

# 2018 VCE Art examination report

## General comments

The 2018 VCE Art examination was based on content from the *VCE Art Study Design 2017–2021*. This examination report should be read in conjunction with the study design, the 2017 VCE Art examination and the examination assessment criteria.

The following criteria were used in context to assess the Art examination paper.

- understanding and appropriate use of art vocabulary and terminology in the analysis, interpretation and comparison of artworks
- understanding of visual language to discuss and evaluate ideas and concepts in artworks
- understanding of artistic practice to conceptualise, create, present and view artworks
- knowledge of artists, their artistic practice and artworks
- knowledge of a range of relevant resources used to support the research and interpretation of artworks
- ability to substantiate interpretations of artworks with evidence taken from artworks and a range of referenced resources
- comparison of the contexts, characteristics, meanings and messages of artworks produced before 1990 with artworks produced since 1990
- understanding and application of all analytical frameworks (structural, personal, cultural, contemporary) to analyse and interpret the meanings and messages of artworks
- analysis of a range of viewpoints in relation to art ideas and related issues regarding the role of art in society
- ability to use commentaries and viewpoints from a range of resources to examine and evaluate interpretations about art ideas and related issues regarding the role of art in society
- ability to develop a personal point of view about art ideas and related issues regarding the role of art in society
- ability to use artworks and a range of attributed commentaries to support viewpoints about art ideas and related issues regarding the role of art in society

The examination required students to have a highly developed understanding of the analytical frameworks and how these can be applied to interpret the meanings and messages of artworks. For detailed information about the analytical frameworks, please refer to the cross-study specifications in the *VCE Art Study Design*.

It is essential that students understand how the analytical frameworks function to interpret the structural, personal, cultural and contemporary meanings and messages. Practice with both studied and unstudied artworks will help students to test their knowledge and skills in using the various frameworks to construct and justify their interpretation.

Another aspect of the examination that students must demonstrate an understanding of is the art process. The art process is defined in the cross-study specifications in the *VCE Art Study Design*. In this study, the art process is integral to the conceptualisation, development and making of artworks. The art process is an iterative component of the practice of artists and includes the

application of analytical frameworks when interpreting and making artworks. The various components of the art process include:

- exploration of ideas through a conceptual and practical investigation
- experimentation with art elements and art principles, materials, techniques, processes and art forms
- development of ideas, concepts, style and visual language
- refinement of materials, techniques and technical processes to provide visual strength to artworks
- resolution of ideas, directions and concepts.

There were three sections in the 2018 VCE Art examination and all questions were compulsory.

- Section A consisted of four questions that assessed theoretical understanding and application of key knowledge and skills in Units 3 and 4. Questions referred to a range of unseen visual stimulus material. Section A was worth a total of 25 marks.
- Section B consisted of two extended-answer questions that required students to examine, evaluate, analyse and interpret a range of unseen visual and written stimulus material from a broad range of sources. Section B was worth a total of 25 marks.
- Section C consisted of two extended-answer questions that required responses in the form of an extended piece of writing that developed ideas in depth. The questions required students to explore all outcomes in Units 3 and 4 through discussion of the meanings and messages of artworks studied throughout the year, and the ideas and related issues about the role of art in society. Responses discussed artists and artworks studied throughout the year and informed opinions with reference to artists and artworks, selected viewpoints and relevant aspects of specific analytical frameworks. Section C was worth a total of 25 marks.

### Advice for students

- Read the requirements of each question carefully and underline the key instructions to ensure all parts of the question are addressed in the answer.
- Use specific descriptive art language and vocabulary.
- Practise applying the vocabulary associated with specific art elements and art principles to unstudied artworks.
- Practise responding to questions within time limits and using the mark allocation as a guide to the amount of time required to respond to the question.
- Use specific evidence from the artwork to justify and consolidate the answer.
- Do not rely on pre-written responses. Prepare to apply the key knowledge and key skills to a range of question types.
- Remove the colour insert from the examination during reading time and ensure that responses apply to the correct artworks.

## Specific information

**Note: Student responses reproduced in this report have not been corrected for grammar, spelling or factual information.**

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

The statistics in this report may be subject to rounding resulting in a total more or less than 100 per cent.

## Section A

### Question 1

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	2	11	44	43	2.3

High-scoring responses identified the colours used by the artist, where they were seen in the painting and to what effect they were used. The highest-scoring responses noted the name of the colour, whether it was primary or secondary, the use of complementary colours, the colour's temperature and the mood that this created. Furthermore, high-scoring responses were written succinctly and used sophisticated art terms and vocabulary related to the element of colour.

