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93301A



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# OUTSTANDING SCHOLARSHIP EXEMPLAR



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

## Scholarship 2023 Art History

Time allowed: Three hours  
Total score: 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 THREE questions from Question Booklet 93301Q: ONE from Section A, ONE from Section B, AND the compulsory question from Section C.

Write your answers in this booklet. Start your answer to each question on a new page. Carefully number each question.

Check that this booklet has pages 2–27 in the correct order and that none of these pages is blank.

Do not write in any cross-hatched area ( ). This area may be cut off when the booklet is marked.

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

# Section A Q3:

Plan: Van Gogh, /  
 Picasso Gogh  
 Alcmahon

Art, as a visual medium, affords the viewer the form of colour

Perhaps as effective a counterpart as any to the Wittgensteinian assertion that language forms the primary "barrier to Lom's ~~experience~~ ~~of~~ ~~their~~ world," is Art as a visual medium. Chief among its unique, distinguishing features <sup>the more</sup> elements, then, is that of colour: its use being powerful in some cases, not so much in others; the element of colour is a form that, owing to its complex nature, naturally carries with it a plenitude of ~~the~~ ~~affections~~ affections & affects which have to be negotiated carefully with respect to conceptions of its elements that are



through absolutism, on a case-by-case basis.

In consonance with the statement then, to begin, we could ostensibly point to Vincent Van Gogh's "The Starry Night" (1889, oil, ~~1889~~, MOMA). ~~Painted with~~ Through, painterly, impasto treatment of paint, Van Gogh's canvas is indelibly marked with a vivacity of colour in his depiction of the Southern French Countryside. Herin, ~~the use of~~ Van Gogh's use of a palette of primarily cool-blues in his depiction of the night sky as the work's primary subject, in tandem with his treatment of line & brushwork thus capture a certain sense of tranquility, serenity, & indeed sublimity in the landscape. Further, the prepared canvas with its underpainted, <sup>off-</sup>white layer again allow Van Gogh to nevertheless counterpoint the uniform application of blue, providing not only contrast - a sense of lightness to offset the otherwise overbearing weight of the ~~blue~~ intensely saturated strokes & lines of blue - but further, & through this, to impart a certain sense of movement within the pictorial space; small interjections of white among the impasto here implying & animating horizontally lined movement within the painting's composition. Indeed, the use of



4  
(~~of~~ yellows)

the complementary, oranges in deepening the  
celestial bodies in the work further work  
to congregate the bold & otherwise dominating  
mud & dark blues throughout. The resulting  
image then, while ostensibly not naturalistic with  
its highly saturated ~~to~~ & dark tones of colour  
in its palette is one of an abstracted,  
perhaps even simplification/deconstruction -  
which, through this treatment of quality,  
achieves a sublimity & balance in appearance  
In rendering the night-time seascape, *Sin Qua  
non*. Here, it is important to note that while  
the intense & vibrant treatment of colour  
constitutes a particularly balanced picture  
which undoubtedly contributes to the image's  
tranquil affects, colour is but an element of  
~~the cannot be isolated entirely & what affects  
it has on the viewer necessarily~~ of a particular  
art work can only be isolated & evaluated on  
such bases problematically; In Van Gogh, colour  
constitutes line, & ~~is~~ the line of his brushstrokes  
also constitute his ~~treatment~~ application of colour.  
To remark one is to therefore also mark the  
affectivity, potency, & power of the other. ~~&~~ Therefore,  
while Van Gogh's pretentious treatment of colour  
in search for an individual "style" renders his  
oeuvre eligible for exemplifying the (most) powerful  
use of colour in its <sup>visual</sup> ~~an assertion~~ <sup>assertion</sup> affective affects, it may  
well be problematic, also ~~in its own right~~.



