

S

93301A



SUPERVISOR'S USE ONLY



NEW ZEALAND QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY
MANA TOHU MĀTAURANGA O AOTEAROA

Scholarship 2013 Art History

2.00 pm Monday 11 November 2013
Time allowed: Three hours
Total marks: 24

ANSWER BOOKLET

Check that the National Student Number (NSN) on your admission slip is the same as the number at the top of this page.

Answer TWO questions from Question Booklet 93301Q: ONE from Section A and ONE from Section B.

Write your answers in this booklet. Start each answer on a new page. Number each question carefully.

If you need more room for any answer, use the extra space provided at the back of this booklet.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–26 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

YOU MUST HAND THIS BOOKLET TO THE SUPERVISOR AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION.

Art deals with more than just narrative |

QUESTION
NUMBER

ASSESSOR'S
USE ONLY

3

~~Why do artists "Story" is an integral part of what it means to be human - from the wonders of fictional narratives, to the nuances of historical ^{yet while} ~~across~~ ^{serve to} human history. Yet many artworks ~~are~~ ^{intended} ~~for~~ ^{to} convey episodes from particular~~ ^{serve to} ~~in narratives, natural~~ ^{as} ~~art is created for such a space - for instance, the religious narrative such as Giotto's numerous ~~multitude~~ ^{Giotto's} ~~religious~~ ^{fresco} cycles~~

Story is an integral part of what it means to be human - from the wonders of fictional narratives, to the nuances of human history. Yet while many artworks serve to visually convey episodes from particular narratives - for instance, the multitude of religious narratives that occupy the pages of Art Historiography and the walls and museums and churches throughout Europe, such as Giotto's Life of St. Francis fresco cycle in the Basilica of San Francesco in Assisi, ~~the~~ attributed to Giotto - other art ~~is~~ ^{more} deal ~~more~~ ^{more} with emotions is more concerned with transience, with sensation, with feeling and being. From Van Gogh's "Starry Night" and "Wheatfield with Crows" to Mark Rothko's "Magenta, Green, Black on Orange", ~~from~~ ^{to} ~~impressionist~~ ^{New Zealand} artist Bill Culbert's "Green 3 Black 2", let us explore art ~~exp~~ take an artistic journey attesting to the notion that art ~~deals~~ does indeed deal with more than just narrative.

Firstly, Vincent Van Gogh, the wagon failed preacher and impoverished painter whose turmoil and despair ~~swirls down~~ is immortalised in the bold, swirling brushwork and vigorous impasto of his Romantic Post-Impressionist paintings. "Starry Night" (1889), one of Van Gogh's most well-known works, is a particularly ~~haunting~~ expressive lament on the tragedy of the human condition. There is no explicit narrative to this ~~profound~~ profound piece of art, rather Van Gogh is giving visual form to ~~the~~ his dark night of the soul. A sinister, twisted tree ~~on the left~~ looms ⁱⁿ the foreground, its ~~extreme~~ acting almost as a break to the horizontal, swirling force of the sky, in which ~~the~~ & garrish yellow stars ~~vibrate~~ vibrate with an electric intensity, like huge glowing orbs. The human elements of the work are dwarfed and almost even ridiculed - the gnarled tree colossal in comparison to the valiant peak of the church spire, and the little sleeping town tiny and helpless beneath the rolling of heavens. Rather than derive inspiration from the beauty of the night sky, Van Gogh's seems to ~~feel~~ express concentrated loneliness and ~~despair~~ isolation at human insignificance in the face of the enormity of the universe. Here, emotion overpowers narrative in a haunting with a hunting as Van Gogh's express Van Gogh pioneers aspects of expressionism in a haunting testament to despair. "

