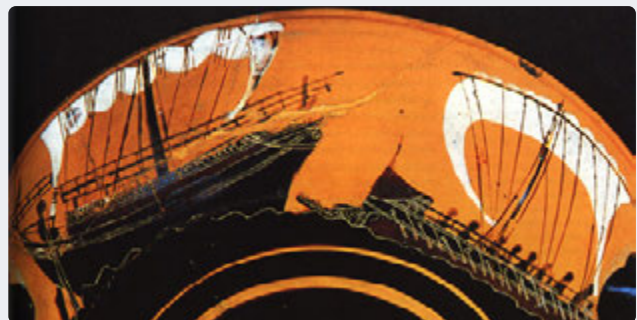
This made Artemis, the Goddess of the Hunt, the Forests and Hills, the Moon and Archery, extremely angry. She was known for her fiery temper, and her acts of revenge and punishment, particularly against people who harmed animals.

Her revenge was to stop the winds so that Agamemnon's ships could not sail.

**Can you draw a quick sketch of Agamemnon's ships stuck on the coast, with no wind to fill their sails?**

**Here's a ship painted on an Ancient Greek dish, to give you an idea what they looked like. Can you see the sails and all the oars?**

**Grab a pencil and a piece of paper!**



The Greeks remained stuck and becalmed on the coast for weeks, until the message reached Agamemnon that if he agreed to sacrifice his daughter Iphigenia to Artemis, the Goddess would once again let the winds blow. Agamemnon agreed and allowed his daughter to be sacrificed.

Do not worry! Without Agamemnon realising, Artemis actually rescued Iphigenia and spirited her away to live with the Goddess as her priestess. But as far as Clytemnestra knows, Agamemnon put glory and victory at Troy above the life of their daughter and is plotting her revenge.

HOMER WROTE ABOUT THIS STORY IN HIS EPIC POEM, *THE ILIAD*. HE DESCRIBES THE TROJAN WAR AS HAPPENING AROUND 1200BC AND LASTING FOR 10 YEARS.

SOME HISTORIANS THINK THAT A WAR REALLY DID HAPPEN AROUND THIS TIME, AND THAT TROY WAS A REAL PLACE ON THE WEST COAST OF MODERN TURKEY.

Leighton has painted the moment when Clytemnestra has been waiting ten years for her husband to return. He thinks she will welcome him home as a hero. Has Clytemnestra forgiven her husband? What do you think?

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If you want to find out more about the Ancient Greeks and Romans, see what Horrible Histories have to say

[www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/shows/horrible-histories](http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/shows/horrible-histories)



Curator Daniel says ...

*"Frederic, Lord Leighton's painting of Clytemnestra was first exhibited in 1874. People looking at it then thought the moonlight, the deep blue of the night sky, the shadows, her fixed glare, her tall unmoving body, really captured the terrible sadness of the story. Look past her stillness and her set features, look closely at her rigid arms and her fingers knotted and clenched together. Leighton has painted clues for us to understand her tension, her determination and her sadness. I love the magical, imaginary setting Leighton has created with the walls, the roofs, the gates and the towers."*



Frederic, Lord Leighton says ...

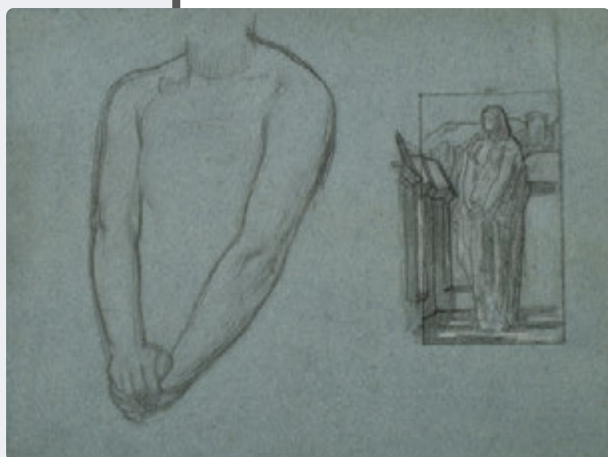


*"It's your turn to create!"*

*As Curator Daniel has told you, I painted Clytemnestra's wringing hands as a clue to how she is feeling. Why don't you try drawing your own hands? You just need some soft pencils or chinks, and paper. You could trace around your hands and then colour them in and add details if you like? Here is one of my drawings to practise her hands and arms.*

