

A Level
Fine Art
OCR
Mrs Crook



Personal Investigation

Practical Portfolio

60% of the total A Level

A personal response to either a:

- Starting point
 - Theme
- } Set by the student or the school

A related study: an extended response of a guided count of between 1000 - 6000 words.

Externally Set Task

15 hour supervised design task

40% of the total A Level

A choice of 7 themes each with a choice of:

- Starting points
 - Theme
- } Externally set by **OCR**

Choose 1 option and generate an appropriate personal response for assessment.

No written examination.



c o u r s e o u t l i n e

Autumn/Spring Term:

Exploration of drawing, painting, sculpture, photography and mixed media through studying art history – Mini Project

Developing and broadening your technical skills and visual understanding based on a theme. Building up an impressive portfolio and introducing essay - Personal Investigation

Summer/Autumn Term:

Specialism in and exploration of medium/theme in independently led work. Completion of essay – Complete Personal Investigation

Spring Term:

External Exam preparation and Exam



WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

- 1. Coursework Portfolio : Personal Investigation** You will be required to mount an exhibition of a number of pieces of work presented as assignments. That is - with research and preparatory studies in either two or three dimensions or a combination of both.





Past A-Level Student Clodagh Delahunty-Forrest

artist research



Past A-Level Student Declan Evans



Artist researched: Andre Desjardins

artist research

LINNEA STRID.



Linnea Strid is a Swedish realist artist primarily paints women and people surrounded by water. She has created four pieces in a series called "The Drowning Artist" in which she paints herself in the bath, with her face partially or completely submerged under the water. Her face is always obscured or distorted in some way by the water, creating a kind of abstraction to the pieces.

PROCESS OF PAINTING:

Linnea Strid begins with a simple, well-outlined sketch of major facial features, such as the eyes, mouth, and nose. She begins by painting some of these areas, such as the eyes, nose, and mouth, and comes on outwards across the face. She also uses blue and instead paints the mixed colours directly onto the canvas. She completely finishes and then begins moving on. She really likes to create seamless blending.

WHY HAVE I CHOSEN THIS ARTIST?

As I feel like a natural progression from Lisa Walker's water paintings to move onto another artist who uses the flowing form of this subject matter along with its varying colour. However, considering where I want this project to go, I have decided to write water with help portraits to fulfil my intentions.

I decided, after completing water, to reflect on my entire project so far, laying out all the pieces of work I had created. This was incredibly helpful, being able to visualise the journey I have gone through so far and having the opportunity to identify underlying themes in my work which can inspire me going forward. I've realised, especially after the 14-page piece, that I intend for the pieces I create at the end of the project to be self-portraits, but I will be obscured or distorted in some way. I will never be fully seen as I am in real life. This incorporates my interests in surrealism as I will be depicting reality (i.e. myself) but with a twist which makes the work eerie, strange or disorienting.

PRO PHOTOS

I took these photos myself using a waterproof camera. I had difficulty taking the photos while also trying to pose for them, so I will not be using them for this artist.



THINKING AHEAD

I also chose to take photos of myself underwater which I could use later on in my final piece. These images don't relate to this current artist but I may refer back to them later on in the project.



I used two different grey pens (with thicknesses of 0.2 and 0.5mm). In order to achieve shading and depth, using grey for all the other areas. This decision made these features stand out more. However, it did cause me to have difficulty with the multitude of shades in the rest of the one used in the watercolour piece, as it slightly obscured my face but makes my specific part as one of the main focuses of my final piece will be self-portraiture, so to a certain degree people who looked at the final piece said they didn't think it looked like me when I show it or ripples. For instance, my hair is much darker in the water. However, it is still me in the water so I want to explore further. This piece was created on cartridge paper. I used the same method as the

oil on a larger scale than my previous two experiments. With this experiment, I will use a lin drawing tool of working.



