

Scholarship

2012 Assessment Report

Visual Arts: Sculpture

COMMENTARY

The 2012 Scholarship Sculpture submissions were highly ambitious in their intent and the nature of the works produced. The commitment to making life-size real-scale work positioned intelligent, versatile and lateral propositions and projects for candidates to pursue.

Submissions included a variety of conceptual investigations; material, installation, formal, collaboration, process, object, site, performative, community-focus. There is a sense that candidates are really passionate about the physicality of making and are interested and engaged in sculptural practice. Many projects included a sense of humour (as a conceptual tool) and at times, it was clear that candidates were having 'fun' with their propositions (particularly noted in documentation of interactive or performative work).

Photographic documentation was good, representing sculptural propositions appropriately in relation to intent, for example, consideration of the background, composition includes the entire object, scale references are clear (sculptures are made of real-scale objects). The range of sculptural exploration is growing each year. Of note, is the sophistication of crafting appropriate to concept and associate contexts. This was evidenced through material investigations that re-contextualised ideas by testing and re-testing not only via the making, but also in the installation and documentation of work. Each step is a new work or iteration, and is presented as such. Traditional materials such as moulding materials like clay, plasticine and plaster are being used in innovative and inventive ways, for their material qualities and signification to activate ideas.

Also in evidence is improvisation as a strategy for making. Candidates are utilising propositional type approaches to test out ideas in new ways. Various material objects are being sculpted through a number of methods, techniques and processes, often in quite simple ways (placement, stacking, balance). Scenarios or situations are set up that suggest or point towards sculptural ideas or conventions, for example, candidates are using external sites, locations and spaces to place materials and objects in relationship. Or they are actively seeking out different materials and testing their qualities as sculptural form, for example, found objects (clothing, safety gear, furniture, scientific equipment), materials (food, liquids, plastic). It is exciting to see candidates using the world around them to create work in such a simple and accessible manner.

Looking across all five fields it is clear that there is an aptitude for sculptural practice that could be developed to increase numbers entering for Sculpture, Level 3 and Scholarship. The Sculpture cohort is considerably smaller than the big fields and thus the Scholarship panel would like to encourage more candidates to consider Sculpture as one of their subjects in 2013.

SCHOLARSHIP WITH OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with Outstanding Performance typically:

- made precise conceptual leaps between projects that identified relationships between research and a wide range of contemporary and traditional sculptural practice
- based research within a clearly defined aesthetic and type, which was of personal interest and significance to the candidate
- exercised a range of aesthetic sculptural strategies to explore ideas that were then refined through regular evaluation and lateral analysis

- used different strategies of drawing in generating, clarifying and testing to present resolved ideas with sensitivity and accuracy
- showed careful consideration in respect to the nature of the project undertaken and implemented ambitious projects that were well researched and managed and executed
- operated with a complete sense of ownership and purpose throughout all aspects in the development of work
- utilised a strategic documentation process that clarified the sculptural intent of the work.

SCHOLARSHIP

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

- used a purposeful approach to expand an enquiry beyond a derivative, descriptive superficial understanding of artistic influences
- employed an expansive range of methods to investigate a conceptually driven proposition that was in keeping with the aesthetic logic of the work
- set up a range of challenges in terms of technical and physical scale of projects to allow for complex and comprehensive sculptural installation
- went through a process of constant reflection to ensure that each work became a new move or shift in the development of ideas
- employed a strategic editing process in both the folio and workbook to indicate points of importance and an economy of means within the body of work
- labelled sculpture, performance and time-based documentation appropriately and concisely with relevant contextual information such as materials, site, time and duration.

OTHER CANDIDATES

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

- presented work that was not technically competent enough to articulate ideas or to truly engage in a sculptural dialogue
- did not identify a proposition or topic with sufficient scope and depth to enable a sustained investigation of sculptural ideas
- used a range of often unconnected or inappropriate artist models that didn't add value to the investigation or inform the enquiry
- used the workbook to descriptively record step-by-step their processes of making work rather than providing evidence of research that informed their practice and how it evolved
- used written language to describe sculptural intentions in lieu of the work being able to communicate these ideas formally and/or conceptually
- presented folios that lacked discipline-related skill or focus. Folios need to operate at a high level in order to holistically connect with the workbook and be in contention for Scholarship.