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TOP SCHOLAR



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.

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Section - C

Martin Grayford claimed in his essay from the Pursuit of Art that "artists are always in dialogue with each other", with "predecessors", "contemporaries" or "nature".

This is certainly justified to a certain extent as art is essentially a visual language through which artists and the world communicate, ~~and which~~ resulting in ^{it} "competitions" and "imitation". However, it's vital to note that ^{while} artists ~~are~~ ^{do} interact with the three elements mentioned above, but also ~~the~~ ^{they} expect from ~~other~~ ^{other} ~~that~~ ^{they} their sources of inspiration are not limited to them. In fact, they may derive inspiration from all aspects of life, across disciplines or from human nature itself.

While Artists do indeed constantly ~~also~~ create art through "imitation", albeit unwittingly at times. This idea of "imitation", however, is a fine line to walk as ~~being~~ originating and "innovation" are subjective, hence Grayford's straight-forward way of using the word "imitation" is only justified to a certain degree. For instance, one art work that demonstrates this idea is Paul Gauguin's The Spirit of the Dead Watching, depicting the nude body of Gauguin's 13-year-old Tahitian wife and problematically exotifies and idealises people and ~~places~~ places perceived to be uncivilised and primitive. The portrayal of female nude is rampant in ~~the~~ the history of art. From the depiction of ~~Venus~~ Olympia to Les Femmes d'Alger, artists have, in their "unwilling

process" of, depicted female nudes under different lights and ideas. Hence, while some might agree that Gauguin's artwork is an "imitation" of female nude painting in the past, ~~it~~ ^{it} ~~is~~ ^{is} very ~~original~~ ^{original} otherwise as the intent of the artist and the interpretation of the viewers are all ~~strikingly~~ ^{uniquely} different. Gauguin exploits the emotional potential of colour in ~~depicting~~ ^{giving} the girl in a haunting and spiritual quality. The various shades of purple conveyed a sense of great intimacy and mystic femininity, betraying Gauguin's colonial and derogatory gaze of indigenous people, ~~is~~ ^{is} especially females. The stark contrast between the girl's brown skin and the whitish yellow background brings out Gauguin's, or more generally European derogatory gaze, ~~and~~ which shines a new light, albeit negatively, from that's starkly contrasting to the way artists in the past have depicted female nudes.

~~Then~~ Note that the viewer's gaze is level with the eyes of the luminous figure watching the girl from behind, hence the ~~the~~ Tahitian girl is not only looked down upon by the god-like figure, but also by the viewer. This depiction of female nude ^{while taking inspiration from} ~~cannot be said to be~~ past ~~past~~ paintings of female nudes, cannot be said to be exact "imitation" as ~~Gauguin~~ it brings to light the concept of the colonial gaze, through which Gauguin ^{and other European artists} depicted the "Other" - "the dusky women" and "the noble savage", which wouldn't have been relevant concepts until after colonisation. Hence, while Gauguin certainly was "in dialogue with" his "predecessors" who also painted female nudes.

the way through which he painted this work and, whether or not intentionally or not, perpetuated the colonial myth, was what allowed him to add a personal spin to the painting that sets it apart from being a mere "imitation".

Grayford also stated, ~~that~~ repetitively throughout the ~~to~~ extent, that "artists derive inspiration from three sources - "predecessors", "contemporaries" and "nature". Again, while this certainly can't be faulted, its expression is too limited in scope. Artists also derive inspiration from a myriad of outside sources, through ~~the same~~ ^{similar ways} as they would from the three aforementioned elements - ~~the~~ communication, exploration and expression. One painting that demonstrated the inter-disciplinary nature of art is Salvador Dali's surrealist artwork, The Persistence of Memory. Dali had the modern desire to break away from conventions and the rational centres of the mind, and he was fascinated by the ideas of psychologist Sigmund Freud. Hence, he believed that while ~~there~~ art and human experiences are transient and ephemeral in the real world we live in, art in the alternate universe where the id (~~the~~ subconscious) has overcome the ego (^{consciousness} ~~consciousness~~) is long-lasting and universal. This "dialogue" between Dali and his inspired Sigmund Freud led him to create this about 1931 work. The overall colour palette of the painting is sombre and muted, immediately ~~the~~ casting the viewer in a pessimistic and gloomy mood. At the centre of the painting,

