

# **Scholarship**

## **2011 Assessment Report**

### **Visual Arts: Sculpture**

## COMMENTARY

This year, the majority of the Sculpture Scholarship submissions demonstrated a strong sense of ownership in the creative processes and investigations entered into by candidates. It was noticeable also that a significant number of candidates had a comprehensive understanding of formal sculptural conventions and devices. Some of these demonstrated how a formal approach could operate as conceptual and moved through a range of formal ideas to develop a complex sculptural proposition. Other candidates successfully employed strategies, such as modernist sculptural traditions to push forward their investigation and development of ideas – for example, using a raised horizon (platform) in relation to other structures or objects to activate the relationship of the viewer to the work. Devices such as this heighten the sense of space, scale, and potential viewer relation / participation.

Many candidates employed appropriate research and genuine experimentation with ideas and methods in the production of sculptural work. It was good to see candidates making real-scale objects and working within environments that allowed for an authenticity of sculptural investigations to occur i.e. works were made to a scale that enabled them to act as intended rather than to imitate sculptural concerns. Successful Scholarship candidates employed an honest approach to research and clearly identified how this research informed the approach to producing their own work. Candidates who presented strong workbook and folio relationships often demonstrated clear evidence whereby the workbook charted the learning journey of the candidate, highlighting significant discoveries or points of clarification and reflection. These workbooks were often edited sections of the year's workbook practice that showed success and failure, offered possibilities and extrapolated out ideas, used maquettes and other options for investigation. In some instances, work included in the workbook was not documented on the folio. This not only demonstrated the breadth of engagement / range of work produced, but also highlighted the candidate's critical skills in terms of being able to edit a cohesive body of work for the folio.

Many candidates took advantage of the opportunity to attend exhibitions of contemporary sculptural practice that allowed them to formulate fantastic real-life experience and build their own knowledge of sculptural practice. They undertook ambitious projects where technical challenges were met with a great deal of success, particularly for those who kept their production high and learnt through making rather than hypothetical decision-making. A number of successful candidates took risks with inventive processes that allowed for surprising and unexpected sculptural outcomes. These submissions moved through an extensive range of material and media possibility, where the academic inquiry was further clarified in each iteration or manifestation. Overall, the ability of many candidates to thoroughly immerse themselves in a genuine and clearly defined sculptural proposition gave the work a sophistication and high level of resolution.

Finally, the Scholarship panel would like to encourage students who are performing at Merit or Excellence at L3 to enter Scholarship. Even with a somewhat limited workbook, it is still possible to 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:**

- demonstrated thoughtful and mature understanding of sculptural conventions and contemporary practice through research into appropriate artist models. Referencing was intelligent and critical, feeding directly into the candidate's own explorations
- utilised a strategic documentation process, which clarified the sculptural intent of the work, in that it showed careful consideration of the site and background of the photograph in the presentation of work i.e. did not distract from but added to the works sculptural proposition
- explored techniques and processes in keeping with the aesthetic logic and material understanding of the sculptural proposition
- had an implicit understanding of scale, shifts between scale, and how to manipulate this to their advantage
- demonstrated that all investigations, from drawing to resolved works, supported the sculptural proposition and evidenced fluency and intelligence in the consideration of the conceptual and aesthetic proposition
- maintained a sense of ownership and originality in all stages of the production of work, through constant renegotiation of the proposition and resourcefulness in regard to material concerns.

## **SCHOLARSHIP**

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

- demonstrated strategic approaches to practical exploration and theoretical research with one informing the other, thereby substantiating interests with authority and inventiveness
- used a simple sculptural proposition that was added to in complexity through genuine research, experimentation, and evaluation
- showed understanding of the role of maquettes as works in their own right
- employed a strategic editing process in both folio and workbook to indicate points of importance and an economy of means within the body of work
- labelled performance and time-based documentation appropriately and concisely with contextual information, such as site, materials, scale, and duration
- ensured that each work became a new move in the development of ideas
- took risks with the experimentation of materials and techniques and evaluated these risks for their potential to extend the ideas generated.

## **OTHER CANDIDATES**

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

- presented work that was not technically competent enough to articulate sculptural ideas
- used written language to describe sculptural intentions when the visual work was unable to communicate these ideas formally and/or conceptually
- wrote descriptions about 'concepts', 'symbolism', 'meaning' behind works that were not visually manifest within the work

- replicated or re-presented the same images from the folio in the workbook, which offered little additional evidence and did not advance the proposition or understanding in a meaningful way
- did not identify a proposition with sufficient scope and depth to enable a sustained investigation of sculptural ideas
- used a range of often unconnected or inappropriate artist models; artist models were closely followed rather than critically explored in relation to the candidates' own interests
- 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 show evidence at a high level in order to holistically connect with the workbook and be in contention for this award.