

Assessment Schedule – 2009

Scholarship: Art History (93301)

Candidates answer TWO questions, one from Section A and one from Section B. Each response is marked out of 8 against the descriptors for the Art History Scholarship Standard. A third mark out of 8 is awarded across both responses for communication of arguments.

- Schedule 1 relates to the quality required for the two candidate responses.
- Schedule 2 relates to the quality required for communication of argument.
- Schedule 3 gives, for each question, examples of evidence that might be included in a candidate's response.

Schedule 1: Quality of candidate response (marked separately for each of TWO responses)

Performance Descriptor 1	8 marks	<p>The response shows exceptional knowledge and understanding of discipline through:</p> <p>a highly developed critical response to art works and contexts and comprehensive depth and breadth of knowledge relevant to question and critical reflection on evidence from varied sources and confidence in knowledge, understanding and judgement and independence / originality of approach.</p>
	7 marks	<p>The response fulfils most of the requirements for PD1:</p> <p>but critical response level is less even or quality of depth and breadth of knowledge is less consistent or critical reflection is more limited or confidence is not sustained or independence / originality are not sustained.</p>
Performance Descriptor 2	6 marks	<p>The response shows extensive knowledge and understanding of discipline through:</p> <p>a well developed critical response to art works and contexts and comprehensive depth and breadth of knowledge relevant to question and critical reflection on relevant evidence.</p>

	5 marks	<p>The response fulfils most of the requirements for PD2:</p> <p>but critical response is uneven</p> <p>or depth and breadth of knowledge relevant to question is less comprehensive</p> <p>or critical reflection is less relevant.</p>
Performance Descriptor 3	4 marks	<p>Response shows extensive knowledge and understanding of discipline through:</p> <p>broad relevant knowledge</p> <p>and depth of understanding</p> <p>and developed critical response to art works / contexts</p> <p>and reference to appropriate evidence.</p>
	3 marks	<p>The response fulfils most of the requirements for PD3:</p> <p>but shows some irrelevancies</p> <p>or there are poor choices of examples</p> <p>or critical response to art works / contexts is uneven</p> <p>or some irrelevancies.</p>
Performance Descriptor 4	2 marks	<p>Response shows (generalised) knowledge and understanding of the discipline through:</p> <p>reference to evidence</p> <p>and skills of critical response to art works / contexts.</p>
	1 mark	<p>Minimal knowledge and understanding</p> <p>Little reference to evidence.</p> <p>Descriptive rather than critical.</p> <p>or Does not address all parts of questions.</p> <p>or Weak engagement with topic.</p>
	0 marks	<p>Question not addressed.</p> <p>Lack of critical response.</p>

Schedule 2: Communication of arguments (marked across both responses)

Performance Descriptor 1	8 marks	Responses show outstanding communication skills through mature, confident, cohesive, and focused argument and demonstrate clarity of thought and are expansive and sustained and show flair.
	7 marks	Responses fill most of the requirements for PD1: but argument may be less mature, confident, cohesive and focused or clarity of thought is less evident in some aspects or is less expansive and sustained or lacks flair.
Performance Descriptor 2	6 marks	The responses show excellent communication skills through confident, cohesive and focused argument and demonstrate clarity of thought and are sustained over both questions.
	5 marks	Responses fill most of the requirements for PD2: but clarity of thought is less consistent or quality is not sustained in both questions.
Performance Descriptor 3	4 marks	The responses show effective communication skills through: coherent and relevant argument and clarity of thought and sustained breadth of argument over both questions.
	3 marks	Responses fill most of the requirements for PD3: but communication skills are less effective or argument is less coherent/relevant or clarity less evident or has repeated material in questions.

Performance Descriptor 4	2 marks	Communication is clear and coherent in both essays and is generalised / not sustained.
	1 mark	Communication is unclear and argument is generalised.
	0 marks	Lacks clarity

Schedule 3: Evidence Statement (examples only)

SECTION A: QUESTION ONE

In an art work the medium makes a powerful contribution to the message.

Justify or refute this statement with reference to a range of art works.