Past A-Level Student Clara Moore

artist research



Past A-Level Student Leah Grennan



Current A-Level Student Skye Timbrell

media experimentation



Current A-Level Student Deborah Omokorede



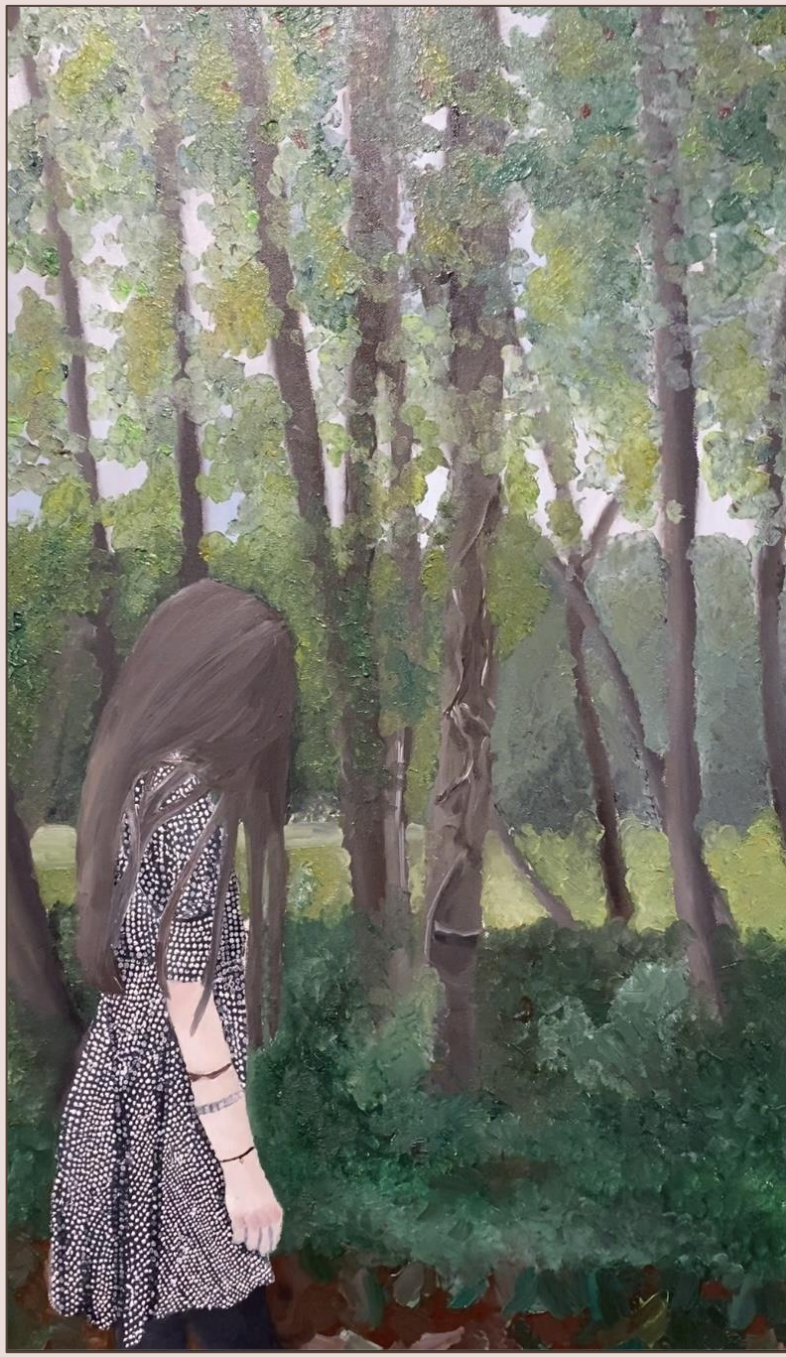
Past A-Level Student Blaise Delahunty-Forrest