Dalí depicted a surreal distortion of an eerily-human looking, monstrous figure surrounded by four clocks, ~~two~~ three of which are given a fluid like quality. In this case, the clocks, products of industrial revolution, represent the "internal policeman" of logic that is so widely constructed and mandated, and blocks the creative drive of ~~artists~~ individuals in Dalí's and other Francians' beliefs. Hence, the rendering of the clocks soft and fluid in the subconscious state which Dalí created using unidirectional brush strokes, blending of foreground and background, and pointillism, represents ~~the~~ defiance in the face of order and a reclamation of the fluid time - the ~~idea that of the~~ instability of time as a social construct that is characterised by the distinction between human experience of time and the mathematical perception of time. Hence, in many ways, Dalí is drawing inspiration from ~~an~~ others and ~~they~~ creating a "response" toward existing conventions and ideas, but in this case, the source of inspiration is from another discipline. Hence, Dalí learnt, instead, from a psychologist and ~~through~~ art, gave the views a synesthetic experience to put to sleep the "internal policeman of logic" and awaken the our innate creativity and imagination. After all, other subjects ~~as~~ found, are just as vital as the three sources of inspiration. Gayford ~~prophet~~ identified and many have long lasting effects on the history of art.

Furthermore, Gayford is right in saying that although Reynolds "did not learn his art from nature", "many artists"

did indeed use nature as a source of inspiration. However, if we look closer ^{in time in} history to the present, artists have often derived inspiration from "nature" but not in the traditional sense, but instead from human nature. Instead of being "in dialogue with early other", they also include the viewer to become a part of this creative conversation in constructing art. This concept is aptly presented in the performance art by Marina Abramović. In this artwork, the artist derived inspiration from human nature - to in turn expose the flaws of human nature. ~~She~~ The artist placed 72 ^{mechanical} objects of threat and seduction on a table with white tablecloth, ranging from perfume and rose to knives and guns. For six hours, she used her own body as feature and bore complete control and responsibility for viewers to do whatever they wished to her in collective action. Initially, the participants were hesitant to use any of the objects on her; however, as time went on, they became emboldened to elicit fear and to test her limits. At one point, a viewer held a gun to her head ~~and~~ ^{while} another made a real cut on her throat. These unexpected acts of aggression and cruelty are taken what inspired Abramović in the first place, to create this work and expose yet another dark side of human nature - the latent potential for violence and aggression in the face of female passivity. This artwork not only draws inspiration from human "nature", which ~~has~~ broadens Grayford's use of just the word "nature" and involves not only "predecessors",

and "contemporaries" in ~~the~~ dialogue" but also the viewers themselves. Essentially, the artist has created a shared space between ~~the viewers and the artist himself~~ as both artist and art subject, and the viewers, and the very viewers take up this space and filled it with so much power and aggression is astonishing and horrifying. Hence, again, ~~the~~ Gayford's statement that art involves several ~~of~~ parties' ~~own~~ collective communication through artistic "dialogue" is rational but perhaps not up to date^{or inclusive} with the new, more contemporary art emerging.

Ultimately, Gayford was correct in saying that artists in the past and present have drawn inspiration from "predecessors", "contemporaries" and "nature", ~~and so~~ ~~the~~ to create art, and in the process "learned from each other" to attempt to become "innovative" to a certain degree. However, with the development of art and our wider society, ~~these~~ ^{broadly} statements are perhaps, needed to encompass the different ~~sources~~ from which artists draw inspiration and the different parties involved in this visual "dialogue".

Session B: Art does not replicate the real world

In the Kleidoscopic world we live in, artists ^{often} use art as a lens through which we may view the different aspects of our world. ~~However~~ ^{Nevertheless}, art does not replicate the real world; rather, it simply ~~offers~~ ^{offers an alternative} way of seeing to rediscover diverse ^{social} ~~social~~ values, ~~social~~ contexts and ~~the~~ issues.