Some examples of the media and the message they may convey:

- “the medium is the message” as stated by Marshall McLuhan, eg the sleek steel lines and soaring architecture of the Eiffel Tower – seen as a monument to human achievement
- the expensive materials, eg gold leaf and lapis lazuli, used to signal both the piety of the donor and the importance of the subject in Renaissance art
- Leonardo's development and use of a broad range of drawing media enabled him to capture the fine detail and nuances in his many anatomical studies/studies from nature
- the fine surfaces of tempera paint that avoid calling attention to the medium, therefore allowing the message in the content to stand out more
- the marble of Canova's *Venus* – the beauty of the pure white polished marble adds to the formal beauty of the Venus
- the found object/manufactured item, eg *Fountain*, challenging the status of high art but also making a strong political comment on the waste of war
- Picasso's use of materials such as chair caning tied his work back to meaning after it had almost reached abstraction
- Constructivist sculpture – medium adds to the message that art should reflect contemporary society
- screen printing by Warhol celebrated the industrial methods popular in his time and questioned what fine art was
- *Spiral Jetty* and other forms of land art (eg Virginia King) – using natural materials to consolidate the message
- Neil Dawson's *Throwback* – the use of materials (as well as shapes) that tie the work to the Auckland Art Gallery and the city
- Emare Karaka – “my brush is my patu” – the thick paint and violent application elaborating the call (perhaps violent) for protest.

Other aspects

- In many art works, eg those that act as a window on the world, the viewer is encouraged to disregard the medium. Therefore the medium makes little contribution, eg – Andrew Wyeth's realism, Northern Renaissance portraits (Van Eyck).
- There may be instances where the medium can make the message more of a challenge to comprehend, where it is a diversion, whether intended or not, eg et al's Venice Biennale work, the elephant dung in Chris Ofili's work, gold and excrement in Julia Morrison's work.

SECTION A: QUESTION TWO

Perspective is a key element in art works.

Discuss this statement with reference to a range of art works.

Perspective is a key element in art works either through presence or absence, eg:

- the enormous role of perspective in Renaissance Italy – driving the work of artists such as Uccello, Piero della Francesca, Tintoretto (*Last Supper*)
- discussion of Alberti
- the creation of models for ideal cities based carefully on rules of perspective – the architectural lines of Renaissance churches and their fittings, which lead the eye from the door directly to the altar
- Perspective can be integral to the communication of a particular artist's message by making the viewer feel more involved in the work, eg Piero della Francesca's paving in *The Flagellation*, Gericault's *Raft of the Medusa*.
- the use of the 'box' perspective in Northern Renaissance interiors, eg *The Arnolfini Wedding*
- the significance of perspective itself, eg it triggered a response in art at the turn of the 20th century and the advent of Modernism; it is still a key element in art training
- Even when perspective is deliberately subverted, it is there by its very absence, eg in the works of the Cubists and Cézanne, or displaced as in Brancusi's *Torso*, with its multiple viewing points. These examples emphasise what a powerful mode of language perspective had become in art and how determined those artists were to overturn it.
- the denial of perspective by artists who wish to emphasise the surface or form, eg McCahon, Cézanne – or those whose work is more decorative or patterned, eg Matisse
- irrelevant in works such as Jackson Pollock's splatter paintings, Hotere

This question could also be interpreted as 'perspective' meaning the viewer's perspective or way of seeing – a viewer's interpretation of an art work may be one of understanding or bafflement depending on the perspective they bring, eg

- different viewers can see a Constable as either a beautifully rendered work to be reverently viewed in a gallery, or as more suitable for reproduction on a chocolate box
- an art-literate audience would regard Duchamp's *Fountain* as an art work – but it is necessary to have an informed perspective on art to do so. Those without such a perspective would view the work quite differently.

SECTION A: QUESTION THREE

The importance of composition in art is overrated.

Justify or refute this statement with reference to a range of art works.