To improve the quality of short-answer responses related to the use of art elements, it is essential to keep a focus on the art element identified and how it is used (the art principle) in the artwork. Vague references to colour should be avoided, for example, 'there is a lot of red in the artwork, or the artwork is comprised of primary colours'. Students could practise using a three-point approach as outlined to respond to a question about the use of art elements, for example, what is the dominant colour used by the artist? Where is the colour used prominently in the artwork? What effect/impact does this have on the artwork? Students should refrain from restating detailed didactic information about the artwork in their answer.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Colour is used to contrast, balance and ultimately, help unify different elements of Cairn's 'Agatha Gothe-Snape' together. Since the colours in the foreground figure are much more cooler shades of green, varying in tones on the clothes and blue in the rug, the figure greatly contrasts between its bright, fire-truck red background. In doing so, the red background, similar to its contrasting effect with the background figure, contrast additionally with the repeated use of green and blue objects to the left and right respectively in the background, and thus background colours also balance the piece. Since some of the shades of blue and green in it match the colours in the clothes of the foreground, colour also helps to connect these elements together and create a sense of unity.*

### Question 2

Marks	0	1	2	3	Average
%	3	12	42	43	2.3

High-scoring responses discussed the types of lines that created patterns and how the variety of lines and patterns created movement in the artwork. The answers then directly referenced specific subject matter in the artwork where evidence of patterns created through the repeated use of lines could be seen.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Alick Tipoti's lino print 'Mulungu' (2008) is an excellent display of pattern, and repetition of pattern, as an art principle. Tipoti's repetitive use of bold black and white lines creates a simple pattern, to begin with, yet his varied use of zig-zag, swirled and glyph-like inscriptions into each line create a perfectly harmonious scene of rhythmic movement and flow throughout the linocut. This repetition of pattern and rhythm give the audience an impression of water flowing down the image, different currents in the water and impressions of the different textures imagined and depicted in the scene.*

**Question 3**

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Average
%	3	1	1	2	6	14	18	21	18	16	6.4

This question was answered well. High-scoring responses developed insightful and balanced interpretations about the approaches used by the artists to compare the similarities and differences in the industrial landscapes. The key instruction for this question was to compare and to draw out a comparison of the meanings and messages that the artworks communicated. Responses that scored highly used comparative language to describe in detail what was both similar and different about the two artworks. Alongside these comparisons, the subject matter and its relationship to climate change and issues about pollution and the discussions about the destruction of our environment and the influence of industrialisation upon the landscape were thoughtfully interpreted. High-scoring responses used specific evidence from each artwork to interpret the meanings and messages, and adjectives such as gleaming, polished, upward, and muddy, messy and gritty helped to analyse the impact of the artworks.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Both Sievers's and Martin's pieces show the viewers how the advancements in technology throughout the last century have affected how we create energy and other valuable resources. While Martin's work "Powerhouse 3" illustrates how the modern technological advancements such as power plants have become commonplace in society through the depiction of the well-known powerplant shape and is a strong image that demonstrates the effect it has on our environment, Siever's piece aims to show viewers the inside workings of the mass producing factories. "Sulphuric Acid Plant, Electrolytic Zinc, Riordon Road, Tasmania" allows a careful insight into the factories that litter our landscape.*

*While Siever's piece is highly sharp, disjointed and seems to have very little purposeful composition, Martin is able to illustrate the plumes of smoke with a soft urgency, showing the viewer the movement of these buildings, whereas Sievers's piece aims to show, rather, a still moment in time.*

**Question 4**

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Average
%	3	1	1	2	6	9	14	22	20	12	10	6.9

Question 4 examined the actions involved in the experimentation stage of the art process based on four images that illustrated the evolution of Deborah Halpern's *Angel*. In order to score highly, students needed to specifically address each of the four given images in their answer. Most students were able to describe the art process; however, those who did well were able to use the language of the study design and described the process of experimentation using the images to guide their discussion. Clear and direct references to the use of art elements, art principles, materials and techniques applied by the artist to interpret and summarise the art process were often attributes of high-scoring responses. The highest-scoring responses seemed to imagine Halpern at work, thinking about the decisions and problems she needed to solve in order to resolve the artwork.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*Deborah Halpern went through extensive experimentation leading to the creation of the artwork 'Angel'. The artist began preliminary sketches on paper which trialed how the form of the work would look, including the use of colour and shape in decoration. Following this Halpern created a small model in ceramics which allowed her to experiment with 3D form and trial ceramic glaze colour which could later be developed into tiles. Moving to a larger scale, Halpern experimented*

*with creating a steel armature to support the sculpture, reflecting the form of the original sketches and small-scale model. Following this, Halpern may have done further experimentation with ceramic tiles and their composition within the final work, attempting to use bright colours. These experimentations were refined then resolved into a final artwork 'Angel' which reflects Halpern's playful and bright ideas that were developed from sketches all the way to the larger scale public art installation.*