media experimentation

resolving ideas

Past A-Level Student Jessica Mehew

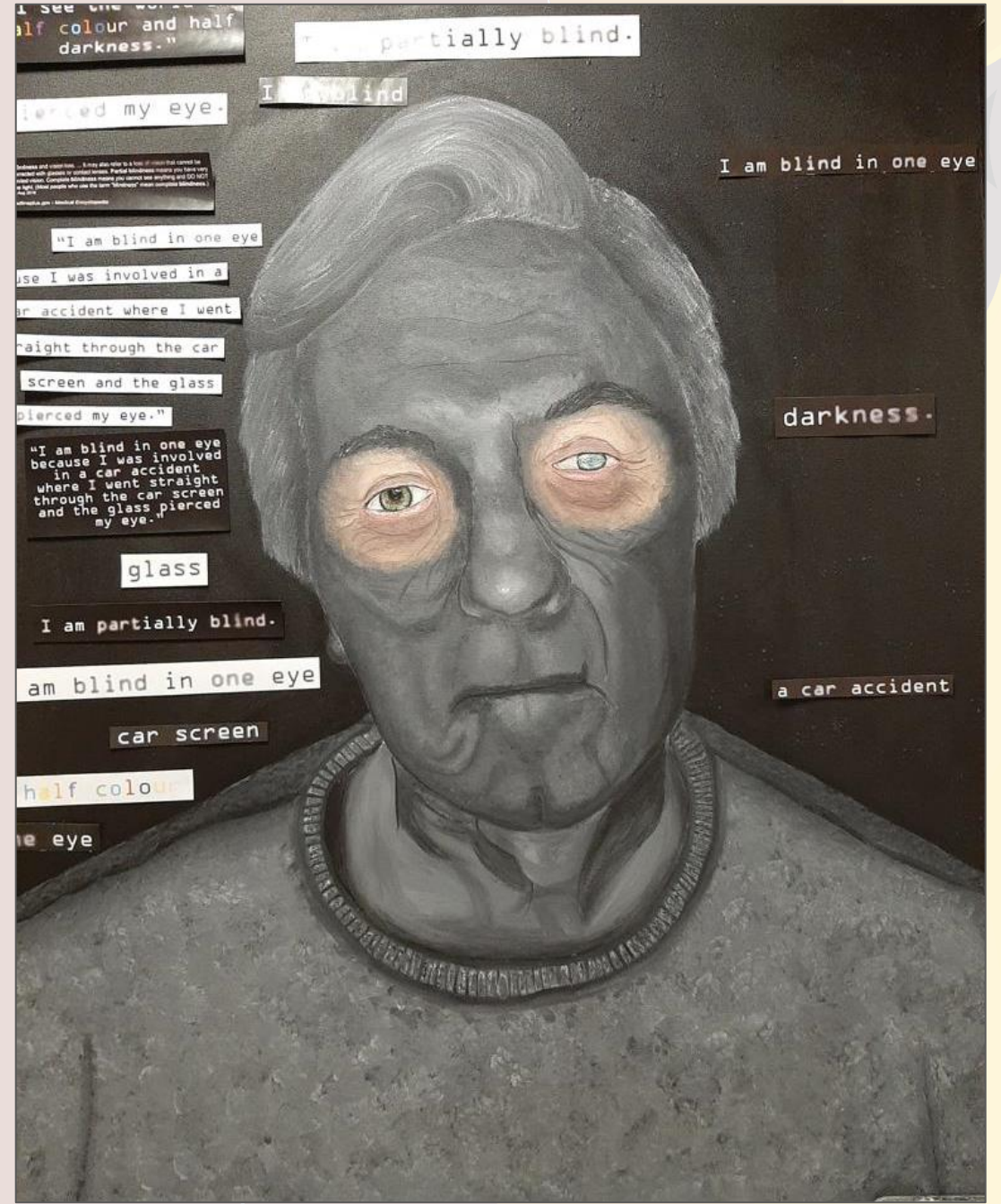


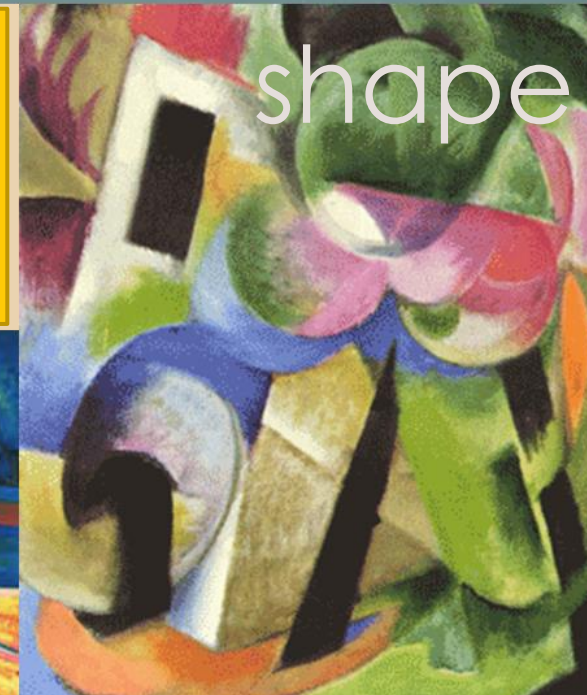
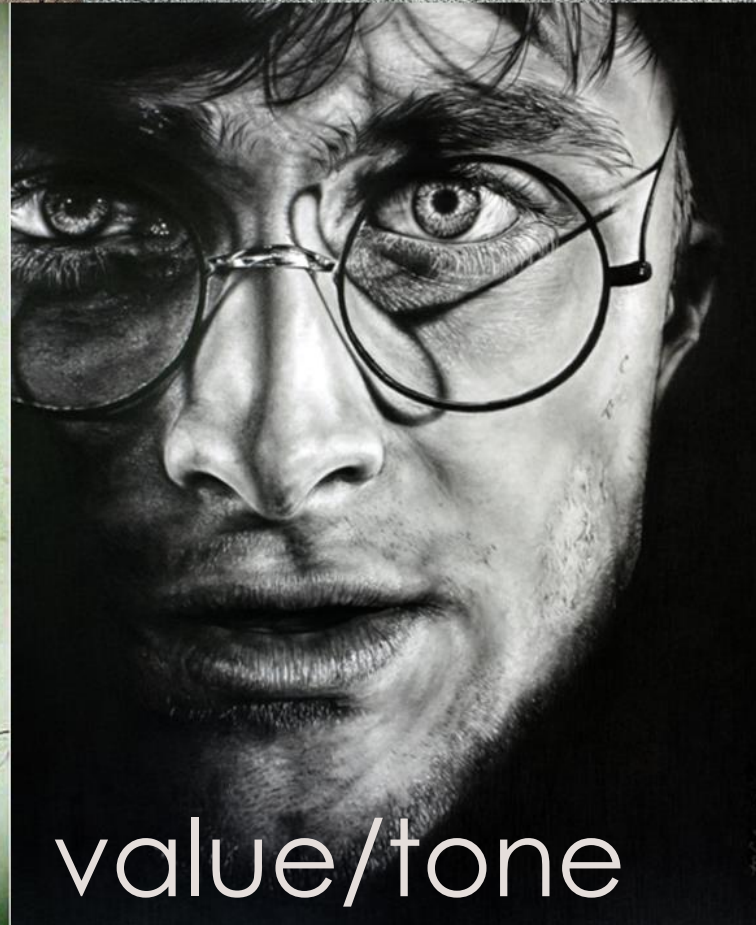
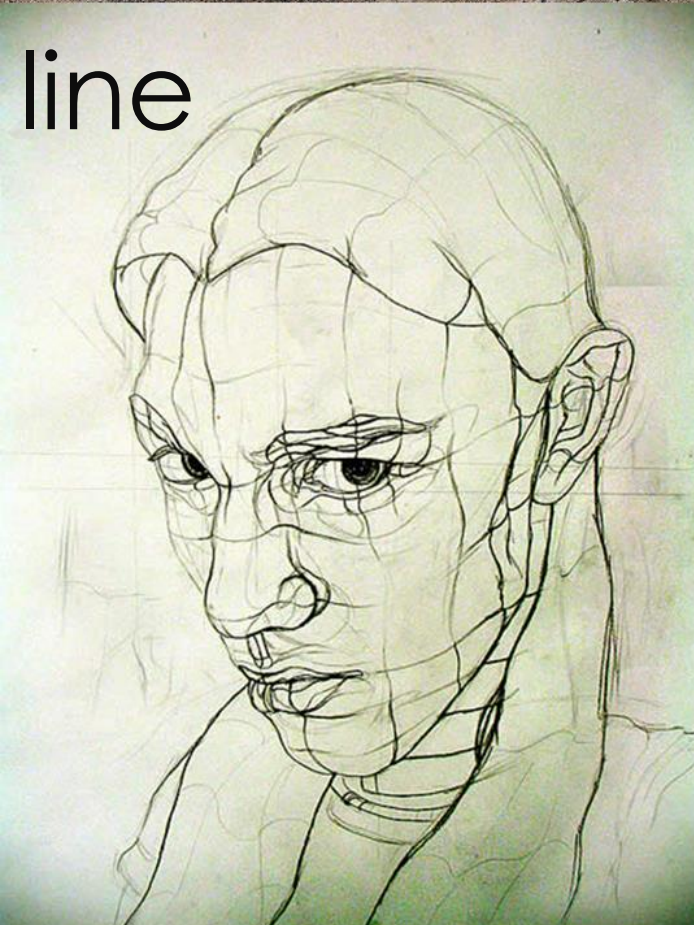
Past A-Level Student Una Clifford



