

Scholarship

2011 Assessment Report

Visual Arts: Printmaking

COMMENTARY

Printmaking Scholarship continued in 2011 to have a richness of submissions that exhibited a real sense of ownership and a genuine experimentation with ideas and processes. Many candidates had a comprehensive understanding of traditional printmaking conventions and activated conceptual ideas with confidence and insightfulness; this enabled complex propositions to unfold and operate effectively. Successful candidates understood how to use their subject matter to initiate, explore, communicate, and express visual ideas and concepts.

Submissions that gained Scholarship were firmly and confidently grounded in a high level of drawing practice, both traditional and contemporary approaches that offered variety and inventiveness and successfully declared themselves by the visual coherence in the folio and workbook as a partnership. Successful folio and workbook packages demonstrated candidates' high ability to manage and individually negotiate pathways that conceptually driven ideas could develop forward. Experimental and transitional developments were extended by creative and well-considered adjustments in aesthetics, image, process, and colour, which was harmonised again by a well configured and owned proposition. Candidates are working in a wide range of printmaking processes, synthesising with other fields by utilising options for making from outside the field of Printmaking, such as photogram and cyanotype photographic processes, installation, and film. Understanding and facility of external methods utilised was fluid and well integrated into the print medium, which was exciting to observe.

Candidates displayed an extensive variety for presenting workbooks and demonstrated both honesty and ownership. Selection of appropriate artists' models is critical at this level and must have relevance to the proposition, and should not be selected on the basis of 'share' aesthetics as in, "I like this model's work". Artist model references should provide useful turning points in the advancement of ideas and experimentation of processes in relation to the topic and concepts being explored.

The overall ability of many candidates to engage themselves in complex, genuine, and well researched propositions led to rich and diverse levels of refinement within printmaking practice. The investment in experimental media material use as an aesthetic tool or method to develop visually articulate and ambitious works was a real strength for many submissions, as each new work offered new solutions or shifts in ideas.

Finally, the Scholarship panel would like to encourage students who are performing at Achievement with 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 expert use of drawing to visually convey complex ideas in image making through a well established and engaging proposition
- located their own inquiry within well sustained and understood contexts, through systematic and inventive making underpinned by ongoing critical analysis

- demonstrated a high level of fluency and technical skill of print processes and provided evidence of 'new' work and experiments that set in motion further developments within the body of work
- presented workbooks that moved on from their artistic references, relating ideas to techniques, building and reinforcing decisions made on the folio to offer other possibilities through analytical and reflective reasoning (consideration of new ideas or unanticipated opportunities)
- understood inherently the ability of print media to generate a range of subtle qualities and nuance appropriate to their own concept e.g. emotive, psychological, seductive, imaginative, surreal, atmospheric qualities.

SCHOLARSHIP

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

- presented ideas on the folio and workbook that critically underpinned the established proposition and willingly regenerated, re-negotiated through in-depth research and experimental processes
- applied technical processes with a high level of understanding and confidence including testing processes from other fields, which offered a broad range of research types and scope to extend ideas into own photo shoots, performance practice, and material investigations
- confirmed that each new print was another step in the development and refinement of ideas i.e. was in control of each shift in composition, media treatment, and image type
- took charge of media, working with the potentials and limitations of individual processes to extrapolate well constructed and thoughtful pictorial outcomes
- demonstrated risk-taking with printmaking technologies, materials, and processes to explore their own ambitions within the subject.

OTHER CANDIDATES

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

- did not establish contextual connections or relationships between the workbook and folio, rather just merely described ideas and often repeated information that was already visually apparent
- presented work that was not technically adequate or proficient enough to visually communicate their ideas
- did not have a grasp of the conventions of the print medium and thus presented poorly executed work that didn't engage subject matter past purely representational notions
- provided literal commentary of each panel of the folio in the workbook, usually in chronological order, that was repetitive and undermined the inquiry
- 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.