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# OUTSTANDING SCHOLARSHIP EXEMPLAR



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa  
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

## Scholarship 2025 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 the margins (///). This area will be cut off when the booklet is marked.

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

## SELECTED QUESTION

Copy and paste the question you have chosen into the space below.

Art works are driven by human hope and desire.

Discuss this statement. Support your response with detailed visual analysis of a range of specific art works.

## PLANNING

Yes - The Joy of Life

No - Kollwitz, Franz Marc

Art works can be driven by human hope and desire, and this is a central foundation of many works. David with the Head of Goliath by Caravaggio exemplifies this. The work depicts with dramatic gravitas the moment when the biblical shepherd boy David holds up the head of the Philistine giant Goliath. Caravaggio innovated the style tenebrism which uses extreme chiaroscuro to create dramatic contrasts. He perfectly renders the feeling of noble guilt felt by David.

The Joy of Life represents the hope of Matisse that the world of art could be as free and joyous as that expressed by his work.

Salon de Independants

## ANSWER SPACE

Type your answer in the space below.

B I U     

Art can express what an artist can only convey through visual language, and the range of what can be expressed is limited only to what an artist feels. As humans, artists experience the full breadth of human emotion, that is, not only hope and desire but also the extreme opposites.

Art works can be driven by human hope and desire, and this is a central foundation of many works. *The Joy of Life* by Matisse is a work that exemplified the artist's views on conceptual and compositional freedom. He created this "monster" - as referred to by a critic - of a work as a direct challenge to the Ecoles des Beau-Arts, which imposed moral subject matter and conformity of technique upon its artists. In this Arcadian landscape, foliage pulls apart like curtains to reveal a field upon which figures lounge, play, make music, and caress. The work's composition echoes the freedom Matisse hopes artists are able to exercise. The foliage parting on either side creates a triangular composition in which figures are arranged randomly. The viewer is free to roam and the figures are free to do as they like. Matisse also does not use naturalistic scale and proportion; the figures do not necessarily get smaller as they recede into space, and the ground lifts in an unnatural way. This invites the viewer into the work, as though perspective shifts relative to the viewer's distance from the figures. Matisse creates a pleasurable viewing experience. The arabesque lines that form the contours of the figures are echoed in the serpentine lines of the foliage. This gives the work a rhythmic pulse, gently guiding the viewer's eye. The use of colour is especially striking. Matisse wished to use colours to evoke emotions and not simply as representational tools. He uses warm, analogous colours for the foliage on the left side of the composition. Bold, saturated reds, yellows, and oranges have a blending effect. The contrast between the complementary bright pink and teal in the foliage on the right side pops more. As stated by Matisse himself, both harmonious and dissonant colours can have a pleasing effect; "I simply render what I feel." The figures

embody happiness. A circle of figures dance in a circle in the background, an orange figure plays a flute to the right, two pink figures near the foreground are engaged in embrace. They are flat but modelled chromatically through variations in their pink, giving some sense of three-dimensionality. The burning pink also enhances the passion of their action, showing how Matisse combined the formal and emotional needs of the canvas. The subject matter, a beautiful utopia, and the freedom with which Matisse creates his work, is fuelled by his hope and desire for artistic freedom. The landscape is like a Garden of Eden, a colourful paradise of freedom to which Matisse wants to escape.