final response

Past A-Level Student Precious Chidzomba







Industry standard software

Adobe® Creative Cloud™



CAD
(Photoshop,
Lightroom,
Premiere Pro)





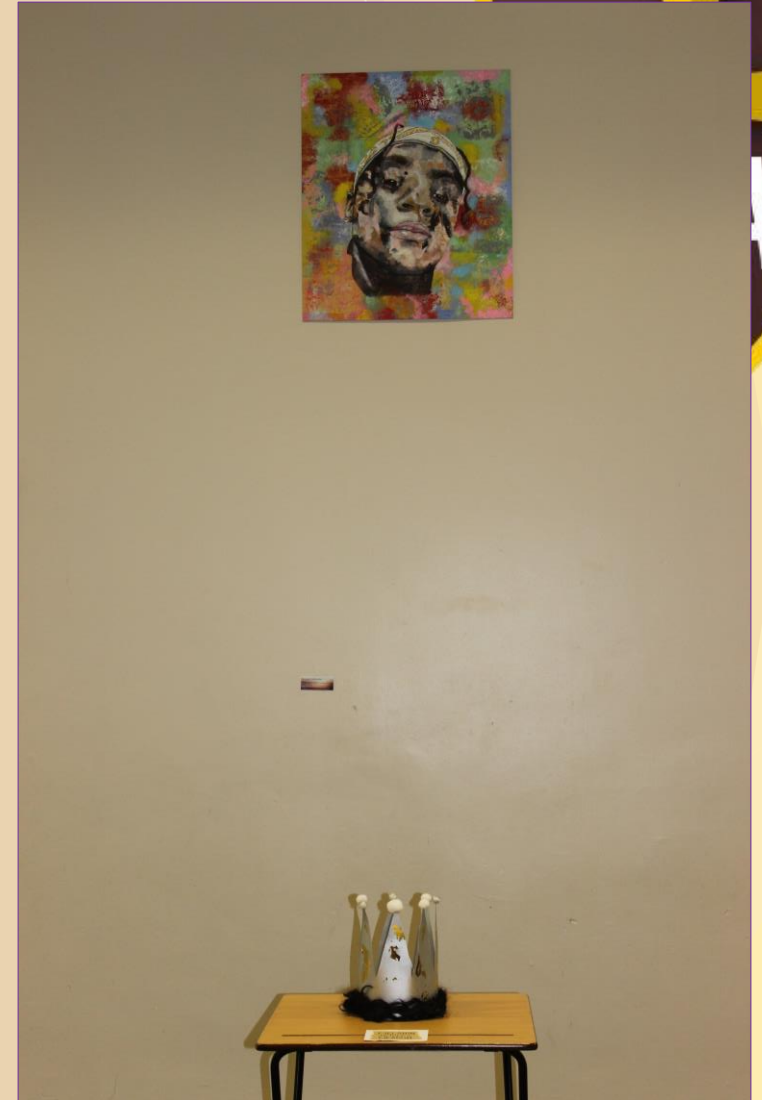
Past A-Level Students
Clodagh Delahunty-
Forrest and Precious
Chidzomba