## Section B

### Question 5

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	Average
%	4	1	1	1	3	5	7	9	10	12	13	11	10	6	6	8.9

In the highest-scoring answers, the structural framework was clearly understood and made connections to the art elements, art principles, materials, techniques and symbols to discuss both artworks. For example, the repetition of Andy Warhol's two-dollar bills and the way the quality of the prints varied due to the silk-screen printing process. Furthermore, these answers then attributed a meaning to this interpretation through the cultural framework and referenced the throwaway culture and shallowness of consumerism. These inferences were then discussed referring to Fiona Hall's careful application of gouache to create the illustration of a leaf (structural framework), highlighting the precious relationship to the environment or cost of our consumerist culture (cultural framework).

Some responses were structured as a comparison, even though the question simply required a discussion of the different ways the artist approached the subject matter. Observations of the structural and cultural framework offered more than simply the information in the commentaries and attempted to make links with ideas about money, including discussion of greed, decadence and the impact this attitude has on the environment. It is highly recommended that students make direct quotes from the commentaries in their answer to differentiate their ideas and position from another and associate these with the artworks illustrated.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

#### Structural analytical framework

*The bright vibrant green tones of Warhol's work is emphasised throughout the piece. It creates an endless and dominating representation of money as an important factor in everyday life. In comparison, Hall's use of muted green with a touch of blue emphasises the leaf rather than the money, representing the importance of the environment. The repetitious notes displayed in Warhol's work is indicative of the constant 'consumption' of money as the leading source of success. Compared to Hall's work which used the 'individual' leaves to emphasise 'nature' as the source of money.*

#### Cultural analytical framework

*Andy Warhol's work constructed in 1962 uses the 'repeated' two dollar bills as a representative of the successful 'wealth' of America and it's dominating 'status' after other countries. Money in 1962 became more and more important and Warhol's work emphasises the 'culture' of America being 'consumed' by money. In comparison, Hall's work shows through the inclusion of leaves that in the 20th - 21st-century money is heavily reliant on the environment. It demonstrates the fact the 'resources have been exploited' and the 'natural cycle of life' damaged due to the greed and 'economic' advancement of society.*

**Question 6**

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	Average
%	9	1	1	2	8	9	12	11	14	12	11	9	6.8

This question required students to discuss the ideas and related issue(s) raised by the artwork with reference to the image and both commentaries. Higher-scoring responses were able to discuss Aydemir's artwork in relation to notions of racism and feminism and relate it directly to the image by discussing the visual effect of the pink plastic and ideas, reflecting on how Aydemir had recontextualised the sculptures by covering up the problems associated with colonisation and patriarchy to visually represent how our history can be 'covered up' and consequently 'erased'. References to both commentaries were woven successfully throughout the response to support ideas presented.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

*The ideas this artwork by Aydemir raises are political in nature. The usage of pink plastic is "both material and metaphor" (comment 1) that represents the underrepresented that "still await public commemoration" (comment 2). Since pink is traditionally a very feminine colour associated with women, Aydemir uses it to represent the female political figures that underrepresented in Tasmania, as Lake comments "There are no statues of women in Tasmania" (comment 1) in contrast the largely male demographic that is, such as "a statue of Dr William Crowther" (comment 2). Additionally, since the pink plastic covers the figure entirely, the brightness of the colour aims to call to attention the statues that should be there as well, and the "veil" (comment 1) the plastic creates becomes a "metaphor" for how these figures, which are "those who fought for freedom in its many guises - for an end to convict transportation, or for the political representation of workers, or for women's suffrage or for Aboriginal land rights", are hidden from public view and unknown similar to how the amount statues in the park are covered in pink plastic and no-one can tell who they are. This, the primary idea this artwork aims to convey is to encourage and create awareness for the political figures that should be represented but aren't in Tasmania's society.*

**Section C****Question 7**

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Average
%	9	1	2	4	7	7	9	14	9	10	10	8	8	7

The highest-scoring answers understood the nature and application of the contemporary framework to one artwork made before 1990 and one after 1990. Another characteristic of high-scoring responses was the comparative structure employed to identify and explain the similarities and differences in the two artworks. Selected artworks were often linked by a common theme such as colonisation, globalisation, technology, presentation, participation, immigration, virtual reality, artificial intelligence, communication, conflict, nature or change. This provided the opportunity for answers to the question to compare the similarities and differences in the meanings and messages between the historical and contemporary artworks.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