Despite the joy and reverie of *The Joy of Life*, which, in both its subject matter and style, is driven by hope and desire, there are other art works that are driven by extreme tragedy and absence of hope. One such work is *Woman with Dead Child* by Kathe Kollwitz. The work depicts a woman, hunched over in grief, clutching her dead son. Their black-and-white forms are constructed through etching and sit against a flat, gold background. The cropped composition of the work, in which the mother takes up the full space of the plate, creates a level of intimacy between subject matter and viewer. The black-and-white colouration strongly contrasts the acidic and varied colour palette of the previous work. Kollwitz models form through dense networks of black lines, which she uses to convey the emotions of tragedy and destitution. The child's head rests against the mother's right knee. He almost glows, by contrast, as Kollwitz leaves much of his form unetched. He glows with the innocence and purity only a child could have. In contrast, the mother is consumed by black grief. Some areas, such as her hand, are completely covered in black, as though a plague were spreading through her body. Stark curves convey the contortions in her face; her hunched pose is almost animalistic, and the rough texture of the work - Kollwitz experimented with the texture of the plate using sandpaper - imparts the artist's own emotional resonance to the work. Kollwitz used herself and her son Peter as the models for the sketches, drawing herself in the mirror. As the wife of a doctor who served the impoverished in Berlin, Kollwitz was no stranger to child mortality. And 11 years later, her son would die in the first world war, making *Woman with Dead Child* a premonition of what was to come. Kollwitz uses a lack of colour and a confrontational composition, as well as her own personal mark on the medium, to communicate that the work comes from a real place of tragedy and grief. There is no hope or desire for this mother, who does not engage with the viewer, does not look up to a brighter future. She is being consumed by her grief and that is all the viewer is able to see - the flat gold background and cropped composition will reveal nothing more, for there is nothing more for this mother. Hope and desire are completely absent in this work.

*The Last Judgement* by Giotto demonstrates how hope and desire can drive an art work, but that these emotions are often fuelled by fear. The work places the figure of Christ at the centre of the composition sitting atop a throne surrounded by a mandorla, or full-body halo. The figure of Christ is much larger than all other figures, a typical use of Medieval hierarchical scale to denote importance or rank. Already, this is a way of showing Christ's power over the viewers, inspiring fear and awe. To the bottom left of the composition are the blessed people who are making their way to heaven. Jewel tones are used for their clothing, and they all share the same pose, pressing their hands as though in prayer. Their uniformity conveys stability; the commissioner hopes and desires to be part of this group. Bleeding out of the mandorla to the bottom right is a blood-red stream. Giotto uses a macabre shade of red to denote this bloody pit that represents Hell. At the bottom is the terrifying figure of Satan, a monster painted in Blue, grasping the truncated forms of sinners that is devouring. The forms of the various figures in Hell are contorted; they are minute and painted with dull, unassuming colours. This was a work commissioned by Enrico Scrovegni, painted for the Arena Chapel which was donated by him. He had committed the grave sin of usury (putting interest on loans), a crime for which Dante had set out a special place in his *Inferno*. Indeed, in Giotto's hell, usurers can be seen being hung by bags of money. Giotto creates a scene that is set in Hell but that can easily be related to by viewers. He achieves this through his naturalistic depiction of figures. The apostles seated to the left and right of Christ are tonally modelled with shadows and highlights to have a sense of weight and volume through their drapery. The perspective is distorted - viewers are able to see far more than they should be from the viewing height - but intentionally so, so as to give us an omniscient view of Christ, the blessed, and the sinners in Hell. The viewers are meant to share in the fear and desire of the commissioner. At the bottom of the composition is a portrait of Scrovegni donating a miniature building representing the chapel to angels. This is a work that is clearly driven by a mixture of fear, hope, and desire, demonstrating that feelings of hope and desire are not only positive, such as in *The Joy of Life*, but can have negative roots.

The works explored above demonstrate that, while hope and desire can play a role in driving art works, human emotion and experiences are much more complicated than that. A broad range of stories and feelings can drive the creation of art works, and even those that are driven by hope and desire can come from different places in the emotional spectrum.

## SELECTED QUESTION

Copy and paste the question you have chosen into the space below.

Art's purpose is more educational than decorative.

Justify or refute this statement. Support your response with detailed visual analysis of a range of specific art works.

## PLANNING

Doryphoros, Baluyut, Basquiat

"alone of all men is deemed to have rendered art through a itself."

## ANSWER SPACE

Type your answer in the space below.

