

Scholarship

2011 Assessment Report

Visual Arts: Painting

COMMENTARY

Students and their teachers should be encouraged by their achievements in what is a difficult and sophisticated course of study. In all cases, successful folio and workbook submissions demonstrated candidates' high ability to position their work in context. In some cases, projects were framed by the work of artists from a range of origins and fields. This was achieved by extracting common threads and integrating them into the candidate's own inquiry. In other cases, candidates showed good insight into the ideas and methods of production from a narrow contextual framework and extracted suitable and sufficient options for their own work. This revealed deep understanding of that context and its possibilities and constraints and often resulted in a strong exploration and study.

Some submissions extracted options for working from outside the field of Painting, such as Film, Poetry, Advertising, and Sculpture and successfully synthesised aspects appropriate to and useful to the candidates' purposes. Evident too was the knowledge of procedure, high level of skill, and the ability to develop techniques helpful to the candidate's project. Some very successful submissions showed the candidates' particular interest in and sensitivity toward the material / tactile qualities of painting and its use to produce meaning in the work.

Notable this year was a lack of submissions of work based in abstract painting. Although some submissions contained works that had been developed by systematically reducing and eliminating representational elements or by developing away from figuration, very few were founded in established practices of Abstraction. Utilising a 'formal inquiry' as concept is a viable painting proposition with many potential opportunities for exploration.

Also notable was the absence of entries into the Scholarship award from candidates whose submissions in NCEA L3 had achieved with Excellence. Even with a somewhat limited workbook, candidates can still be competitive within the field given that it is a holistic view of the two sites of evidence (folio and workbook) that determine the award of Scholarship.

SCHOLARSHIP WITH OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with Outstanding Performance typically:

- developed workbooks that revealed a depth of understanding of the context in which their work arose. This understanding was manifest in the candidates' ability to show their own motivations and critical analysis of their own work and the types of practice to which their own work belongs
- demonstrated high levels of skill and technique in their selected convention(s) of Painting. These techniques enabled the complex testing and advancing of the candidates' own ideas/proposition to produce original work
- generated and extracted content from their own (photographic) source material. This produced ideas, specified pictorial situations, and provided detailed information from which to paint
- found or responded to subject matter that emerged in the making of the work itself, rather than as a preliminary (data gathering) exercise
- developed alternative or expanded bodies of work that, though potentially worthwhile, were not prioritised for inclusion in the folio

- made excellent interpretations of their generated subject matter, whether they were for the use of colour, media, format, imagery, or procedure or their use in the production of meaning in the work.

SCHOLARSHIP

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship but not Scholarship with Outstanding Performance commonly:

- initiated projects that had enough traction for the candidate to engage in and test a series of investigations, which affirmed their own interests, intent, and inquiry within picture-making and pictorial situation
- presented a body of work on the folio that continuously regenerated, reinterpreted, and negotiated new angles in regard to their chosen topic to formulate a body of both experimental and resolved works
- showed evidence of having fabricated a workbook after the folio submission had been completed. This often appeared as notations about work made, or possibilities for subsequent work. Although such 'future' fabrications are legitimate, it might be more beneficial to the students learning to continue the practical artistic project and submit this in the workbook format, thus revealing an actual advance from the folio
- used the workbook as a contextual / art historical survey that related the work on the folio to its context. In these instances, the 'pooling' of this information both consolidated and expanded the inquiry on the folio
- revealed, through the workbook, that drawing was both a preliminary inquiry and a means to examine or reflect critically on the work as it developed
- utilised other discipline practice in a controlled and inventive manner to extend the painterly discussion e.g. devices such as projection, collage, installation, cut-out, photography, object, text were employed and integrated to create credible options and successful works.

OTHER CANDIDATES

Candidates who were not awarded Scholarship or Scholarship with Outstanding Performance commonly:

- wrote propositions, aims, or even research questions, which applied more appropriately to social science research than artistic practice. These often seemed to be developed before the project started and produced a sense of the student feeling the need to illustrate the proposition, or answer the questions. It is not appropriate in an Art project to try to figure out what causes infant mortality or exploitation of one group of people by another
- made lengthy verbal descriptions of the steps taken in the folio (when these steps are easily seen by looking at the work itself)
- did not show a good grasp of the painting medium and, therefore, did not apply technical facility to progress or address the topic at hand in both the folio and workbook
- did not demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental conventions of painting and the potential of picture making devices and approaches to activate their topic
- described the desired meaning of the work in what seemed an attempt to convince an audience that the meaning was 'in there' (without the ability to analyse what the work was actually doing)
- presented text-heavy workbooks that focused on descriptions of artists and artistic periods, with little or no evidence of the relationship to their own work. Workbooks should be visual documents with appropriate notation and figurings, not an essay in their own right

- submitted folios that lacked any real direction or subject-related skill. Folios need to evidence at a high level in order to holistically connect with the workbook and be in contention for this award.