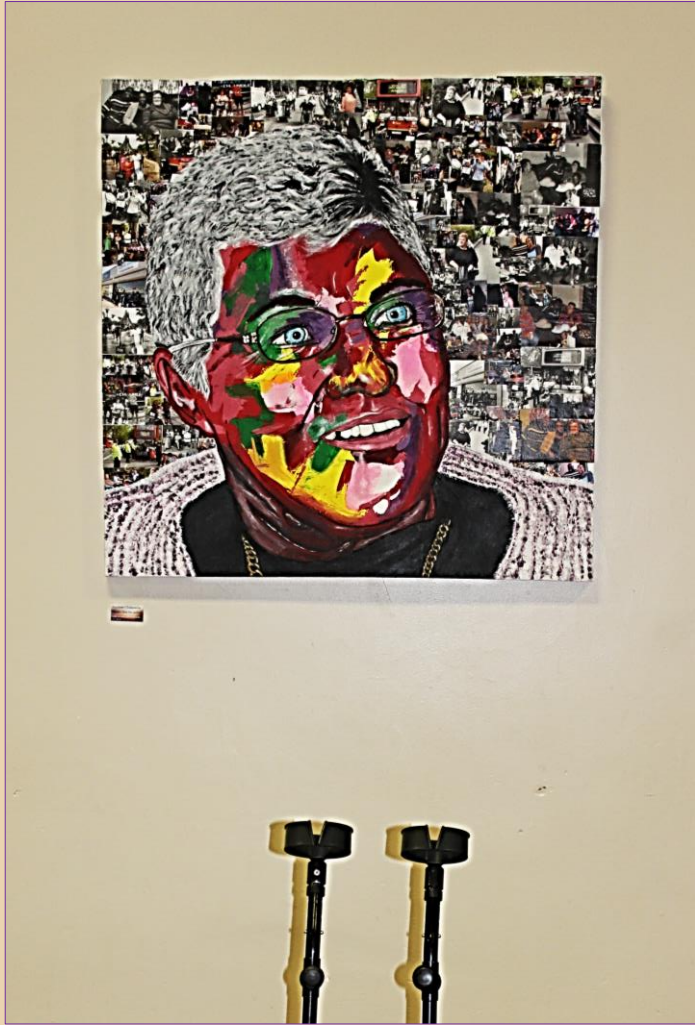
exhibition skills



Past A-Level Students
Sophie McGeough
and Precious
Chidzomba



exhibition skills



Past A-Level Student Precious Chidzomba

exhibition skills

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

- 1. Coursework Portfolio:** You will be required to mount an exhibition of a number of pieces of work presented as assignments. That is - with research and preparatory studies in either two or three dimensions or a combination of both.
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Can't help myself

By Sun Yuan and Peng Yu

Sun Yuan and Peng Yu both studied oil painting at the Central Academy of Fine Arts, Beijing. They began collaborating in the 2000s and used art to comment critically on political constructs, freedom, and democracy. Their large-scale installations spark controversy for using human and animal material when opposing political activity and moral boundaries.

'*Can't help myself*', the piece I want to look at, is an installation that was revealed to the public in 2016. They modified a robotic arm, which is often used in car manufacturing, by adding a shovel to the end of the mechanism. Yuan and Yu had designed different movements for the machine to mimic the normal movements of a human. Some examples they had labeled are "*scratch an itch*," and "*bow and shake*,"¹. They isolate the machine from the public by an acrylic partition. The machine was then surrounded in animal blood, which the machine attempts to sweep inwards.

I chose to research this machine due to its movements: The artist's humanized the machine through the robot's erratic gestures and it appears to be struggling to scoop the animal blood towards itself. This can be seen through the abrupt spins and flails breaking up, and in contrast to, the machines controlled, rhythmic engineered movements. The spins interrupt a series of slow melancholic movements to show how the machine is getting bored and frustrated with its lack of progress. There is a sense of desperation and hopelessness as it is trying to clean up its mess but as it turns its attention away, the blood just seeps back. It is almost trapped in a cycle with no progress.