Furthermore, "Wheatfield with Crows", rendered by Van Gogh in 1890 mere weeks before he committed suicide at the age of only 37, ~~even further~~ questions the point of expresses the darker side agency a work of seeps & reverberates with turmoil and mental anguish. Van Gogh A red and green path ventures into a windswept wheatfield, only to simply end, with no apparent destination. What, Van Gogh seems to plead, is the point of life, if we wend our way through the years simply to die, to end, to cease to be? Van Gogh's choice of colouration of the path reinforces this despair - "I have tried to express the terrible passions of humanity by means of red and green," Van Gogh ~~said~~ explained, seeing in the juxtaposition of these vivid colours a jarring dissonance. ^{The sinister mood of the work is deepened} Above the wheatfield, crows, symbols of death, fly in a multitude of uncertain directions in an ominous, stormy sky. The vigorous texture of the brushwork ~~leads~~ ^{white} troubled ~~quality~~ exudes angst on almost tangible angst. As in "Starry Night", the work Van Gogh does not construct a narrative here but rather endeavours to ~~push~~ point with the colors of his a tormented ~~positive~~ visual metaphor for his roiling psyche - as great poets give voice to human emotion, so great artists like Van Gogh give it colour and form.

An essential leap forward into the twentieth century now allows us to consider narrative, or the lack of it, in a more modern artistic context.

"A painting is not about an experience," Mark Rothko declared, "It is an experience" - and artist Mark Rothko's for instance "Magenta, Green, Black on Orange" (1949), for instance, is remarkable in not only its lack of exclusion of explicit narrative but indeed a complete rejection of figurative forms rather than nothing instead this masterpiece simply exudes another form altogether. Rothko instead embraces immerses himself in colour as subject matter, with rectangular blocks of colour "breathed" ~~and~~ ^{onto} layered onto the uncoated and untreated canvas. The result is a stunning and surprisingly moving moving experience, as the colours vibrate against one another in countless permutations, some appearing to sink into pictorial space while others bulge forward into the world of the viewer, and then with ~~the~~ abrupt ^a change ~~abrupt~~ morphing as we ~~we~~ ^{transform} our perceptions then develop suddenly shift. The large black panel of colour ~~in~~ Magenta in "Magenta, Green, Black on Orange", for instance, sandwiched by strips of warm cream, could ^{at once} be a yawning void in Rothko's composition; or perhaps a flat space around which other colours hum and pulse; or even extending outwards towards us. Ultimately it is up to us to

decide on our own interpretation of this symphony of radiating colour - even Rothko has liberated us to endow it with our own personal sense of drama and meaning. This ~~is often~~ seems to be completely removed from the definitive narrative religious narratives of the early Renaissance, ~~which~~ painted ^{largely} for the purpose of narrating Biblical accounts to the illiterate masses! Hence ~~Art, Art~~, rather Rothko has granted & crafted a work free from narrative, ~~so that it may then allow us to see and feel in it what aspects of our own personal narrative may~~ so that it may then allow us to see and feel in it what aspects of our own personal narrative may more profoundly reflect and deepen the world of each viewer.

This brings us to a work created by in our own nation century and nation - New Zealand artist Bill Culbert's ²⁰⁰⁶ "Green 3 Black 2".

Forming part of the 8th Silver Truck exhibition of New Zealand's Real Art Roadshow, it was a privilege to gaze at this work in ~~pe~~ actually earlier this year. It is a deceptively simple work, consisting of three green black and two black plastic bottles ^{through which} arranged in a row across positioned in an ~~row across~~ a fluorescent white tube has been inserted. The bottles ^{five} humble & bottles embody the everyday and over the mundane, and sit in ordered, rhythmic contentment - yet the fluorescent tube within them is transformative. These seemingly

ordinary objects over which man becomes, that graced by the element of light, evocative of much grander and far more beautiful phenomena such as total green light filtering through icy green water, or the glow of pounamu jade. It is a testament to the potential of the simple and the everyday to become ~~extraordinary~~^{extraordinary if only} what can be considered acts of art viewed in a different ~~through the~~^{through the} "light", as it were.