The power of art lies ~~not~~ in its ability to reproduce what we see in the real world, but rather, to convey and amplify ^{vital} aspects of societal values. This idea is explored in Johannes Vermeer's oil-on-canvas painting, The Milkmaid. From the milkmaid's practical garments made of rough, inexpensive ~~cheap~~ materials and reddish stitching, ~~the artist~~ to the milkmaid's strong built and pushed up sleeves, this genre painting depicts ~~the~~ a middle class woman undertaking ~~domestic~~ mundane activities to help us see and visualise the ^{vital} Dutch value of the "domestic virtue". The ~~composition of~~ artist's use of pointillism in depicting the bread and basket enhances their coarseness and ~~richness~~ ^{richness} ~~and hence he highlights~~ ~~the milkmaid's~~ ^{richness} a sign of ~~her~~ simple, down-to-earth, and perhaps slightly impoverished lifestyle. Furthermore, the stark contrast between the ~~dark~~ soft and diffused light and the little beam of unfiltered, bright light too in through the crack of the pane further highlights the painting's ^{modern} economic contrast. However, ~~given~~ ^{given} the burgeoning middle class and successful mercantilism that was happening in the Dutch Golden Age, it is unlikely

that the painting was a truthful replicate of the real world. ~~Reiter then depict~~ ~~that~~ Vermeer didn't aim to capture the life of a miller as he saw it, but rather, to illude and appeal to the viewers, through simple light, and celebrate the many silent pleasures of the mundane life. The composition of the painting with the miller and the table forming a pyramid further emphasises the vital ~~Dutch belief of domestic life~~ ~~as a~~ simplicity and strength of domesticity, a paragon of vital Dutch virtues - strong, simple, direct. Hence, despite the ~~the~~ extreme realism of the artwork, it ~~was not~~ ~~aim~~ does not replicate the real world, but rather, conveys a vital social ^{value} ~~virtue~~ that are in ^{some sense} ~~many ways~~ more important than physical existence.

Art may also portray subjects so real that they seem to be replicates of ~~the~~ aspects of the real world but in fact reveal deeper societal concerns and meanings given the sociocultural context. This idea is shown in the post-colonial work by New Zealand artist C.F. Goldie, Memories: Eru te Papatahi, in which the artist ~~dep~~ achieves such realistic depictions of the subjects that it is in fact revealed to be false and inauthentic given the social context, hence ~~the~~ bringing to light deeper societal concerns. Upon first glance, the artwork is marvelled at for its hyper-realism that makes the Māori women depicted seem like a replicate of a person ~~from~~ the Māori race in the real world. From her slumped form, wrinkled face to her coarsely modelled hands and arms, te papatahi ~~is~~ is

present not only in pigment and oil, but almost in veins and flesh. This ~~depiction~~ Without Biocultural context of New Zealand, especially at the time, being a post-colonial, hegemonic society, viewers viewing the work would have undoubtedly taken the painting to be a realistic portrayal of the Māori people. However, knowing the ~~date~~ aforementioned social context, viewers realise that while the subject painted is indeed a real figure in the real world, Goldie has manipulated ~~the~~ various components of the painting to perpetuate the 'Dying Māori Theory' - the prominent ^{whether intentionally or not} sentiment ~~that~~ ~~the~~ by the Europeans that the Māori people would soon become extinct due to European conquest and diseases. Reviewing the artwork, the ~~use~~ artist's use of muted colour palette ~~as~~ as well as the ~~light~~ different light that emanates from the top of the canvas ~~indicates~~ ~~grazes~~ an impression of dusk and sunset - an iconography of nostalgia and irreversible loss. Hence, Goldie has depicted not only a Māori woman's senility, but also the entire race's vulnerability, detracting it from being ~~the~~ ~~as~~ a realistic ~~representation~~ ~~light~~ representation of the Māori people. While the hyper-realistic painting might've replicated the subject in appearance from the real world, almost as if making a museum record of a race he thought was going ~~to~~ ~~extinct~~ ~~soon~~, the way he manipulated his depiction is by no means a replication of Māori people's condition in real life. In fact, as more information about the ~~painter~~ artist ^{reveals} ~~the~~ ^{- an symbol of heritage and culture} makes on the ~~the~~ ~~in~~ ^{the} papatiki, ^{if} ^{the} ^{man} ^{was} ^{painted} ^{on} and her costume were supplied by Goldie, hence almost

no part of ~~her~~ is a reliable representation of ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~Maori~~ in the real world through this European ~~artist's~~ ^{artist's} ~~self~~-entitled gaze. Therefore, while an artwork may appear like ~~the~~ an exact replica of the real world, given the artistic and social context, it is likely manipulated by the artist and not at all a faithful representation.