On the otherhand, in the case that there is no colour used at all, it therefore cannot be the most powerful element in given are made. For Zen Buddhist monks, colour is indeed but a distraction in the path towards the aesthetic, especially in their practice of calligraphy. In isolating its artistic & creative variables, therefore, works of calligraphy are dictated by a state of musho, or a oneness of <sup>de</sup> spiritual & physical & thus allowing for the aesthetic practice ~~to~~ <sup>spiritually</sup> efficacy in the ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~humanistic~~ dimension. Indeed, such is the work of Muso Soseki's "No Spiritual Meaning" (c. 1280, monochrome, period, ink on rice paper), whose use of solely blank ink & brush upon rice paper thereby limits / forbids any use of colour. All the viewer is presented is a painterly use of line in rendering the words of the Sutra in a singular, continuous brush stroke that one eye hand may be seen as a reflection of ~~the~~ Soseki's particular mental state, a stamp of its rapid execution & corresponding (in)purities of mind & soul. Or, non iconographically, the circular, ebbing nature of the ink strokes can be seen as a derivative of the also circle symbol of



The practice & the circularity & oneness  
 of nirvana, Samadhi & the physical  
 world. In any case, as a practice of  
 cultural heritage & significance or perhaps  
 the minimalist & simple, or spontaneous &  
 creative affect of the image, there is a  
 sense of affection, fascination, appreciation or  
 otherwise that cannot be the result of  
 any treatment or use(s) of colour, for there  
 is none to be found.

Conversely, on the other end of the extreme, is  
 another ~~work~~ landscape, this time, ~~this~~ Colin  
 McMonahan's "Red & Black Landscape" (1959,  
 Sand on Board, Christchurch), which depicts  
 the setting sun in Canterbury on disk.  
 In the picture, McMonahan's minimalism with  
 regards to other elements - ~~perhaps~~ like,  
 space, form, composition, etc. are scarce, if  
 not absent entirely like pattern, perspective, etc. ~~For~~  
~~the viewer~~ For the viewer, all that can be  
 seen is an ominous tripartition of the  
 canvas vertically, with a uniform application  
 of dark red at the topmost ~~part~~ third,  
 then white, then black. The effect is truly  
 an abstracted landscape that takes  
 the saturation & vivacity of colour as perhaps



Yes primary visual device, ~~which~~ imparting & imposing  
 an ominous effect upon the viewer given the  
 sinister connotations of its blood-red. And yet,  
 Critic to this piece is its use of the element  
 of texture & medium, with the ~~fractures~~ grating  
 quality of sand crucially allowing McMahon to  
 apply a gradient of colour from the ~~dark~~ red to  
 the white that suggests the transition from  
 the day to the light's reflection in the  
 water, extending out to the horizon. Critically,  
 without this, the viewer would be inevitably  
 hard-pressed to identify the landscape & may  
 indeed (into the title) only recognise it for  
 a piece of abstract art & not a  
 brooding x2 landscape.

Like Van Gogh & like Sasaki, then, McMahon's  
~~work~~ multimedia work like the calligraphy &  
 painting preserve each, some degree of  
 complication & problematization of the statement  
 "colour is the most powerful element in  
 an art work," regardless of how ostensibly  
 consonant the work's initial appearance may  
 seem to hold with it. For ~~the~~ when taken  
 as a whole, are more than we  
 reveals ~~states~~ <sup>wholes</sup> that are constituted by more  
 than a mere sum of its elements, with



One non afflictual, communicative, prescience & indeed, powerful than ~~the~~<sup>its</sup> others.

See B Q6

Art, & the study of & art history necessarily needs to account for the diachronic, ~~reference~~ charge-inducing potential of Art. In such a sense, Art can very well serve as a potent weapon. Equally, however, Art as representation, <sup>reflections,</sup> can also serve as prescient reminders of the aftermaths & follies of indiscriminate treatment of such "potent weapons".