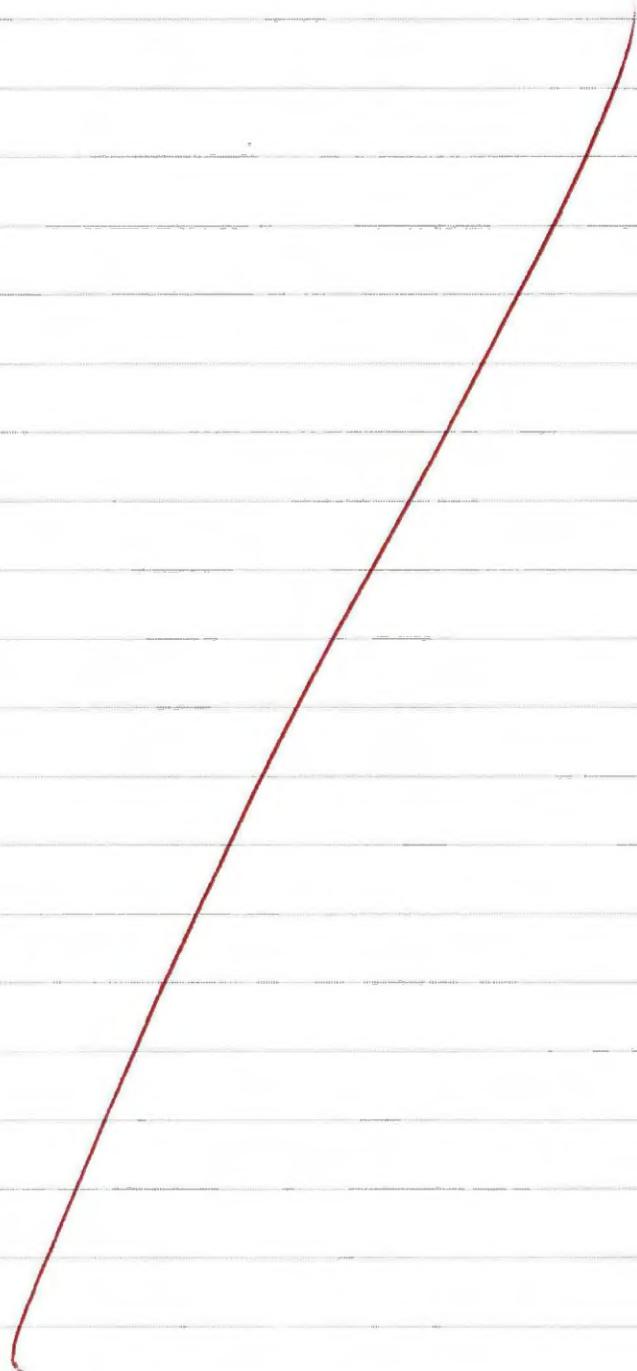
Culbert presents no narrative to ~~other~~^{his audience} viewer - even his objective and literal title of "Green 3 Black 2" lends no airs and graces to his creation - but rather in letting his artwork speak for itself, and whisper into the listening heart of the viewer, as ~~this~~ the five unassuming plastic bottles become objects powerful of power and value.

Therefore, in conclusion, it is abundantly clear that from this fascinating range of artworks - from Van Gogh's haunting images of impastoed on despair, to Rothko's celebration of colour, to Bill Culbert's construct of found objects - that art by no means necessitates dealing with narrative. None of ~~these~~^{the} four artworks ~~discussed~~^{present or implied} are narratively diverse, ~~yet~~^{inclined} yet each exertion extends ~~an~~^{over} a wealth of impact to the viewer, suggesting that sometimes, when it comes to narrative in art, less can be more. Perhaps the greatest most powerful art and universal art is that which does not set out to express a specific narrative or story, but rather

QUESTION
NUMBERASSESSOR'S
USE ONLY

allows us to discern our own.

U



9
Art is always made for an audience.

- 7 Why does the artist create? The reasons are as myriad and diverse as artists themselves, yet often it revolves around the notion of sharing, of conveying and communicating ~~an~~ an idea or a message, an emotion or sensation, a dream or imagined world. ~~This is why~~ ~~an~~ ~~artist's~~ ~~work~~ ~~is~~ ~~made~~ ~~for~~ ~~an~~ ~~audience~~ If not to share such an element of experience with some form of audience, art loses much of its purpose and power.

