

External assessment 2025

Stimulus book

Visual Art

General instruction

- Work in this book will not be marked.

Stimulus 1

This content has been redacted for copyright purposes.

Redacted image can be viewed online:
<https://mymodernmet.com/xiao-wang-portrait-paintings/>

Xiao Wang (born China, 1990)

Sound of Cicadas, 2022

Oil on canvas

152 x 203 cm

Context

Xiao Wang is a Chinese-born, New York-based figurative painter. Wang works from photographs, creating constructed scenes that are often inspired by and sourced from real-life settings. Wang's body of work typically uses figures, landscape elements and colour to communicate issues of contemporary life. Wang is closely connected to each person he paints, often depicting his friends, his partner or himself. The artist and his partner appear in *Sound of Cicadas*. A cicada can be seen resting on the artist's wrist.

Many of his artworks respond to his perspective as a Chinese immigrant living with social and cultural change, and the challenges of integrating into a new country. In Chinese mythology, the cicada symbolises the cycle of life, death and rebirth, making it a powerful representation of eternal life.

Detail

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<https://mymodernmet.com/xiao-wang-portrait-paintings/>

Stimulus 2

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Redacted image can be viewed online:
<https://artblart.com/tag/brook-andrew-i-split-your-gaze/>

Trevor Turbo Brown, Latji Latji people (born Mildura, Victoria, 1967; died 2017)

Self-portrait, 'I am the Dingo Spirit', 2015

Synthetic polymer paint on canvas

122 x 102 cm

Context

Trevor Turbo Brown spent much of his youth on the streets and camping by himself on the riverbanks of the Murray River, which runs through the centre of Mildura. During winter, Brown sometimes slept with packs of wild dogs to keep warm. He later described having animals as his only friends at this time. In the early 1980s, he moved to Melbourne where he trained as a boxer and also became known for his breakdance street performances, which earned him the nickname 'Turbo'.

In 2001, Brown began studying art in Melbourne and launched a successful art career. He usually worked outside, painting quickly using unmixed acrylic paint. He preferred to work on large-scale canvases and mostly painted animals.

Stimulus 3

This content has been redacted for copyright purposes.

Redacted image can be viewed online:

<https://ruthborchard.org.uk/content/feature/279/artworks-6506-colin-davidson-self-portrait-2022>

Colin Davidson (born Belfast, Northern Ireland, 1968)

Self-Portrait, 2022

Acrylic paint and oil paint on polylactic acid

105 x 78 x 54 cm

Context

Colin Davidson is known for large-scale commissioned portraits of public figures, actors, musicians, poets and writers. While painting these familiar faces, he has become increasingly preoccupied with their status as human beings, more than their celebrity.

Davidson took over four months to develop *Self-Portrait* using a combination of 3D printing and layers of paint. The base is made entirely from polylactic acid, which is a biodegradable compound used by 3D printers.

Stimulus 4

This content has been redacted for copyright purposes.

Redacted image can be viewed online:
<https://www.juliedowling.art/self-portraits?lightbox=dataItem-ly17s3112>

Julie Dowling, Badimaya/Yamatji/Widi peoples (born Perth, Western Australia, 1969)

Self-portrait: Budjarri (Pregnant), 2005

Synthetic polymer paint, oil and plastic on canvas

120 x 100 cm

Context

Julie Dowling is an artist, activist and writer. Her work is both personal and political, commenting on social justice and change. She grew up in both semi-rural and urban areas in a large Badimaya extended family. Her artworks show influences from First Nations iconography and Renaissance portrait paintings of the 16th century.

Dowling frequently works with self-portraiture. The seated composition, format and facial expression of the central figure in *Self-portrait: Budjarri (Pregnant)*¹ are similar to a number of her other self-portrait artworks.

¹ Budjarri means pregnant in Noongar language.

Stimulus 5

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Redacted image can be viewed online:

<https://moranprizes.awardsplatform.com/gallery/NrbbQxwM/OEKEdYnE?search=62cc7c09fcb07d24-1>

Solomon Karmel-Shann (born Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, 1998)

Portrait of the artist with a blank canvas, 2022

Oil on canvas

120 x 100 cm

Context

Solomon Karmel-Shann is a figurative painter who aims to create open narratives through his representations of people and objects. He refers to his process as a hands-off approach, allowing his paintings to dictate the direction and meaning that evolves as he works. He is interested in encouraging audiences to engage with his work using visual clues that hint at a meaning without revealing everything.

Portrait of the artist with a blank canvas is one of several self-portraits the artist has created to express emotions he cannot fully grasp or articulate.

Stimulus 6

This content has been redacted for copyright purposes.

Redacted image can be viewed online:

<https://www.portrait.gov.au/portraits/2022.14.a-b/ngayulu-minyma-tjanpinya-i-am-a-tjanpi-woman>

Tjunkaya Tapaya OAM and Tjanpi Desert Weavers, Pitjantjatjara people (born Antalya, Northern Territory, 1947)

Ngayulu Minyma Tjanpinya, I am a Tjanpi Woman, 2018

Tjanpi (dry grass), acrylic wool, raffia, wire

85 x 155 x 111 cm

Context

Tjunkaya Tapaya OAM is a senior woman of the Tjanpi Desert Weavers, a not-for-profit Indigenous social enterprise representing 400 women artists from 26 remote communities. The women artists earn an income creating contemporary fibre baskets and animal sculptures using tjanpi.

Tapaya grew up at the Ernabella Mission in the far north-west of South Australia. Her mother travelled to the mission from the Northern Territory shortly after Tapaya's birth. As a young woman, she worked in the mission's craft room where she learnt to paint, work in ceramics, and weave and sculpt with tjanpi and raffia.

As a leader in her community, Tapaya is concerned with passing down her craft skills and cultural knowledge. She invites other weavers, particularly younger women, to work on large tjanpi projects with her so they can learn weaving and construction skills through collaboration.

Side view

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Redacted image can be viewed online:

<https://www.portrait.gov.au/portraits/2022.14.a-b/ngayulu-minyma-tjanpinya-i-am-a-tjanpi-woman>

Side view

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copyright purposes.

Rear view

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copyright purposes.

Stimulus 7

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Redacted image can be viewed online:

<https://www.gerwyndavies.com/sunny-boys/jinba2dkeq1hadvpizq4cv4sv2dnh5>

Gerwyn Davies (born Ipswich, Queensland, 1985)

Sir Joh Heslop, 2018

Archival inkjet print

120 x 120 cm

Context

Gerwyn Davies is a photographic artist and costume maker. He explores aesthetics, concealment and performance in photographic portraits of invented characters. Davies always poses in his own photographs, wearing garments made from ready-made and everyday materials. The locations or constructed scenes of the photographs are selected for their symbolic meaning and formal compositional qualities.

Sir Joh Heslop is from a series of works developed during a residency with the Museum of Brisbane in 2018. Davies reimagined Queensland figures, landmarks and symbols in response to other artworks in the museum collection.

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References

Stimulus 1

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Stimulus 2

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Stimulus 6

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Stimulus 7

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