

2015 NZ Scholarship Assessment Report

Visual Arts: Painting

Part A: Commentary

Comment on the overall response of candidates to the 2015 examination.

Painting Scholarship for 2015 presented exemplary examples of high quality performance, particularly noted in the technical facility and application of conventions and concepts belonging to the discipline of painting. Candidates had a clear understanding of the specific modes of painting language they want to pursue. They invested time into exploring options, before they started the folio and also throughout the process of developing the folio. They tested materiality of paint, e.g. developed an understanding of impasto, appropriateness of brushstroke, colour palette, tone, etc. This led to sensitive handling of topics and careful consideration of their thinking coupled with in-depth visual explanation in the workbook.

It is important that candidates link with their passions, find their interests and make a point of it through in-depth investigation and analysis, i.e. make their enquiry independent by finding resonance with something that matters to them and truly is their own interest. Through simple themes well explored, candidates demonstrated a very good understanding of imbuing the work with meaning – conceptualising and developing through analysis (thinking through signification). It would still be good to see abstraction dealt with as enquiry, i.e. working with the ideas that sit within that genre and the traditions of formalism. A deep enquiry into traditional painting practice and modes of working is a valid proposition and has far reaching potential.

The use of artists' reference and models was more purposeful this year with devices of different historical time periods, application of contextual knowledge employed with analytical finesse. Workbooks were also used well to document significant shifts or symbology, as to selection, change of direction and/or conceptual relevance.

Drawing practice within digital formats was well integrated with analogue drawing media to create own 'found' imagery, along with staged theatrical, time based digital media exploration being successfully translated into painting, back and forth, to create layering and rich compositional planes. Many candidates worked across discipline – dipping into other approaches to re-stimulate their direction. In most cases, this was well-synthesised back into their own painting. Colour was used to develop ideas – in particular, the function of colour, an investigation into colours schemes and how it affects or shapes the work. Scale was dealt with similarly.

A few recommendations from the panel are:

Consider colour, composition, scale, surface, figure and ground – formal attributes of painting as worthwhile things to investigate, not as supplements to the meaning of an image, but as integral to the meaning of a painting;

If you find it difficult to regenerate or substantiate your work, look outside of art to get material, subject matter, forms;

If you are using symbolism, iconography or visual metaphor, discuss the significance of the meaning it has for you, not just the dictionary definition or commonly accepted view. The panel can see it, but are interested to read what you write/ think about it;

On the folio, include information about dimensions, media and context (as appropriate) next to photographs of the work that replaces the original.

The Painting Marking panel would like to encourage more students to enter Scholarship. It is clear that many of the candidates that are achieving excellence or merit at L3 would be positively competitive at Scholarship, if not Outstanding Scholarship.

Part B: Report on performance standard

Scholarship with Outstanding Performance

Candidates who were awarded Scholarship with Outstanding Performance commonly:

- engaged in an individuated, self-driven project where conventions of painting practice were used as influence, but were well-synthesised into the work
- developed a mastery of the chosen technique in painting
- valued and sought out their own point of view in life, subject matter and artistic practice
- invested time in developing and examining options going in and out of developing work for the folio.

Scholarship	<p>Candidates who were awarded Scholarship commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• provided good contextual knowledge of both art and history, as well as popular culture, which was applied in the making of work that referred to other texts/fields of cultural practice• were selective of painting approaches that synthesised well with their topic and genre• approached workbook exposition in a way that suits or reflects their own way of working; thematic, technical, contextual• made tactile, exploratory, divergent, visual workbooks to supplement their folio, but as appropriate to the ways they worked.
Other candidates	<p>Candidates who were not awarded Scholarship commonly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• didn't create a backstory to the project, which then limited the ability of the work itself to communicate• didn't identify a particular set of interests or a painting proposition that could be effectively developed through practice• literally described panel by panel expositions of the work• in the workbook, wrote essays without highlighted annotations and were therefore not succinct and often in tiny writing and/or in pencil, which was almost unreadable.