Let us first leap back into the fascinating world of ancient Rome, where the ^{mobile} ~~Bust~~ of Philip the Arabus, a Roman emperor, was sculpted in 244-249 AD. This ~~is a work of~~ ^{was} ~~an~~ interpretation ^{of} a work of propaganda, ~~and~~ explicitly approved by Philip himself, for the audience of the Roman people. In the ~~Third~~ ~~Emperor~~ After all, loyalty and trust in one's ruler are important to inspire in any time and age, particularly so in troubled times - and when Philip came to power in the third century AD, Rome was rife with military unrest and political intrigue. Philip is therefore depicted in the Vosistic style - otherwise referred to as, "warts and all": ~~with a~~ ~~not~~ particularly flattering depiction of his physiognomy: forehead furrowed above a large Semitic nose, with deep nose to mouth ~~grooves~~, crevices, a heavy jawline and high sculpted cheekbones. Philip is portrayed ~~with~~ It is with perhaps unflattering honesty that the sculptor has worked - yet for a deliberate purpose, to convey Philip as a real and relatable figure of

authority, and one who has acquired through experience and hardship the qualities of age - wisdom and capability. Her is the This is no young upstart of an emperor, Philip's audience is reassured, but a most ~~suitably~~ aged committed and experienced ruler who even when off-duty - as suggested by his non-commanding pose - is ~~worried~~ ponders how to remedy René's many troubles, with ~~an~~ grave ~~and~~ ~~sovereign~~ gaze of his incised pupils to the right. ~~For this~~ This artwork, then, like all propaganda, ~~has been~~ ^{most certain} crafted for an audience and indeed ~~work~~ is an element of propaganda

Springing forward into ^{blossoming} Florence in the midst of the ~~midst of the~~ ^{immersed in the} burgeoning Renaissance provides a very different historical and artistic context in which to consider the relationship between artist and audience. ~~Masaccio~~ Particularly captivating is the work of the brilliant ~~Masaccio~~, ~~shortly~~ who ~~tragically~~ died ~~at the~~ in 1428 ~~at the age of~~ only 26-27 - yet even even before his untimely death in 1428 at the age of only 26-27 ~~he~~ ~~wonderfully~~ created a stunning artistic legacy ~~rather~~ of unprecedented naturalism and ~~that~~ perspectival accuracy. "Holy Trinity", a ~~bit~~ for instance, frescoed ~~bit~~ halfway down the left aisle ~~etc~~ on the walls of Santa Maria Novella in circa 1425, ~~been~~ ~~consists of~~ ~~a~~ ~~area~~ depicts an architectural space with such meticulous linear perspective that 16th century art historian Giorgio Vasari remarked that it appeared as if "the wall had been pierced" with ~~such~~ a real chapel. ~~Masuccio's~~

was consideration of the impact of this perspectival system on his audience is evident as the whole work is created around a single vanishing point positioned at the viewer's eye level. Furthermore, he has clearly considered how to best draw the audience into appropriate reverence and worship of the Triune God as the Bust of Philip the Arabian was designed to draw ^{its} Roman audience into a spirit of loyalty and trust) in their emperor, "Holy Trinity" is also ~~designed similarly~~ ^{also} designed to draw & similarly evoke a specific response from its audience - in this case, to draw viewers into appropriate reverence and worship of the Triune God. For this purpose the patron, Domenico Lenzi, and his wife are included kneeling in the architectural foreground of the work - like us, they are excluded from the offered barrel vault in which the persons of the Holy Trinity, along with Mary and John, are depicted, and so as like them we should kneel in awe before our God. Therefore this ~~quite~~ ^{is} therefore both perspectively and instructively, Masaccio's "Holy Trinity" is most definitely an artwork made for ~~use~~ ^{use} as its churchgoing audience.