<https://hannahroseprendergast.com/sun-yuan-peng-yu-cant-help-myself/>

¹<https://www.guggenheim.org/artwork/34812>

Key Elements

The colours used are similar in tone to imply consistency. All colours are also realistic (the sky is blue, and the brick is stone as it would be at the time). The sky is in 3 distinct layers of colour, again keeping in line with the structured architecture within the painting.

The city itself is imaginary. The main, thought to be religious, building at the centre, with the other buildings located around it in the distance. The central monument resembles a historical site called Tempio S. Pietro, located in Rome.



The painting includes no people and no nature - the focus is solely on the perfection of the structural aspects of the city. This is emphasized by the empty plinths. That would usually adorn a statue. This adds to the emptiness of the city, making it feel vast and abandoned, even though it looks new.

The painting reflects the ideals of Renaissance artists at the time - they used Roman monuments as influences for their paintings and architecture.

Artistic Elements

The whole painting is symmetrical vertically, a mirror line can be drawn directly down the centre of the central building on both sides would be completely symmetrical. The only difference being the heights of the buildings in the very back that disappear into the horizon line. This creates balance.

The door of the main building is the vanishing point, with all lines leading to it. This door is also slightly ajar, creating darkness - emphasising the vanishing point.



A sense of depth and space are created within the painting, due to the use of one point perspective. The buildings go back into the distance, giving the illusion of a three-dimensional space - adding to the realism.

The central building is in the shape of concentric circles and its peak is the central point of the painting.



her in this state of stillness. With nothing beyond, the viewer gets the sense that nature is suffocating Ophelia and although she appears to be looking at the sky, really, she sees nothing, because she is dead.



Her facial expression isn't one of happiness, but it isn't one of sadness either. She's waiting for death to release her.

Ophelia's hands are reaching up and are open. In my opinion, there is a religious tone to this. Jesus is often painted with his arms outstretched towards Heaven. In Crucifixion paintings, Jesus' arms are spread and he is looking up at the sky, accepting of his fate and awaiting God. Ophelia also has her arms reaching out, upwards, despite the fact that she is dead, that as being period under the water. Milton is suggesting, through her pose, that Ophelia is accepting of her fate and even welcoming of it, which fits with the context of this being her suicide. We can almost picture her hopes of peace that come with death, similar to Jesus' peace in Heaven after a life of persecution.

COMPOSITION



The strength of nature is exemplified in the painting through the use of the Golden Ratio and Rule of Thirds. The backdrop of trees and bushes curve around the piece towards the front left side of the composition. Ophelia's face rests just above the centre of the Golden Ratio, drawing the viewer's attention immediately to her and her story. Nature is everywhere and it guides the eye, as if the forest has allowed them to witness Ophelia's death.



The cover of nature is broken up by the water travelling through the middle and bottom thirds at a slight angle. Ophelia's dress straddles the centre and bottom thirds, travelling along the horizontal bottom third line. The bulk of the foliage is placed in the top and bottom thirds, (horizontally) allowing the painting to feel encompassed by nature while still retaining a distinctive portraiture and storytelling aspect in and at the centre.



The river banks on either side of Ophelia form leading lines, guiding the viewer to create a sense of flow and movement as she floats parallel to them.

OPHELIA AND WATER

The water itself is personified by Queen Gertrude as being the killer of Ophelia, making her dress so heavy that it pulled her under. If she was alive there would be some kind of movement or rippling. Water is a part of nature, but the fact that it has no movement symbolises that death is present in the scene. Ophelia is being carried and almost supported by the river, while its ultimate purpose is to end her suffering. In the most obvious way, the water is the killer. However, in the romantic mood of the painting, water is her saviour/means of escape.



This piece⁹ is a little different and doesn't have as many obvious contrasts. The woman in the artwork appears to be experiencing domestic abuse; others see a happy loving relationship as he gives her flowers, but behind closed doors he is punching her which she has sadly become numb to. This makes me feel helplessness as I feel like the woman and I are defenceless and unable to react. The male arm in the piece is a vivid orange tone which is the same colour as the hair of the

victim, yet her skin tone is ghostly and white which could represent the vulnerability and powerlessness she has. The use of the same orange tones of the arm and hair could represent the control he has over her. The black clothing also could represent the lifelessness she feels as it appears she is dressed for a funeral. The composition of this piece is a straight horizontal line which passes through the middle of the image. The arm, moving into the flowers flying out of the original bunch, and the hair, create movement from the right of the piece to the left. This could show the power and motion of his strength when abusing her as we follow the male arm across the piece until it reaches her face. I feel like this piece represents domestic abuse and how the female in the digital painting is expected to take it and how, on the surface to anyone else, the relationship would seem loving symbolised through the roses. The powerful physicality of the horizontal gesture is disguised and masked by the flowers - this is power and fragility, dominance and submission. The removal of the eyes, for me, emphasises this further as the woman's identity is hidden. The use of colour affirms the muted identity of the female whilst reminding the viewer of her previous life and passion through the colour of her hair.

