

Scholarship

2010 Assessment Report

Visual Arts: Printmaking

COMMENTARY

The Print Scholarship cohort firmly established itself within the requirements of this particular discipline. Successful Scholarship submissions ably demonstrated a good understanding of the conceptual and formal needs to do with both printmaking and contemporary practice in the Visual Arts. Also evident was the use of well grounded traditional drawing skills with the incorporation of contemporary approaches. In this sense the technical knowledge was at the service of, rather than the slave of, the discipline and concept.

In general the submissions that gained scholarships had an obvious ownership around the direction of the work undertaken. This was apparent in the way that the premise for the portfolios was established early in the first panel and the ideas and approaches to exploration were allowed to develop in an interesting and ultimately complex manner. These portfolios were able to sustain an open-ended process of inquiry with the work produced and continually reinvented prints that built upon that learning. In essence, successful Scholarship portfolios declared themselves by the visual coherence on each panel. Technical issues relating to printmaking were closely aligned with the visual exploration at each stage.

Workbooks continued to demonstrate an understanding of ideas and approaches undertaken in the portfolio work by elaborating on and extending that dialogue. In some cases the stronger workbooks almost became independent artworks in themselves. They revealed the same sense of ownership apparent in the portfolios and a total engagement with their investigations in printmaking. Where additional work was presented in the workbook, students revealed not only other options, but also an expanded field of experimentation and exploration. These workbooks were an integral part of how the submission operated and thus successfully communicated the outcome. The best workbooks were able to navigate their way around references to artist models, technical concerns, how to re-introduce new, yet related, themes and make precise analytical decisions on expanding these concerns. In essence, these demonstrated critical reflection on their practice in a clear and informative manner. The less successful workbooks relied more on mere descriptive accounts of the submission.

Evidence showed a wide range of approaches to printmaking in Scholarship. The innovative response to print media via alternative technical means was kept in good company by more restrained, yet no less eloquent, attention to a more traditional use of printmaking as a tool. In comparison, some of the other successful candidates were able to rely on a more excessively expressive approach. This wide range of use of media showed acute understanding of how and exactly what was being communicated. Here the approaches to the techniques and the visual exploration of mark-making, etc. were appropriate to the subject matter being used. This was often a crucial and fundamental decision over which the successful submissions demonstrated a complete and comprehensive authority.

In the awarding of Scholarship, the workbook is seen in relation to the portfolio and not as a separate entity. The workbook operates in many ways to help the viewer ‘understand’ the portfolio. For candidates with obvious ability at level 3, the addition of a workbook and the entering into the Scholarship examination extends and enhances learning.

SCHOLARSHIP WITH OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with Outstanding Performance typically:

- identified propositions in printmaking that enabled sustained, complex and insightful investigations
- employed a multitude of strategies within research, and extrapolated options through the careful evaluation of the ideas generated
- synthesised contextual/conceptual and/or formal modes of working from established practice into an individually conceived body of work
- understood the various means by which drawing operates within production of prints and employed this understanding with sensitivity and accuracy
- understood inherently the ability of print media to generate a strong body of work with fluent control over the printmaking processes and procedures utilised.
- integrated workbook and portfolio completely to link ideas of research, established practice and student's own ambitions within the subject
- demonstrated strategic approaches to practical exploration and theoretical research with one informing the other, thereby substantiating interests with authority and inventiveness
- understood the value of producing outcomes in order to move forward; reflecting a critical and decisive approach to practice that enabled work to communicate a clear and distinctive point of view.

SCHOLARSHIP

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

- demonstrated a clear understanding of the parameters of an investigation, by utilising visual strategies located in contemporary practice to develop and extend an individually conceived printmaking proposition
- utilised a range of investigative drawing to explore insightful and eloquent ideas and enquiries
- utilised printmaking technologies, materials and processes fluently in keeping with the aesthetic intent in order to achieve purposeful resolutions
- produced work that was both elegant and sophisticated in its execution, demonstrating a high level understanding of printmaking procedures
- expanded an enquiry beyond a derivative, descriptive, superficial understanding of artistic influences
- sustained a constructive and informative relationship between the workbook and the portfolio
- demonstrated a considered and strategic approach to practical exploration and theoretical research with one informing the other and therefore substantiating interests with authority and inventiveness
- operated with a comprehensive sense of ownership and purpose throughout the enquiry and were able to communicate visually complex ideas in a succinct manner.

OTHER CANDIDATES

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

- misunderstood what was appropriate and realistic in established printmaking practice at this level of study

- did not identify a proposition with sufficient scope and depth to enable a sustained investigation of printmaking ideas
- failed to adequately grasp, select, draw together a range of experiments with media and printmaking conventions into a coherent inquiry
- utilised artist models haphazardly in order to justify changes in work or as a reference list to establish subject matter
- wrote lengthy descriptions about “concepts”, “symbolism”, “meaning” behind works that were not visually manifest within the work
- used written language to describe printmaking intentions when the visual work was unable to communicate these ideas formally and/or conceptually
- presented work that was not technically competent for the required level of performance
- failed to elucidate and sustain a purposeful and structural relationship or connection between the workbook and the portfolio.
- replicated or re-presented the same images from the portfolio in the workbook which offered little additional evidence and did not advance the argument or understanding in a meaningful way
- used the workbook to descriptively record step-by-step the process rather than as a critical analysis of the ‘journey’ undertaken
- appended a “further developments” or “extensions” section in the workbook, which amounted to a superficial ‘add on’ or tangent that did not advance or contribute to the overall thrust of the inquiry.