

Scholarship

2009 Assessment Report

Visual Arts: Printmaking

COMMENTARY

Overall, most Printmaking Scholarship candidates presented evidence that was well representative of the formal and conceptual types expected of contemporary print practice. Submissions that gained Scholarships were genuine, focused and fluent and contained a real depth to the investigation, led by the candidate and displayed honesty and ownership. These portfolios *hit the ground running*, starting with inventive exploratory beginnings that were then shaped into interesting and complex topics. These candidates were continually asking the right kinds of questions, which enabled a number of key shifts to occur and visual thinking to develop, backed up by both traditional and contemporary links to process and established practice.

For most candidates, their workbook played a key role in supporting and extending the dialogue apparent on the portfolio. This aspect was a crucial divider between the awarding of Scholarship or not. Weak workbooks seemed rushed, or just described what could be seen on the portfolio. The best workbooks moved on from their artistic references, related ideas to techniques, built and reinforced decisions made on the portfolio, and offered other possibilities through analytical and reflective reasoning (consideration of new ideas or unanticipated opportunities). These candidates were consistently, critically reflecting on what was happening.

It was pleasing to see such thorough investigations into print processes with many candidates exploring and examining the conventions and parameters. Articulate choices were made to use other surfaces, such as found objects, coasters, handkerchiefs, printed matter. In many cases these types of inclusions were paired with propositions or ideas that were both visually and conceptually challenging; i.e. they reconsidered and questioned continuously. Some candidates even demonstrated an awareness or consciousness towards the viewer (and their comprehension of the work) in part as content. This type of sensitivity was typical of those in contention for Outstanding Scholarship.

There was a variety in the kinds of techniques being used. Most techniques were utilised well to consolidate ideas with more sensibility and appropriateness to concept. There was an inherent understanding of the ability for print to operate with sensitivity – to impart subtle, emotive and complex qualities. Many candidates employed sequencing (series) as a device to set up a sense of time or narrative, presenting a considered and substantial body of work as a single outcome. In some cases, not enough physical space was left around work/s on the portfolio, so that they could be seen in the context intended.

SCHOLARSHIP WITH OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with Outstanding Performance typically:

- utilised a wide range of investigative drawing to explore highly intelligent ideas and enquiries
- showed that they understood inherently the ability of print media to generate a range of subtle qualities appropriate to own concept, e.g. emotive, psychological, atmospheric qualities
- purposefully employed considered strategies relevant to concept for layout, ordering and editing on the portfolio and workbook
- used print processes in an inventive ways to question ideas
- operated with a complete sense of ownership and purpose throughout the enquiry.

SCHOLARSHIP

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

- identified propositions that enabled sustained, complex and interesting investigations
- integrated workbook and portfolio completely, to link ideas with established practice and candidate's own interest in the subject
- demonstrated a high level of technical knowledge of print processes and media, sustaining a type of aesthetic appropriate to the proposition
- offered broad ranges of research types that provided scope to extend ideas into own photo shoots, performance practice and material investigations.

OTHER CANDIDATES

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

- presented work that was not technically appropriate to this level
- did not establish a clear proposition to advance an enquiry
- included too much documentation about what was already on the portfolio or described the folio in essay form
- lacked filtration of ideas, including experimenting, evaluating and synthesising
- did not establish connections or relationships between the workbook and portfolio through contextualisation, but merely described ideas or repeated information
- did not engage in an investigation into media and materials appropriate to print conventions.

Recommendations for 2010, arising from Scholarship 2009 Assessment Process:
Visual Arts: Printmaking

Candidates who are performing at Merit or Excellence throughout the year should be encouraged to enter for the Scholarship examination. Even with a somewhat limited workbook it is still possible to be competitive within the field given that it is a holistic picture with two sites of evidence (portfolio and workbook) that is in consideration for Scholarship.