Composition is not overrated

- Composition is not confined to painting but is a key element in sculpture, architecture, photography, and printmaking.
- Composition is created in a myriad of ways – and is an integral part of any art work. It includes the ways figures or objects are arranged within an art work, geometrical shapes created by such groupings, the use of symmetry and asymmetry, balancing of elements, framing devices, cropping of figures and objects, proportion, scale, horizontals, verticals, and diagonals.
- Composition is always there – the placement of every item in an art work is mediated by the artist. Even when chance is invoked (eg Dada), the artist still decides whether or not to leave something where it is, eg Pollock's bottle tops, cigarette butts.
- recognition that some artists are deliberate in their randomness with composition, eg Arp's collages of *Squares Arranged According to the Laws of Chance* (1916–17); the amorphous objects floating across the surface of Miro's *Painting* (1933) appear random but are not so – in fact they are as carefully arranged as the precise balance and shape of Mondrian's *Composition in Yellow and Blue* (1929)
- Composition in the art of some cultures derives primarily from cultural traditions and rituals that are of extreme cultural significance, eg the arrangement of carvings in a whale.
- Messages can be contained within composition itself. Unusual approaches to composition can challenge art traditions, eg in Raphael's Mannerist *Fire in the Borgo*, the figure of the Pope, central to the story, is almost lost as a small figure in the background.
- However, a candidate might recognise that the importance of composition could be underrated by others, eg by those who do not understand that every element in a work of art is put there by decision – nothing is left to chance.
- There could be a failure to recognise that composition is the arranging of key elements in a manner that successfully projects the key ideas that an artist wishes to communicate. For example, an artist might place an important figure central to a composition and place less significant figures at the periphery of the work, eg the figures of Christ and God occupy a central position in Dürer's *Adoration of the Trinity* (1511), while saints and churchmen are positioned in blocks on either side and below these central figures. As an unimportant observer in the work, Dürer places himself in the lower right of the painting.
- A similar example would be abstract works that have been greatly reduced in form, eg Brancusi, *The Newborn*.

Composition is overrated

- Composition is only one of many means to an end, ie the overall message or effect. Looking at works in which several strong elements work together, eg are the curving lines in Pollock's work any more important than the encrusted texture of the surface (*Lavender Mist*) or the colour, to the sense of freedom and openness created?
- Composition can be stultifying and suffocating. It forces a viewer to see something in a particular way, instead of allowing a more postmodernist approach, or allowing viewers to come to understanding in their own time. For example, if Christ was a man of the people why can't the viewer figure out who he is rather than the artist making him the central figure or focal point in art works.
- Composition can be used as a sledgehammer.
- Composition is overrated in works in which artists themselves consider controlled, fixed composition to be unimportant, eg:
 - Brancusi interchanges components of his sculptures
 - Rick Killeen invites curators and owners of his cut-outs to arrange them to suit their own taste and décor
 - kinetic sculptures such as those by George Rickey and Alexander Calder, in which composition at any given time is random according to the laws of chance and the strength of the wind.
- Rauschenberg – monotone paintings in one colour
- Do spontaneous splatters in a Jackson Pollock make or break the work?

SECTION A: QUESTION FOUR

The art work as a whole is more important than its individual elements.

Examine this statement with reference to a range of art works.

Arguments to support the view that the 'whole' of an art work is greater than the sum of its parts – material, title, colour, shape, line, concept, site, scale, theme, form, symbolism, gesture, composition, content, context – all contribute to the whole.

Architecture

External features of a building such as materials, technique, fenestration, and decoration combine to serve the prime function of the edifice – which is to enclose and manage space.

Sculpture

- The contribution of site eg the statue of Queen Victoria in Victoria Park, Christchurch reigns over her orderly domain (similarly Queen Victoria in Albert Park, Auckland)
- Eg Neil Dawson's *Throwback* in Albert Park, Auckland:
 - considered in the context of the commission (to commemorate the centenary of the nearby Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki)
 - the lunette shape has narrative links to the gallery building
 - the context of the volcanic nature of the Auckland isthmus adds to the overall meaning of the work in that there is the suggestion that this lunette from the gallery has been thrown out as a result of volcanic activity.
- Chris Booth's towers of rocks at the entrance to Auckland's Albert Park: the title *Gateway* adds a component to the art work that enhances its overall meaning, reinforcing the significance of the specific site.
- Michael Parekowhai includes pieces of paua shell in his art works. The material is an aesthetic element, but there is a message. Add context and the ideas of the artist together and the sum of the parts is greater than any individual element.
- In formal terms, a work such as Richard Serra's *Tilted Arc* is simply a curved slice of corten steel. In context, in its site, it becomes a statement about urban space and the way the public uses that space.