Advancing another 175 years or so brings us, quite literally, "face to face" with ~~the~~ Caravaggio's ^{Caravaggio's} spectacularly memorable and macabre "The Head of Medusa" (1598-1599). In rendering this grisly scene, Core Baroque master Caravaggio has clearly considered how to best exert a ~~memorable~~ lasting impression on his audience. "Caravaggio," art historian Simon

Schama writes in his lively narrative "The Power of Art", "is the most confrontational of painters, with everything calculated to be too close for comfort." This insight is as captivatingly evident in "Head of Medusa", where Caravaggio, painted painting on the bulging convex surface of a poplar shield, in this amph renders deep shadows on the ~~dark green~~ background to illusionistically transform the green background into a concave, bowl-like shape hollow from which Medusa's severed head rears alarmingly up and out at viewers.

Furthermore Caravaggio has selected the most shudder-inducing moment of Medusa's demise, an almost repulsive reconciliation between life and death where ^{as} Medusa's cheeks still exude the glow of life ^{against} while stalactite-like forms of blood explode from her neck, and her reptilian tresses continue to coil and writhe even as the head from which they sprout dies. In constructing such a theatrical, disturbing juxtaposition, ~~of life and death~~ Caravaggio irresistibly induces a sobering ^{effect on his audience} movement - for in the face of such a graphic depiction of death, who can help but discern a ~~fear of one's own~~ notion of one's own future death lurking in some corner of the mind? It is almost as though Caravaggio is delighting in the ~~by~~ ^V himself, his paintings inducing

We arrive at the final work to be discussed, an equally disturbing pencil and conte on paper work by New Zealand artist Sylvia Siddell, entitled "Inferno" (2007). This ^{Siddell} ^{whole} composition ^{or arrangement} is designed

^{with} her audience in mind, as the viewer is drawn through inclusively implied water beyond pictorial space - we were stood before ~~her~~ her hellish kitchenware dam ~~soak~~ stovetop just where the user of these malicious kitchen accoutrements would be positioned. It is almost as though we could reach out and grab the pan ~~pot handle~~ handle of the pan in which the fish we were frying has suddenly lurches to snapping, razor-forged life; or slam shut the oven door from which tongues of fire hungrily lick; or ~~beneath the blessing of~~ even be subject to attack by the ~~in formerly~~ cords of ~~concrete~~ electronic implements ~~serpentines~~ electrical cords that have transformed into writhing serpents reminiscent of can the locks hair of Correggio's Medusa.

By Siddell ^{thus} ~~most~~ ^{her audience} lures us ^{into} considering ^{and} even placing imagining ourselves ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~utterly~~ bizarre scenario ~~in~~ whereby kitchen implements undergo nightmarish embellishment to seize a vengeful life of their own, and to turn on ~~the~~ ^{the} users who take their inanimate nature ~~for~~ for granted. ~~IF~~ To stand before "Inferno" is close almost to be sucked in to a wildly fantastical and dislocating daydream, and Siddell has deliberately ~~done made~~ it to be so, intending for us, her audience, to join her in ~~the~~ ^{realm} strange capering ~~whims~~ of her imagination. 4

In conclusion, these four captivatingly diverse works through which we have journeyed from ~~the~~ ancient Rome to 21st century New Zealand, attest all attest

to the idea that art is always made for an audience. Perhaps the artist wishes when it seems there is always an inevitable point of connection between an artist and audience in that the artist has laboured and endeavoured to arouse in us ~~shock admiration~~ ^{reverence} some kind of response - whether it be loyalty for our ~~an emperor, revulsion at a decapitated gorgon,~~ religious reverence, revulsion at a decapitated gorgon, or a new respect for our domestic appliances! ~~why not~~ For it is this in this power of art to move us on some level - often jolt us out of complacency into a deeper and more raw understanding of our world - that art derives its purpose. ~~And even if it's a work of art she/he~~ Perhaps even the artist themselves partakes of this experience, both creator and witness ^{in the birth of his/her} conception, development and birth of a work of art - the first and most viscerally involved audience member of all. ✓