Frida Kahlo was a Mexican artist whose main form of work was paintings, out of the 143 works, 55 were self-portraits. The themes she based on her work on was her own personal experiences including marriage, miscarriage and the operations she underwent from many different diseases she caught as a child and growing up. Ultimately, she was depicting the pain that she experienced throughout her whole life and career. Her work is affiliated with many different art movements including surrealism, magical surrealism, symbolism and modern art. Some influences for her work were surrealism and Diego Rivera. Kahlo admired Rivera and his work and eventually married him in 1929.



This artwork that she created was a part of the naive art period which means simple and unaffected. This piece was made in 1940 and titled 'Self-portrait with thorn necklace and hummingbird'. My initial thoughts about this piece was that Kahlo was trying to send a message that she was unaffected by her divorce and the end of her affair which happened around this time, that she was calm and unbothered by these events. However, after researching the meanings behind this work and gaining understanding of the thorn necklace and the hummingbird, both juxtaposing each other, I strongly believe that she is trying to say that she is in pain and hurting. This continues to follow the dark themes in her work. She also is comforting herself by using the hummingbird as symbolism for good luck. Kahlo is portraying herself as how she wants to be in the future but also presently that her current feelings are almost a weight keeping her down. The thorn necklace could further support her suffering as it can be seen as religious imagery taken from Jesus' death and the crown of thorns.

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- 3. Externally Assessed Assignment:** A final assignment chosen by you after consultation with your teacher. This is carried out under controlled conditions of supervised time, which will be fifteen hours in total.





INSTRUCTIONS TO TEACHERS

- The 15 hours supervised time can be scheduled at any time provided that at least one session is at least 1.5 hours in duration.
- Time given to candidates for preparatory work can be determined by centres.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

- There are seven themes in this paper. You may choose any theme.
- Work on one chosen theme. Choose one option (A, B, C, D, E, F or G).
- All options are available for all specifications.
- During the 15 hours supervised time, you are required to demonstrate your ability to select your theme and produce your submission(s) (as related to your preparatory work).

INFORMATION

- The mark mark for your preparatory work and submission(s) is 88.
- The marks for each question are shown in brackets ().
- You will be given a period of time to plan and prepare your work before the 15 hours of supervised time.
- This document consists of 20 pages.

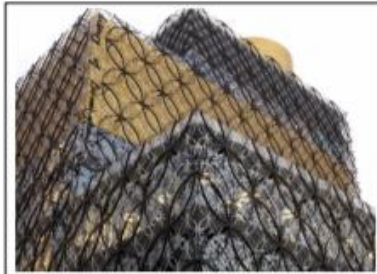
Theme 1

Circles and Curves

'Circles and curves' have been extensively used by artists, designers and craftspeople. Respond to **one** from (a), (b), (c), (d) or (e).

(a) Round, spherical, rotund, circular, arc, bend, twist, loop, coil, spiral...

(b)



(c)

"An attempt at visualising the Fourth Dimension: Take a point, stretch it into a line, curl it into a circle, twist it into a sphere, and punch through the sphere."

Albert Einstein, 1879–1955

(d) A mathematical society is offering commissions for art, design, digital presentation and craft in response to the following brief.

Explore, develop and produce a design for a mixed-media artwork to be displayed in the entry area of the mathematical society headquarters. The design should be based on 'circles and curves'. The final piece should fit onto a wall 5 m × 5 m. You are required to produce scaled designs that explore the theme using appropriate materials.

(e) The use of circles and curves can be found in the work of practitioners such as:

Kenneth Noland, Bridget Riley, Frank Lloyd Wright, Jean Paul Gaultier and Vladimir Tatlin

Either

- (i) In a medium of your choice, make several studies which explore this theme and produce a commentary on your selected context and techniques.

Or

- (ii) Design an exhibition of selected practitioners on the theme of 'circles and curves'. You should include written analysis of key works and related promotional material.

[80]

OCR A Level Fine Art

Results:

A Level Fine Art

2023 – 2024: 80% A – B (5 students)

2022 – 2023: 100% A – C (6 students)

2020 – 2021: 92% A – C (13 students)

2019 – 2021: 100% A* – B (3 students)

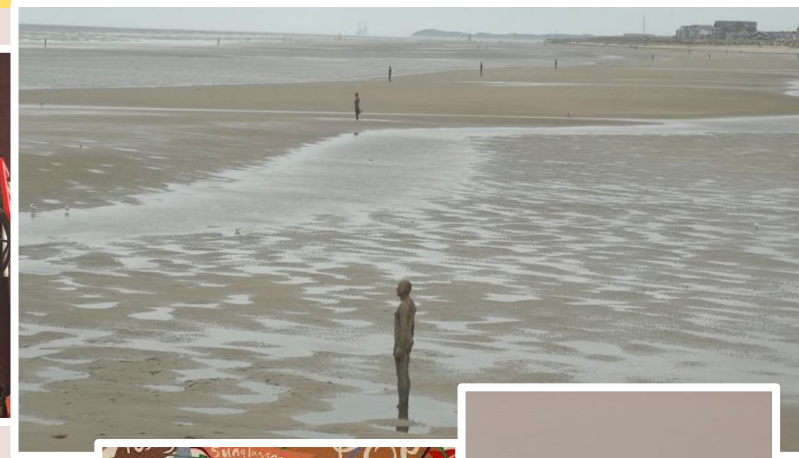
2018 – 2020: 100% A* – A (3 students)