**Artwork produced before 1990**

Name of artist: *Casper David Friedrich*

Title of artwork and approximate date: *'Wanderer above a sea of fog' 1818*

**Artwork produced after 1990**Name of artist: *Peter Daverington*Title of artwork and approximate date: *'Welcome to the pleasure dome' 2009*

*Both artworks reflect their contemporary context during that era which can be linked to the 21st century. 'Wanderer above a sea of fog' depicts a lone wanderer's back on an escapment revering the grandeur landscape of the Elbe sandstone mountain. Painting the sublime nature with gestural brushstrokes and smocky grey tone, Friedrich expresses his inner opposition against the industrial and commercial developments during the Enlightenment period (early 18th century). This act of protesting a vote in an artwork is echoed in many artworks in the contemporary society, especially during political upheavals. Likewise, Peter Daverington's painting 'Welcome to the Pleasure Dome' depicts the juxtaposition of the smooth naturalistic color of nature against cropped artificial forms of networks in the foreground, expressing his will to advocate for societal and political change. The harsh edged geometric form that Daverington paints with ultra smooth surface seems to render the omnipotent screens in the digital age, which leads to various issues such as global warming, technological evolution as well as globalisation.*

*Friedrich suggests that, 'a painter should not merely paint what he sees in front of him but what he sees within himself'. Thus, he rearranges his plein air paintings in his studio to better express his political voice to evoke social change. In his era, he portrays the wanderer in formal attire to be humble which overturns the social superiority of the aristocracies during Enlightenment Period and after the Napoleonic War and French Revolution. Contrastingly, despite Daverington did not personally experience war and conflict, he expresses his will to 'welcome' European War Refugees to the 'Pleasure Dome' of America, hence responds to a contemporary issue. Overall, both Friedrich and Daverington depicts nature, but with the underlying connection to a contemporary issue within the political world.*

**Question 8**

Marks	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Average
%	9	1	2	3	3	5	10	10	9	12	11	9	8	7	7.7

High-scoring responses addressed each of the five key requirements in the question:

- a personal point of view
- one art idea and related issue(s)
- the role of art in society
- a range of viewpoints attributed to two or more commentaries on art
- one relevant artwork.

The highest-scoring responses stated the issue within the first sentence and linked it to the role of art in society. They provided a brief structural discussion of the artwork that they could then refer to support their art issue. The commentaries related directly to the artwork and were from credible, authoritative and reliable sources. Commentaries using fewer than five words should be avoided. The references to commentaries in high-scoring answers included quotation of the author, source of the information and the date of publication. Furthermore, there were clearly two sides to the argument and the answer stated a personal viewpoint in relation to the disparate voices.

The following is an example of a high-scoring response.

Statement about one art idea and related issue(s): *Is it ethical for artists to borrow objects or symbols from other cultures or minority groups without acknowledgement*

Name of artist: *Gordon Bennett*

Title of artwork and approximate date: *'Nine Ricochets (Stand down black fella, jump up white fella'* (1990)

*Cultural appropriation, and whether it is ethically acceptable for artists to use as part of their practice, is an issue that has caused much debate within the art community. This issue is especially relevant when discussing the controversy that occurred when non-Indigenous Australian Ian Tiller, created the artwork 'The Nine Shots' (1985) which incorporated an appropriated Aboriginal Symbol from the artwork 'Five Dreamings' (1984) which had been created by Indigenous artist Michael Nelson. The controversy occurred, as Tiller had taken a symbol from a minority culture which was not his own, and thus had culturally appropriated, which was heavily criticised by the Indigenous community. In a response to Tiller's artwork, Indigenous artist, Gordon Bennett created the piece 'Nine Ricochets (stand down black fella, jump up white fella' (1990), which made an attack at Tiller's artwork. Bennett also incorporated the Indigenous symbol in his artwork which consisted of black and white dotted circles placed in repetition around the artwork, however as Bennett is Indigenous himself, he did not receive the backlash that Tiller did, as he was taking something from his own culture or heritage, thus not culturally appropriating.*

*Many members of the art community side with Tiller's views as he believes that cultural appropriation is "a contemporary phenomenon" and that if an artist wants to take inspiration from Indigenous culture then this is a "demonstration of its success". This view is similarly shared by others such as Australian art critic Christopher Allen who believes that cultural appropriation "is as old as time itself" and should be encouraged within the art community. Oppositely to this, others of the art community believe that cultural appropriation is not acceptable and should be condemned. This view is shared by Aboriginal curator Djon Mundin who believes that when a "majority group works with a minority group, what usually occurs is that the majority group is always dominating". His views are further expressed when he stated that when majority groups use symbols or objects from minority groups, they often exploit these groups, thus cultural appropriation must be used "fairly and respectfully", to ensure that the minority group does not experience exploitation.*