Lastly, art may sometimes be so far from ~~the~~ a replica of our ^{real world} in appearance yet discerningly close in ^{and issue it reflects} the meaning. This concept is ~~is~~ demonstrated through Pablo Picasso's cubist artwork, Les Femmes d'Alger, in which he depicts three prostitutes from a brothel in Barcelona's Carrer d'Alger which the artist himself frequented. The ~~female~~ female forms, in this case, are heavily distorted with the use of geometric shapes to depict the figures' ^{angular} ~~angular~~ forms such as triangular breasts and unnaturally bent arms. With such distortions and fragmentations of form, the artwork is clearly not a replica of the real world in appearance; however, by peeling at the ~~to~~ overlapping forms of the figures from a multiplicity of perspectives, viewers are able to discern the issue of the misogynistic society that ~~has~~ ^{exists} in many ways replicas of the one in our present society. The female forms are pushed ~~to~~ in front of the eyes of the viewer, who occupies the "male gaze" by Picasso making the background ~~draping~~ ^{draping} apart of the foreground. To further emphasise the misogynistic ^{and derogatory} view of women as lustful, savage and primitive ~~with~~ ^{with} sexual desire, Picasso places African masks on ~~the~~ several of the figures, creating not only misogyny but also cultural

Session A: Colour and the way it is used is the most powerful element in an art work.

The colour palette of an artwork, arguably, is the first ~~the~~ element of art viewers become aware of upon viewing a painting. Hence while colours may not always be the most powerful elements in an art work, as an artwork cannot be without other elements such as composition, form and frame, the way colours interact with each other can certainly appeal to viewers' senses and evoke emotional ^{or symbolic} ~~that~~ associations when viewing the art.

Colours can trigger symbolic association in viewers, when used predominantly in an artwork ^{with the help of other components}. This idea is presented in Anish Kapoor's installation artwork Swanable. While this work does not explicitly narrate the horrors and ~~the~~ diabolical violence of the Holocaust, ~~the~~ the way Kapoor used symbols in conjunction with colour implicitly allow viewers to experience a dark, bloody past that haunts successive generations. The colossal, train-shaped block ~~is an iconography~~ made of red wax is an iconography of the ~~the~~ Nazi German trains that carried countless innocent Jewish ~~to the~~ people to be slaughtered in cold blood. ~~As the~~ ~~the~~ Immediately upon first glance, viewers associate the colour red to the red blood spilled and splattered during the Holocaust. In some sense, the darkness of red is even more potent and evocative than that of black. As the blood train ~~was~~ inches imperceptibly slowly across the museum on its 80 metres track, painfully squeezing through each archway and leaving red, gummy

wax behind as it passes, the artwork extends ~~itself~~
 form and reform itself, again and again. This visceral
 and bloody sight with the red confronting people's
 visual sense with force and ~~aggression~~ ^{power}, viewers cannot
 help but lament about the loss that was robbed of
 assistance. Of course, colours, while powerful, are enhanced
 by various other elements of the work. In this case, by
~~exhibiting~~ ^{exhibiting} the red, blood train in Hans de Koonst, a museum
 that was first commissioned by the Nazis during the Holocaust
 where the family room was lived by Adolf Hitler himself
~~not~~, the colour red becomes even more evocative, ironic
 and sensational, as if viewers can physically see the
 terrifying ~~the~~ scene of the train carriage seen to
 be killed unjustly. Therefore, colours can sometimes be
 the most powerful element of an artwork when used
 to symbolise a certain thing and to evoke a certain
 emotion, but it can also be enhanced by the artist
 using other elements of art in conjunction.