OCR A Level Fine Art

Visits

- Crosby Beach
- The New Art Gallery Walsall
- Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery
- Tate, London
- Tate, Liverpool
- Walker Gallery, Liverpool



OCR A Level Fine Art



Entrance requirements:

- Entrance into Sixth Form is based upon achieving an average points score of 5.0 in your best five subjects.
- Where a student has studied GCSE or BTEC in a subject they would like to study in Sixth Form, it is recommended that a Grade 5 (equivalent) or above is achieved.

Sound advice....

- Pace your workload
- Be curious
- Look outside yourself
- Enjoy the work that you do



OCR A Level Fine Art

Qualities required:

- Creativity and Imagination
- Passionate
- Observant / an eye for detail
- Curiosity and Questioning nature
- Persistence, patience and flexibility
- Time management
- Communication skills
- Technical and creative skills



OCR A Level Fine Art



Courses Past Students have pursued:

- Birmingham School of Art: BA Art and Design
- Birmingham School of Art: BA Fine Art
- Coventry University: BSC Architecture
- University of Brighton: BA Animation (2 students)
- University of Birmingham: Law
- University of Liverpool: Communication and Media (Journalism)
- University of Warwick: Biomedical Science

Writing / Analytical

- Art Curriculum Writer
- Art Historian
- Art Critic
- Arts Administrator
- Arts and Cultural Planner
- Website Owner / Blogger
- Graphic Novel Author

Graphic Design

- Advertising Director
- Logo / Branding Designer
- Advertisement Designer
- Sign Writer
- Magazine Layout Designer
- Book / eBook Designer
- Packaging Designer
- Calendar / Stationery / Wallpaper Designer
- Typographer

3D Product Design

- Industrial Designer / Bridge Designer
- Toy Designer / Kite Designer / Utensil Designer
- Miniature Model Maker / Mock-up Artist
- Stained Glass Window Designer
- Prop Designer
- Food Product Designer
- Potter / Ceramic Designer
- Wood Turner / Carver
- Mosaic Designer
- Jeweller
- Weaver
- Glass Artist

Fine Art

Fashion / Textiles

- Fibre Artist
- Accessory Designer (Shoes / Bags / Hats)
- Dressmaker
- Embroiderer
- Fashion Consultant
- Fashion Designer / Sports Apparel Designer
- Fashion Merchandising
- Pattern Maker
- Costume Designer
- Quilt / Rug / Linen Designer
- Fabric / Textile Designer
- T-Shirt Designer

Spatial Design

- Architect
- Landscape Architect
- Urban Designer / Town Planner
- Playground / Theme Park / Sports Arena / Golf Course Designer
- Interior Designer / Decorator
- Set / Stage Design

Digital / Multi-Media

- Animator
- Concept Artist
- Digital Illustrator
- Digital 3D Modeller
- Web Designer
- iPhone / Android App Designer
- Television / Film Producer
- Documentary Filmmaker
- Camera Operator
- Film Editor
- Special Effects Designer
- Video Game Design
- YouTube Video Creator

Photography

- Advertising Photographer
- Fashion Photographer
- Photo Journalist
- Food Photographer
- Portrait Photographer
- Underwater Photographer

- Weaver
- Glass Artist

Fine Art

- Airbrush Artist / Spray Painter
- Architectural Illustrator
- Book Illustrator
- Graphic Illustrator
- Technical / Textbook Illustrator
- Story Board Illustrator
- Cartoonist / Caricaturist
- Commercial Artist
- Fine Artist (Painter)
- Printmaker / Screen Printer
- Courtroom Artist
- Art Conservationist
- Special Effects Makeup
- Mural Artist
- Tattoo Artist

Organisation / People Management

- Art School Director
- Primary / Elementary Teacher
- Middle / High School Art Teacher
- University Lecturer / Professor
- Private Art Instructor
- Art Therapist
- Art Dealer
- Artist Agent
- Art Supplies Retailer

- Fashion Photographer
- Photo Journalist
- Food Photographer
- Portrait Photographer
- Underwater Photographer
- Wedding Photographer
- Stock Photo Seller
- Director of Photography

Arranging / Display

- Food Stylist
- Floral Arranger
- Display and Exhibition Planner
- Art / Design / Colour Consultant
- Gallery Owner / Assistant
- Museum Curator
- Personal Stylist
- Picture Framer
- Online Curator

Any Other Career!

Art can be great preparation for any career that requires fine motor skills, presentation skills, an eye for aesthetics and creative thinking!





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