B I U     

Art's purpose is more educational than decorative. Particularly in terms of the practice of art history, art teaches modern viewers about the beliefs of a society and how that manifests in how artists create works. Art certainly can be decorative - who is to say that a crayon drawing by a 5 year old is not art? But to use art to edify and make a statement about something is its primary purpose.

The Greeks of the 5th century BC were greatly interested in and thought beautiful the human form. Polykleitos created the culmination of the evolution in Greek sculpture through his work *Doryphoros*, which represented the pinnacle of art of classical antiquity. Originally sculpted in bronze in the 5th century BC, the best known Roman copy is now housed in the Naples National Archaeological Museum and is made of marble. The purpose of the work is not to be decorative or simply something pleasing to look at; Polykleitos made it pleasing to look at as a visual representation of his thesis titled *Canon*, which spoke about the principles according to which a sculpture should be sculpted to achieve *kallos*, or ideal beauty. Take the pose of the sculpture. The nude athlete bears his weight on his right leg. The left is slightly lifted. This is called contrapposto, which means "shifting of the axes". This shift can be seen in how the left hip drops above the lifted left leg, causing the line of the hip to angle downwards. The shoulders rotate around the central axis of the torso in the other direction, causing asymmetry in the lines of the shoulders and the hips. There is also a relationship between tension and relaxation. The weight-bearing right leg corresponds to the lifted left arm, which originally held a spear. The relaxed left leg corresponds to the hanging right arm. This creates a pleasing counterbalance between the tensed and relaxed parts of the form. Greek architecture of the time was symmetrical and reflected a rational, ordered way of thinking. As stated by Aristotle in his *Metaphysics*, "The chief forms of beauty are symmetry, order, and definiteness". Polykleitos could not use this kind of symmetry in his sculpture as symmetry is not found in nature and would lead to works such as the unnaturalistic rectangular compositions of the Archaic Greek kouros. He thus uses asymmetry and a system of counterbalance to create a pleasing, rational depiction of the human form in motion. Polykleitos was greatly inspired by Pythagoras of Samos who discovered that musical harmonies arise when playing notes of intervals of the ratios 2:1, 3:2, and 4:3. He and his followers believed harmonies comprised everything in the universe and played a role in everything that was beautiful. Polykleitos thus sculpted the *Doryphoros* after the principles he outlined in his *Canon*. Galen wrote about Polykleitos's philosophy, "Beauty arises from the proportions, not

of the elements [that is to say, not of the materials], but of the parts, that is to say, of finger to finger, and of all fingers to the palm and the wrist, and of these to the forearm, and of the forearm to the upper arm, and of all the parts to each other." Polykleitos creates a visual manifesto of *symmetria*, or "rule", which embodied how proportion was thought to create beauty. The *Doryphoros* was sculpted to educate on how to create a beautiful sculptural human form, which is why Pliny the Elder would later say that Polykleitos "alone of all men has rendered art through art itself." He has taught through his sculpture how to create beautiful form, and the rules of composition and line to do so. In the modern sense, keeping works like the *Doryphoros* teach viewers about the ancient world, and art historians have a visual representation of classical values through studying works, so while the *Doryphoros* has always been an educational art work, the way in which it educates has shifted over time.