Perhaps the first historical instance of Art & its artifice employing its potent, subversive, coercive, confrontational quality as a weapon would be with the Realists; for the first time, choosing to not necessarily withstand the systems of patronage & employment that otherwise sustained ~~them~~ them, paintings like Jean-Francois Millet's "The Gleaners" (1857, oil, Musée d'Orsay) contain <sup>social critiques</sup> ~~self-inflictingly~~ dangerous & that hitherto would have been ~~carelessly~~ <sup>provocative</sup> ~~image of~~ towards the Patrons. In the ~~picture~~, Millet depicts 3 women, double bent in the foreground as they "glean" scraps of wheat from an already harvested field. Millet's treatment of the ~~3~~ 3 figures with his use of foreshortening work twofold - to convey the toil of housework of the poor through their postures & to simultaneously enclose their positions within the bottom  $\frac{2}{3}$  of the composition, succor ~~the~~ below the horizon line. As such, an illusion of ~~great~~ much space is created between the ~~the~~ women in the foreground & the plentiful stacks of wheat, overseen by an officer on horse - symbolic of the authority of the bourgeois - in the background, ~~do~~ & above the horizon line. As such, the critical implication of Millet, himself of a farming background, is to capture the



disproportionate struggle of the poor  
 proletariat in a scene of mundanity &  
 realism to the bounty & material wealth  
 of the disproportionately small bourgeois:  
 outnumbered & ~~over~~ overwhelmed in scale  
 relative to the subjects in the foreground.  
 As one Le Figaro writer ~~Paul de Saint-Simon~~  
 of the work, the "The Gleaners" evokes the  
 piles & galleys of 1793 & perhaps even  
 more presciently of the dulled lustre of the  
 dreams of the 1842 revolution also. In  
 the contemporaneous discourse around class  
 struggle & inequality, then, Millet's work  
 is unnobling & visually/figuratively belittling  
 in one move, the proletarian/nesses & is  
 the bourgeois/elite highlights ~~as~~ a particular  
 historical instance in which an art work  
 has concrete, social implications to the pressing  
 discourses & policies of the day. As such,  
 a <sup>possible</sup> potent weapon to the ends of leveraging  
 its power to effectuate change.

And yet, just as equally, artists & their  
 art work can find itself subservient —  
 as opposed to commenting against —  
 the contemporaneous hegemonic  
 apparatuses. Such would be the case of



Jean-Honoré Fragonard & his work "The Swing" (1767) oil on canvas, Nat. Gallery London).  
 Appropriating the dynamism with which he learned from the baroque style which preceded his work & working against the ethos of his early baroque-style works in ~~the French~~  
~~historiated - court~~ is a public painter,  
 Fragonard's latter ~~Rococo~~ Rococo work observes a drastic change in both subject matter & style. Gone, are the moralising representations of mythology & biblical allegory & tight brushwork. Instead, as we see in the painting "The Swing," is a frivolous scene of adultery as commissioned by an anonymous patron/baron of the French aristocratic court. In the pictorial space, Fragonard's baroque dynamism is instead applied to the fringes of the female figure's ~~dress~~ dress & lace, as opposed to biblical figures with classical profiles; the loose, frantic brushwork & use of pinks & whites on the figure of the mistress & dark greens of the dense foliage in the background are used to implicate kineticism, virility, & indeed, sexual appetency / ~~libidinal~~ libidinal energy in the playful dynamic of the swinging mistress & the unbalanced, euphoric baron. ~~Use of detail~~ Fragonard's use of details, learned from the rigorous conventions



of the baroque instead serve ~~inward~~  
 visual innuendo: The flying slipper, &  
 the statue of a cupid gesturing 'whish'  
 as if ~~is~~ recognizing the frivolous, irrogant  
 dimension of this work, its ~~subject~~ matter,  
 & its commissioned use. In this case, then,  
 insofar as one takes the frivolity & decadence  
 of the Rococo & aristocratic courts to be  
 potent as weaponry, it would have to be in ~~the~~ a  
 strictly virtual ~~sense~~, in historical sense of  
~~being~~ being founded & politicized towards some  
 public dissent. Of course, the nature of  
 this painting is strictly & primarily  
 consumptive, pornographic in nature & therefore  
 represents a devolution & degradation  
 in subject matter to the level of the  
 inane & pointless; ~~as~~ enjoyed in ~~the~~ place  
 can be assumed to be the confines of  
 the patron's private residence, "The Spring"  
 lacks any contemporaneous political/social  
 dimension qua charge-inducing. As such,  
 Art can just as easily be weak &  
 ineffectual - not just a failure of a  
 weapon but rather an instrument  
 of <sup>private</sup> (sexual) indulgence.