*Tip...*

*The hand is about the same length as the face from chin to forehead."*







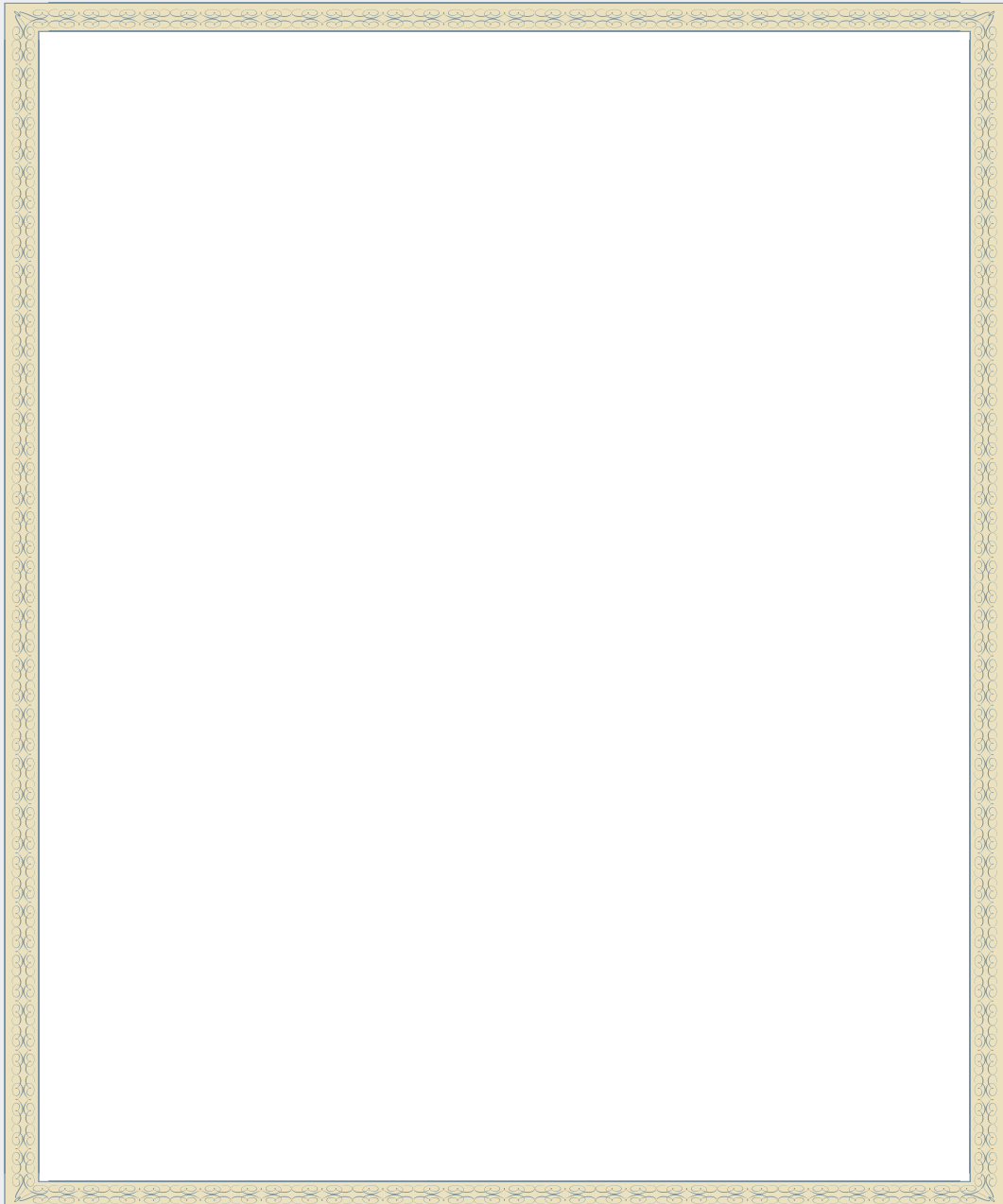
Frederic, Lord Leighton says ...

*“Artemis, Goddess of the hunt, was also known as the goddess of wild animals, wilderness, childbirth and young children. She nurtures and protects. She loves dancing and music. How can we recognise Artemis? Why not do some research to find out how she is depicted – Greek vases are a good place to look.”*

[www.britishmuseum.org/collection/galleries/greek-vases](http://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/galleries/greek-vases)

*“She is often shown as a huntress carrying a bow and arrow, accompanied by a stag or a hunting dog, and her nymphs, roaming the forests.*

*Can you paint a picture of Artemis with her bow and arrow? Maybe you could paint her hunting in the forest?”*





Frederic, Lord Leighton says ...

*“Clytemnestra is staring intently out towards the sea. Look out of your window – what can you see? Think about the colour of the sky, the shapes of the buildings and what you can see in the distance. Can you draw or paint your view?”*



Leighton House Museum



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KENSINGTON  
AND CHELSEA