The artwork's colour may also be the most powerful element
 in ~~an~~ when left alone to interact with each other
 without much ~~agency~~ ^{agency} artistic agency from the artist.
 Andy Warhol's pop artwork demonstrates this idea.
 In this ~~work~~ ^{work}, Warhol ~~depicts~~ ^{depicts} ~~the~~ ^{Marilyn Diptych} or publicity still
 of Marilyn ~~50 times~~ ^{50 times} across the canvas, with 25
 in colours and 25 in black and white. The gaudy,
 garish, bright ^{techni-} colours on the left panel, combined with
 the lack of foreshortening and formal modelling morphs
 Monroe's face into an eerie, inhuman mask that

reminiscent of an embalmment corpse, the ~~st~~ talking away
 Monroe's liveliness and individuality as a person. The ~~for~~
 pictures of Monroe on the left are so starkly contrasting
 to people's past perception of her, ^{depicting} not only
 physical features but also emotional features, violent
~~can~~ are resensitised to the ~~the~~ death of Monroe under
 the immense scrutiny of the media. The black and
 white side of the panel, however, seemingly ~~removes~~
 this out of resensitisation of her and the fading colours
 give an impression of the fading away of Monroe's
 stardom and fame but also the fading away of a consumerist
 and materialistic society's humanity and individuality. The
 stark contrast between the two sides of the panel ~~brings~~
~~views~~ in terms of colours brings focus to the threat of
 and the consequences of mass media and material culture.
 Furthermore, Warhol used a silk screening process when
 creating this work, meaning that any random variations
~~are~~ produced are ~~not~~ the byproducts of an entirely
 mechanical process, including the random variation
 of colours. ~~For instance~~, the random streak of black
 and the fading away on the right panel can be said
 to be the result of colours interacting with themselves
 almost like organic beings and ~~to~~ hence, here, the
 art lies not in Warhol's creation of the work itself but
 rather in his vision to create the work and in the
 random variations produced. Hence, the ^{semi-}random disposition
 of colours in fact influences the way both Monroe and
 Warhol can become anonymous in this society with
 the fading of individuality in the face of modernism.

However, the way colors interact with each other, whether the artistic intent of the artist, may make it the most powerful elements in art.

Of course, colors of the natural world, while constantly shifting, may be the most potent source of art as it is one we witness every single day. Such concept is reflected in Robert Rauschenberg's land art Spirit Judd. This colossal, larger than life land work, ~~with a diameter~~ 150 feet long and 15 feet wide with more than 600 tons of basalt and earth is ~~placed~~ ^{situated} in The Great Salt Lake in Utah. In this case, the particularity of the site as a region subject to the ~~and~~ cycle of nature and ~~disturbances~~ of the environment is ~~of~~ ^{wholly} intentional by the artist to bring out the color, or rather the shift in color in order to emphasize the transience and ephemerality of nature, especially in the face of intense industrialism and artificiality. The change in horizon in the Great Salt Lake ~~cont~~ means that at specific times of the year, the sea surrounding the work becomes almost blood red and otherworldly. This ~~change~~ constantly shift in color combined with the sea's gritty, tactile texture, evokes a sense of primordial beauty, which contrasts ~~specifically~~ powerfully with the surrounding hints of railway rails and ~~at~~ abandoned oil rigs to bring out the explosion of nature in the face of artificiality and industrialism but at the same time, also its vulnerability. The red of the sea

almost symbolically gives an impression of nature bleeding due to the harm and damage imposed upon it by humans in seven years. ~~that~~ The work submerged only one year after creation and emerged a few decades later, before resubmerging and not emerging till many years later. Even then, the colour of the work has changed significantly to become a snow-white, ~~translucent~~ with salt. This stark change in colour again brings out the transience and temporality of nature and rather than direct activism, Swadlow brings viewers' focus to the effects of climate change and ~~partly~~ reminds us of the harm of artificiality. This work, with colours as one of it, it is the most important colours, serves as a poignant and powerful reminder of the ~~scarceness~~ or vulnerability of nature in the face of modernity.

Ultimately, ~~there~~ regardless of the medium or ~~the~~ style of art, colours are inevitable and crucial elements that enhance meaning, meaning and sensation for the viewers. Hence, it is indisputable that ~~the~~ in our multi-sensory world, ~~colours~~ ~~is~~ ~~art~~ are ~~the~~ one of the most, if not the most powerful elements in art.