Sculpture,

Finally, with respect to Jochen Kollwitz's "Mother with her Dead Son" (1951, Bronze, ~~Neue Wache~~ Neue Wache), we ~~find~~ find that Ave need not fix the hold; it invariably escapes these characterisations. In this case, Ave would be that which is not a potare weapon; it rather ruminates on it. Being in a Picta format, Kollwitz's sculpture finds some homologues with Michelangelo's early Picta in that it too represents the ~~fig~~ a mother in grieving. However, where Michelangelo employs marble & idealizes the figure & facial expressions of the Mary & Christ, Kollwitz executes hers in bronze & deliberately employs naturalism of expression: That of raw, untamped grief. Where Michelangelo's ~~work~~ work is of an <sup>open</sup> pyramidal composition ~~with~~, of a sprouted Christ & abiding, flowing folds of Mary's drapery, Kollwitz's sculpture is far more spherical & reserved in compositional lines, ~~restricting~~ The effect is a contrasting scene in which the Mother's grief is depicted in a far more visceral & confronting manner, where as opposed to Mary simply ruminating on her grief with her gestural life had & melancholic gaze, Kollwitz captures the insurmountable, indescribable grief of a



rather - indeed herself, losing her Son Peter in War - in a fashion bordering on the Oedipal, ~~trying to~~ refusing to offer her son away & are seeming implication to Weather in that

Spherical ~~piece~~ scene of grief, against weather & time like a rock, for all of eternity. Thus, Kallwitz neither affirms nor denies anything, &, along her Socialist-realist affiliations, seeks only to represent in its real dimension of pain & suffering, but an image of war in the Neue Wege War Memorial. Not to politicize, mobilize or animate anything potently weaponistic; only to represent the evil potency of weaponry used indiscriminately in sculptural form.

In conclusion, Art, as always, finds in its concrete examples, ~~its~~ testaments to its fluid, a definitional nature; Art can be a weapon as in Miller, but just as equally it can be here & harmless, like Fragonard. Or, it may be something else entirely, something that escapes conventional definitions of "potent weaponry," like Kallwitz.



C

Martin Gayford's excerpt from his "The Pursue of Art: Travels, Encounters & Revelations," in broadstrokes, discusses the discursive & contextual element of art & its conception by its artists.

~~Below~~ Specifically, he asserts that "Artists are always in dialogue ... with predecessors." To this end, one may wonder what of prehistoric art, like in the case of "The Venus of Urbino," or perhaps cave paintings from other prehistoric cultures, ~~then~~ if Art is contextual, ad infinitum to the dawn of time, is there perhaps some kernel of Art that is essential, genuine, or original? ~~perhaps~~

~~More problematically, on this point Gayford delegates the conceptual dimensions of Art to "imitation, rejection, response, quotation & other jokes." ~~the~~ Along such a line of reasoning. Of course, it would not be difficult to handcap & reach category to artwork: "Campbell's Soup Cans" (1962, Warhol)~~



to ~~imitation~~, "Damoiselles d'Avignon" (1907, Picasso) to ~~rejection & response~~, etc. But such faults ~~to be~~ ~~destructive~~. ~~More problematically~~, Rather, Gayford

More precisely, Gayford moves on from this conceptive aphorism to concretely exemplify such categories of Art's interactive nature: Imitation, like in Andy Warhol's "Campbell Soup Cans", a series of 32 canvases effectively reproducing various iterations & flavors of the commercial product by the same name; rejection & response, like in Picasso's "Damoiselles d'Avignon", (1907, ~~etc.~~), one of Picasso's first fully fledged cubist works of his "pink period" & indeed the first to apply the cubist agglomeration & of deconstructed & restructured simultaneity of perspectives to the convention of the nude. Such is not a particularly contentious point of Gayford's.