Jean-Michel Basquiat was a prolific and groundbreaking Neo-Expressionist artist who used art to express ideas about identity and race. In his *Untitled (1982)*, an electric-black skull sits atop a canvas spray painted cerulean blue. The skull is composed of rough, overwritten brushstrokes of black paint, creating a sense of fracture. Interspersed lines of red and white create a sense of internal anatomy - which Basquiat was very interested in - and psychological deterioration. The cerulean blue creates a sense of calm and flat space that is interrupted by the highly contrasting skull that is pushed up to the picture plane. The skull has red-rimmed eyes and a grid of black paint inside a simplified rectangular form denote gnashing teeth. The skull is angry, and it feels as though it will spill out of the canvas. The skull itself is a likely reference to Haitian voodoo masks and African masks, which American and European artists took inspiration from in a movement called "Primitivism" in their artworks. The term "Primitivism" itself contains a basic contradiction in which the "primitive" is seen as a model and admired but is simultaneously viewed as inferior. Art historian Thomas Mcevilley notes that the use of African art as inspiration was not to imply the inferiority of American and European artists, but to indicate their "generosity in recognizing the non-white". He notes that what Basquiat does is an "ironic inversion". Indeed, Basquiat takes a symbol of preeminence in Western art, the crown, painting it white and placing it atop his black skull, crowning the Black aesthetic. Basquiat took inspiration from numerous people, musicians, authors, other artists. In the bottom left corner are the letters "Aa", a likely reference to Hank Aaron, a baseball player Basquiat admired and included in other works. Figures that were ignored by others, Basquiat revered and saw himself in. Art is being used here educationally to express Basquiat's discomfort with the way his identity is appropriated by artists. The way in which he blends iconography - the African masks and the crown - to create his image educates us not only on art historical symbolism but alerts us to the irony of Primitive artists who utilise a Black aesthetic while perpetuating a whitewashed art world. Basquiat's use of medium has the same effect. He uses spray paint, a visual art of street culture, to dismantle the institutionalised and formalised world of art. *Untitled (1982)* is a raw, visual lesson in symbolism, race politics, and a critique on the art world itself. This demonstrates the educational purpose of art. Basquiat's artwork does not simply decorate the wall on which it is hung, it tells a story about an artist's identity and how he used that identity to make a statement. It tells us about the world Basquiat inhabited and how he refused to conform to its institutional gaze.

The use of photography to create an effect on a viewer is one of the best representations of the didactic nature of art. It almost exactly is able to render what the artist was seeing, which, when combined with formal techniques, can have a very edifying effect. This was the purpose of photojournalist Alex Baluyut, who documented the New People's Army in the Philippines during their insurgence against Martial Law under President Ferdinand Marcos. His work *Communist Rebels*, taken from his book *Kamasa* which documented his experience living with the rebels, depicts how civilian and militant life blended during an authoritarian regime. The composition is dense, crowded, and has circular energy. Figures are loosely arranged in a circle around baskets, leading the eye around the photo rather than focussing on a single heroic figure, communicating the collective effort against a monopolising power. The work is self-contained as the figures focus their attention on the baskets, but Alex Baluyut often shot very close to his subjects. The documentary proximity of the work allows viewers to learn about the lives of the insurgent rebels in a way that is much more than decorative - much more than to decorate the pages of his photo book. The picture is muted and has limited tonal range. There is a hazy grey in the background that adds flatness to the work and makes the foreground figures stand out sharply. The haze has a disorientating, muddying effect, communicating a feeling of heat, humidity, and labour. The work educates its viewers on the harsh conditions of the rebels. The strong vertical and diagonal lines created by the rifles breaks the circular energy of the work. It divides human bodies in sharply geometric ways, demonstrating how violence structures their lives even in moments when they are eating or gathering supplies. It is a lesson in how authoritarian regime affects the citizens of a country; how violence does not consist of just short, dramatic episodes but invades and permeates lives. Baluyut strongly sympathised with the efforts of the NPA and wanted to educate the rest of the country on the situation in Mindanao, one of the villages in which the resistance was most strongly taking hold. He experienced terrifying

things while working there. He survived gunfire from his own government and saw the villagers he stayed with be killed. Baluyut uses his photography to edify the world, communicating through the formal decisions he makes in his photograph in order to teach and share his perspective.

Exactly what art educates on is completely dependent on the artist and what they want to convey. It can vary from philosophical ideas of beauty to ideas about race to documentary evidence of the effects of violence. And art can most certainly be decorative, but as a visual language that uses symbolism, colour, composition, and mark-making to express things that other forms of communication do not, art's purpose is most certainly more to edify.