Painting

Colour:

- Elements work in conjunction with each other. Colour in a work needs to have the controlling influence of line to contain it, eg David, *Oath of the Horatii*, in which the controlled presentation of colour in confined blocks facilitates the artist's intention that the work be clearly presented and easy to read.
- Colour in a High Renaissance work contributes to a stable composition through balanced colour weightings across a canvas.
- While the gold in religious works attracts the viewer with its glowing beauty, it also symbolises the heavenly realm in which the Divine reside.
- The inclusion of local saints in Duccio's *Maesta* provides a strong link to the regional audience, but also strengthens the work as a whole, eg it shows that Mary is honoured by these local saints also and helps direct attention to her as the focus of the work.

Foreshortening:

- In Tintoretto's *Discovery of the Body of St Mark*, the extreme foreshortening of the body provides a means of measuring the depth of the picture space – but it is the combination with contrasting light and shade that serves to support the sense of a three-dimensional space in which the figures exist.

Space:

- Space is manipulated to invite viewer involvement, eg the foreground in *Raft of the Medusa* combines with the compositional element of the central pyramid of figures, plus dark and foreboding colours, to create a masterpiece of the Sublime.
- The fractured pictorial forms and spaces, broken repetitions of forms, often harsh relationships of colour and light in the paintings of the Italian Futurists combine with the context of war, urban change, industrial development and the power and noise of the machine in early modern urban Italy – eg Boccioni's *The City Rises*.
- The Surrealists claim to paint neither what they see nor what they know, but what their unconscious reveals. Pictorial elements are needed to give voice to this (applicable to all art), eg Miro's *Harlequin's Carnival* (1924–25), myriad of line, colour and shape.
- Audrey Flack's *Vanitas* series explores the beauty of still-life objects. But add the context of the artist's ideas, theme and message, and the art work is communicating about fate, fortune, human tragedy, and the theme of war.
- But could also argue that an art work can be valued highly for a specific aspect, eg the textured surface of Pollock's paintings, the superrealistic qualities of Duane Hanson's figures.

SECTION B: QUESTION FIVE

Art shows us how things should be, rather than how things are.

Discuss this statement with reference to a range of art works.

Art shows us how things should be

- Renaissance art focused on promises of the hereafter in return for a good Christian life, not on the poverty and suffering that was the common lot, eg:
 - Uccello's fantastic battle paintings that cleanse reality and produce decorative images of war
 - the architecture of Gothic churches, which leads the gaze (and the songs and prayers) heavenwards and gives a sense of so much more than the hardship of the physical world.
- By shifting focus, Colour Field and Abstract artists (Newman/Rothko) took the viewer into a spiritual realm untouched by the aftermath of WWII: the UnAmerican Activities Committee and blacklisting, the war in Korea.
- art as propaganda, eg Massacio's *The Tribute Money*, Le Brun's portrait of Marie Antoinette
- idealised or allegorical landscapes, eg Giorgione's *The Tempest*

It is questionable whether art shows us how things should be

- eg depictions of the female body through time glorify it, beautify it, and ignore inequality (Greek art, nineteenth-century French art and onward)
- Portraiture is often an idealised version of the subject. This is particularly true for women because of their social position; also a manipulation of how the subject will be seen through time; often at complete odds with the real status of women, eg Ginevra di Benci.

Art shows us how things are

- Art always shows us what is – what the world is like at the time an art work is made. It can do this through materials, site, scale, or other aspects rather than just through the image itself.
- Some art works do this in a more obvious way than others, but art always does so on some level. Eg when new materials are used, such as steel beams in architecture, the art becomes a documentation of developments of the time – so too with oil paint in the 1400s in Italy (marking a change in techniques there).
- In terms of content, art can only show us how things are from the particular artist's perspective. What art shows is always mediated by the artist – ie it is an artist's representation of what is.
- Note the reaction when art depicts reality, eg:
 - Courbet's depiction of peasant life
 - Allie Eagle's *This Woman Died I Care*
 - Black Carnival photographs
 - an extreme case is the exhibition *The Body*, where actual bodies are the art.