However, there is a sense in ~~the~~ Gayford's corruption of Art's contextuality - "like... conversation" - that it neglects a certain dimension of ingenuity, ~~the~~ creativity, convergence & radicality that lie at the very base only acknowledges in passing



towards the very end "however many appear completely innovative." On this point, it can be argued that while Bayford is, from a certain historical sense, correct about the contextuality of art, this characteristic is but a category we only apply retroactively. For the artist, they have to actively create that which (can be) is new, & create their own retroactive influences. For example, Caspar David Friedrich's Landscapes "Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog," (1818) & "Monk by the Sea" (1811) both employ fairly conventional motifs & themes: Rückenfigur's & Landscapes are not new or revolutionary devices unto themselves - like the debt which "arises" owe to their predecessors - but crucially, such is the individual's artist's job to create these influences retroactively. Without Friedrich's contingent creation, there would otherwise be the German Romantic Landscape which is "encapsulates longing" (Robbie Hughes) & the sublimity of Nature in his precise, indebted, contextual & imitative manner.

On balance, however, Bayford's ideas are far more often than they are not: His mention of "powerful egos" & the rivalry



between Michelangelo & Raphael perhaps best exemplified in the latter's "School of Athens" (1511). His self-portraiture in the allegorical emblem of Philosophical Knowledge in the far niche of the picture plane, elevating himself to the stature of pagan/secular philosophical greatness can ostensibly ~~be~~ substantiate Gayford's contention in concrete terms. Similarly, imitation & rivalry are at play again, with Raphael's portraiture of Michelangelo himself, too, pointed onto the works of the Vatican ~~is~~ ~~the~~ as the model for the philosopher Heraclitus in the foreground & his imitation of classical profiles in his treatment of various figures imitated from Michelangelo's "Sybil" ~~is~~ from the Sistine Chapel. In such a sense, congruence with Gayford, we can find <sup>(collaborative)</sup> examples of this discursivity, ~~the~~ ~~&~~ <sup>interconnectedness</sup> across even time itself.

Further on the note of individual artistic agency Gayford asserts a collaborative (opposed to competitive) nature done live & its creation "artists may happily ~~there~~ collaborate with one another." Concretely, this may



find its representation in works like the early post-impressionists, Manet, etc. but just as equally in its obverse in examples like Francisco Goya's "Saturn Devouring his Son," a part of his Black Paintings executed in complete isolation & desolation within the confines of his residence on the Walled walls, perhaps it is here that Gayford's discussion(s) of Arc is overly franciscan, an optimist, & fails to account for the archetype of the truly tormented artist working <sup>in</sup> ~~for~~ <sup>in</sup> a chaotic alienation from the rest of the world, history, & ~~the~~ history. ~~Nevertheless~~ Certainly, Goya's "Saturn" & its frenzied brushwork, dull & sickly palette of greys & browns & the impression, lost edges of the figures produces a look into the mind of an artist & are not so tormented and borders of Gayford's academic discussion fully accounts for Arc's complicated interaction with the intricacies of subjectivity & the wider human condition.

In conclusion, Gayford's discussion of Arc is of a discursive, contextual quality & texture is ostensibly well grounded within the history of Art. ~~The~~ Nevertheless,



exceptions invariably appear, further highlighting the contingent, transcendental quality of Art as a category.



## Outstanding Scholarship

**Subject:** Art History

**Standard:** 93301

**Total score:** 21

Q	Score	Marker commentary
3	06	Highly developed visual analysis was evident, particularly in the Van Gogh work, and communication was mature and confident. The question required support or refutation of the given statement and a clearer stance on this along with more attention to context would have enhanced this result.
6	07	Well-developed understanding of contexts was integrated with highly developed visual analysis in this fluently written and sophisticated discussion. A strong focus on the question with Millet, less so in Fragonard although analysis and context here were strong. Analysis in Kollwitz, while relevant, was less specific.
7	08	A confident introduction to some of Gayford's main points, adding a little context along the way. The response then actively engaged with Gayford's ideas, critically interpreting and evaluating – agreeing with and challenging – in a discussion supported with thoughtfully and independently selected evidence.