## PLANNING

Creation of Adam  
Oath of the Horatii  
Kandinsky

## ANSWER SPACE

Type your answer in the space below.

B I U     

Kate Boucher explores the idea that artists are constantly learning from other artists in a constant additive creative process; that this contributes to an artist forming their own artistic style.

She emphasises that such a practice is not copying, but taking "a fine thread and add[ing] it to their own ideas". This process can be seen in *Creation of Adam*, by Michelangelo. Indeed, as Boucher states, traditionally, artists learned from Masters in a workshop, but even so, the Renaissance public favoured artists who had strong conceptual ideas and could bring these to life. *Disegno*, after all, referred not only to drawing but to design. *Creation of Adam* takes "a fine thread" developed by the Classical Greeks and ancient Romans. Renaissance artists learned from studying sculptures in Rome, taking the finely rendered musculature and sketching them to learn how to depict human anatomy. Michelangelo revels in the humanistic idea of appreciating the human form. In fact, he pours all of his expressive power into the human form, showing how he is taking a practice of the past and utilising it in his own way. The composition of the work is balanced, with Adam in the bottom left of the work and God and his entourage taking up the upper right. Though God is compositionally higher, the balanced nature of their relationship is expressed as neither draw the attention's viewer more. In fact, they are portrayed as harmonious rather than having a hierarchical relationship as expressed by Medieval and early Renaissance art. Adam's concave form is completed by the convex shape formed by God's mantle. Adam's form is almost sculptural, painting with the eye of a sculptor. His form is modelled by small variations in value that create gradual transitions from light to dark, creating a sense of roundness and weight. What is interesting is how Michelangelo is subverting the traditional roles of man and God in his work. Using the beauty of human form as originally explored in ancient Greek art, he puts loving attention to both the forms of man and God, and makes them equal in his compositions. Indeed, though his work addresses "different subject matter", Michelangelo takes the beauty that the ancient Greeks saw in the human form and applies it to a theological context, expressing the divine quality he sees in the human form.

Though the work of artists is indeed inspired by other artists, "other cultures," and "male and female artists from all over the world," the artist's conception is also directly affected by their own lived experience. *Oath of the Horatii* by Jacques-Louis David exemplifies this. Painted as a portrait of patriotism, the work depicts the legendary Roman Horatii brothers saluting their father with their swords, swearing to beat the opposing city's chosen representatives, the Curatii brothers, in battle, or to die trying. This is another example of a work inspired by Classical artwork. The figures are framed by columns that support Roman arches: in the middle is the father, to the left are the three brothers in a row, receding into space, and to the right are the women and children, bewildered and emotional - one of the women is engaged to a Curatii, another is a Curatii who married a Horatii brother. David uses geometric shapes and forms to create stark rationality in the work, from the perfectly cylindrical columns to the square tiles that pattern the floor. This geometry is echoed in the forms of the brothers. With a wide stance and their arms painted as linear elements, the conviction of the men is fully canonised as correct in the strict composition. David is fully inspired by classical architecture and the naturalistic anatomy classical artists explored, but he is certainly inspired also by the ethos of his time. Though the males are modelled with great attention to detail, with highlights and shadows outlining the curvature of their tendons and musculature, the women to the right are pale and are not given much volume. The men are composed of elementally straight lines while the women have curvilinear forms. They are further back in space

than the men; one of the women in a green dress is fully covered by the shadow of the father. As stated by Simone de Beauvoir in her text *The Second Sex*, *Oath of the Horatii* exemplifies how "He is the Subject, he is the Absolute. She is the Other." That is to say, in French society of the 1780s, women were seen as emotional vessels and unable to front the country's values of patriotism. Indeed, their emotionality of the work serves as a foil, to heighten and aggrandise the male figures - their role is subject to that of the men's. Although *Oath of the Horatii* as a Neoclassical work demonstrates Boucher's ideas that artists are always taking inspiration and learning from other artists, it is also the philosophies of their own period that dictate the presentation of the art.