SECTION B: QUESTION SIX

Three-dimensional art is more accessible to the viewer than other art forms.

Discuss this statement with reference to a range of art works.

'Accessible' can be addressed as visually, physically, and/or intellectually accessible.

- All art in the public arena – be it two- or three-dimensional – is visually accessible.
- There is limited access (to varying degrees) to art in private chapels (Renaissance) and private collections, eg the largest Richard Serra in the Southern Hemisphere is in New Zealand, but it is in a private collection and inaccessible to the public.
- Architecture is physically more accessible than other art forms – a person can access it physically, can actually enter the three-dimensional building.
- Some contemporary sculpture is physically accessible in the same way that architecture is, eg Nikki de St Phalle's colourful Stockholm Shopping Centre entrance; Virginia King's *Koru* at Brick Bay; *The Lightning Field*.
- Sculpture can be intellectually accessible in that it often represents the human figure in three-dimensional form. Viewers can walk around sculpture in the round, access it from all sides and viewing points, get a full understanding of the work, eg Donatello's *David*.
- Some three-dimensional art is intentionally intellectually inaccessible, eg Duchamp's *Sewing Machine on a Dissecting Table*; Dali's *Lobster Telephone*.
- Abstract art – be it painting or sculpture – might be difficult for a viewer to access intellectually.
- Other art forms such as prints and paintings are often a representation of three-dimensional form in two dimensions. Therefore they represent a less 'complete' expression of the human form than a three-dimensional sculpture would.
- Some works can be particularly difficult to access visually and/or intellectually, eg Picasso and Braque in their use of contracted and distorted space; Phil Clairmont with his crazy, crooked light shades and couches; Marc Chagall with his dream imagery; the Surrealists, eg Miro's stuffed bird on a stand, *Poetic Object*; Jackson Pollock.
- Much two-dimensional art is 'coded' and unless a viewer is familiar with the symbolism employed, a work might not be understood, eg Lamb (of God).
- To an 'educated' viewer, some two-dimensional art is quite clear and easily accessible, eg Renaissance paintings of biblical subjects are readily readable to those familiar with the Christian story, as are classical myths to the classicists.
- Paintings or prints with text are readily accessible to those who can read – provided it is in a language they are familiar with. The converse applies to paintings and prints that incorporate text in an unfamiliar language, eg Lizitsky *Beat the Whites with a Red Wedge*.
- Recognition that the audience differs for different periods and places.
- Argument that intellectual accessibility is much more a product of the time in which the art was made and the audience it was intended for than a result of its medium, eg understanding of the subtleties in a work that get lost over time (Bosch's use of his own symbolism – known at the time but partly lost to us now in his paintings). Does an audience with little knowledge of Māoritanga understand the subtleties in the carvings they see in a whare?

SECTION B: QUESTION SEVEN

Art is the simple expression of complex ideas.

Discuss this statement with reference to a range of art works.

- A candidate could question the notion that art is a 'simple expression', and whether art expresses complex ideas.
- It could be concluded that art presents quite simple ideas.
 - A painting of the Madonna and Child might be regarded as an expression of a very simple idea – of 'good'.
 - Matisse's *Joie de Vivre* might be considered to say it all in the title.
 - Lorenzetti *The Allegory of Good and Bad Government* might be considered to express a clear-cut, simple concept – this is a work which presents its content very simply.

Art that is simple in expression

- Rauschenburg's single colour paintings.
- Duane Hanson's figures – Duane Hanson's *Riot* was presented so clearly that the public were repelled by its message that raised issues of race, age, and gender politics.
- Barbara Kruger's *We don't need another Hero* used text to clarify meaning.
- Martini incorporated the text of Gabriel's words to Mary in his *Annunciation*.

Examples of art expressing complex ideas

Seemingly simple

- Even an apparently simple work, ie a Madonna and Child, is still the distillation of an enormous amount of religious and liturgical thinking. It is a deceptively simple entry to a very complex field.
- The striving for naturalism in Renaissance times was important. Interpretations of biblical environments had the appearance of being natural settings, but they were manipulated to suit the subject. Extensive knowledge was needed to be able to do this convincingly.
- Constable's images are seemingly simple images of idyllic scenes of the English rural countryside. But they have an underlying message about the politics of landscape at a time of rural unrest, agrarian and industrial reform, and revolution.
- In Boccioni's *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, a seemingly simple form of a figure moving through space is in fact presenting more complex ideas about the artist's beliefs that lines of force intersect any object or person. Similarly drawings for *Development of a Bottle in Space* appear to be simple deconstructions of a bottle on a table, but are working towards expressing the same idea.
- Dada works – simple forms presenting complex and challenging ideas, eg Duchamp, *In Advance of the Broken Arm*, in which a simple snow shovel lays down a challenge to the whole of the history of art in the question it asks – 'what constitutes art?'
- Modern art often challenges the status quo in society – and can do so in apparently simple images eg Hotere, Kirchner *Self-Portrait with One Arm*.
- Compositional motifs, eg the Māori koru are not simply decorative but have symbolic value, eg Gordon Walters' paintings and prints.
- To see art as a simple expression can be to misread it, eg Lichtenstein's comic-style works could be read as a larger form of the war comics that glorify the courageous American soldier, but the scale also draws attention to the lack of depth in mass media depictions.
- Rothko's Colour Field works may appear a simple study in colour but this ignores any transcendental aspect.

Complexity of ideas

- Renaissance art communicates ideas about religion, Florentine politics, the importance of mankind, the relationship between man and nature – none of these are simple ideas. Art is about complex ideas.
- Photography often suggests that a real life moment in time has been captured quite simply. But images and compositions are usually manipulated to present some depth of response to a scene or situation. Framing, collaging, cropping, altering contrasts and colour are all employed in creating an image that carries a complex idea as its motivation.
- *Twin Towers of Light* as a memorial to 9/11 – complexity of idea and agendas in two simple sets of searchlights from the footprint of the World Trade Center.

Art that is complex in expression

- Art is also often a very complex means of expressing complex ideas. Look at the difficulty people have in understanding much of the art they see, eg et al, Colin McCahon, analytical cubism, Bosch, Abstract Expressionist works.
- Semi-Abstract and Abstract works often contain ideas that cannot be equated to subject matter, eg Jackson Pollock's *Full Fathom Five* (1947) references the sea and concepts of depth.

SECTION B: QUESTION EIGHT

We need art.

Discuss this statement with reference to a range of art works.

- Do 'we', ie humankind, need art? If so, why?
- Art enables us to visually express ideas that we have trouble making heard verbally, eg:
 - personal devotion to another human or idea, eg small portraits (Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*), or religious works, (Michelangelo's Sistine Ceiling)
 - the High Renaissance and its focus on the ideal and the aim of humankind to surpass what had gone before, eg Michelangelo's David as a model of the ideal of the time
 - the soaring profiles of skyscrapers and human aspiration.
- Art is used:
 - to meet the needs of people in their everyday lives – architecture and furniture (Bauhaus)
 - to separate one generation from another – to make our own mark, eg Banksy, Basquiat
 - as a way of building links (between generations), eg nationalism, monuments, personal memorials (public statues), war memorials
 - to challenge existing ideas, eg Mannerism
 - to challenge the 'official line', eg Dada, Picasso's *Guernica*
 - as a way of seeking understanding of cataclysmic events, eg German Expressionism, and the art that follows wars
 - to express the unspeakable, eg Kathe Kollwitz's work (prints and sculpture)
 - as a way of exploring the unknown, eg Surrealism and its exploration of the subconscious and psychology (Dali's *Persistence of Memory*)
 - to raise consciousness on either a personal or wider level, eg Warhol's images of Marilyn Monroe and consumer items; Audrey Flack.
 - as a way of questioning leaders and ideas, eg Roy Lichtenstein's work, Claes Oldenburg (*Lipstick*), Feminist art, black art, gay art.