Boucher also maintains that while "developing an art practice [is done by] by combining one's ideas with those of other artists", she also acknowledges that it is done by "reacting against them". Kandinsky's art was revolutionary for its time, taking abstracted arrangements and combining it with unconventional subject matter. He is an example of how, rather than taking inspiration from others, artists are able to develop their own practice by reacting against convention. In *Improvisation 28*, black lines dash across the canvas, intersecting and creating tension. A varied colour palette is used, including bright reds, blues, and yellows, but permeating the entire work is a grey colour. This creates dissonance in the work by preventing the harmonisation of all the other colours. This is a point where I would like to mention that it is not only visual artists from which visual artists take inspiration, as Boucher is implying. They can also be inspired by artists of other disciplines. Kandinsky was greatly inspired by the 20th-century composer Arnold Schoenberg, who created atonal music using dissonant harmonies. Kandinsky does much the same with this composition - even the title hints at its orchestral nature. He orchestrates form and colour across the canvas. The dissonance of the colour palette evokes a dreary and apocalyptic feeling, while the tension of the intersecting linear elements evokes dread and conflict. Kandinsky believed that just as music communicated feeling in a purely abstract way, art should also be able to do the same. This work is not an example of Kandinsky's fully abstract works, however; it is *abstracted*. Different forms, though their representations have been reduced to the barest elements, can be made out. In the bottom left of the canvas appears to be the curving form of a blue wave, and above it, a sail from which black lines (oars) eject. To the right is a hill with curving, semicircular forms atop it. These are meant to represent quadrupeds in their simplest form. Some suggest that the imagery of waves and a boat is meant to represent the story of Noah's Ark. The chaos of the composition, with dissonant colours placed next to each other and intersecting diagonal lines would support this idea of a cataclysmic event. The hill on the right of the composition with some forms of buildings atop it could hint at the resolution of the narrative, with the rising forms representing salvation. Whatever the message, it is the visceral feeling evoked by Kandinsky's use of forms that he wishes the viewers to experience. This can be seen, as explained by Boucher, as a reaction against almost all of art history which placed importance, in various ways, on representation (whether this was naturalistic, impressionistic, etc.). Kandinsky represents how artists not only learn "from a Master in a workshop, [...] museums and galleries, [...] books [...] [and] on the internet", but also from other kinds of artists. As visual art communicates feelings and emotions, Kandinsky saw that there was much to be learned by composers who do the same but through a different medium.

Boucher addresses much that can be agreed with in this excerpt from *Drawing with Charcoal*. Artists are indeed constantly learning from others, using work that has been done before to inform their new work, but the forms this can take vary beyond what is explored in the text. Artists learn not only from artists but from their beliefs as formed by the society they live in. Artists can also reject the practice of other visual artists and take inspiration from other artistic mediums such as music. Art is a constant learning process, but inspiration can come from anywhere.

## Outstanding Scholarship

**Subject:** Art History

**Standard:** 93301

**Total score:** 21

| Q | Score | Marker commentary                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|---|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | 06    | The mature and confident response (used Kollwitz work to challenge the given statement) demonstrating high-level visual analysis and extensive knowledge while maintaining a clear focus on the question. More development of context would have enhanced the result further.                                               |
| 6 | 08    | An original approach contrasting an interesting combination of works (classical, graffiti, and a photograph), made for a comprehensive and mature discussion. Visual analysis was highly developed, demonstrating perception and understanding, and comprehensive knowledge was evident.                                    |
| 7 | 07    | A sophisticated response interpreting the text and further developed interpretation of the actual text could have carried this to an 8. The critical response was well-supported by analysis of relevant evidence, and some originality was evident in the qualification of the author's ideas in David and with Kandinsky. |