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SYLLABUS CONNECTIONS: 2011 ARCHIBALD PRIZE

Framing the Archibald:

K–6 and 7–12 discussion questions and activities

- The artist's eye: self-portraits
- A different angle: unconventional portraits
- Inspiring women: vision and drive
- Referencing the past: appropriation
- Nature as the motif: pattern and design
- Striking a pose: compositional arrangement

Analysing the winner

Ben Quilty *Margaret Olley*

Years K–6: Visual Arts and links with key learning areas

Years 7–12: The frames

Focus works:

issues for discussion

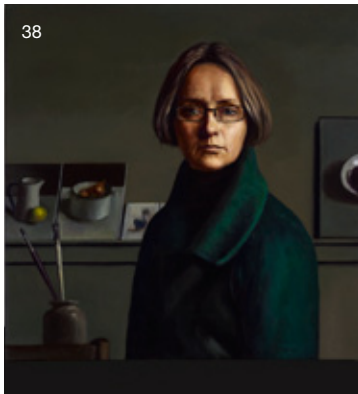
discussion questions and activities K–6 and 7–12

- Jiawei Shen *Self-portrait as Quong Tart's contemporary (after John Thomson)*
- Lucy Culliton *Ray in Paris*
- Sonia Kretschmar *The heart of things (portrait of Cassandra Golds)*
- Craig Ruddy *Cathy Freeman*

Archibald Prize 2011: finalists

Note: Unless otherwise cited, background information and artists quotes are taken from the Archibald Prize exhibition wall texts, AGNSW 2011

THE ARTIST'S EYE: SELF PORTRAITS



38. Pam Tippett *Self-portrait (for a change)*

oil on canvas

The title of Pam Tippett's self-portrait is both literal and ironic. 'It's the first portrait I've done in six years, so it is a change,' says the artist, who is best known for her still-life paintings. 'But it's ironic as well because when I do paint a portrait, it's usually a self-portrait – I'm always available, I don't get bored or need to flatter myself.'

Assess Tippett's gaze. Imagine what she is thinking while painting this self-portrait. Do you think she has worked from her reflection in a mirror or from a photograph? Explain your response.

From which angle is the light source coming? List what you can see in the studio. What is the mood of this portrait?

How has Tippett identified herself as an artist? Assess what Tippett said about her self-portrait, 'It may not look it to most people but for me it is a relatively loose painting.' What clues has Tippett given the audience about her art practice?



22. Song Ling *My name is Fartunate – self-portrait*

acrylic on canvas

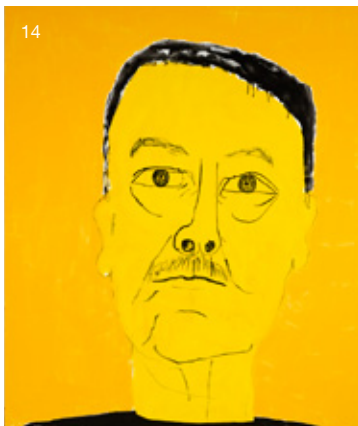
In this satirical self-portrait, Song Ling makes some strong statements about the contemporary culture of modern China and the blind pursuit of luxury goods as an overt symbol of wealth and status. 'The title of the work, My name is Fartunate is not a typo, but a play on words', says the artist. The artist has painted the Chinese character for the word 'far' on his underpants, which translates as 'getting rich'.

Describe the expression on Ling's face. Make the expression you would make if you were in this situation. Is Ling dressed appropriately for shopping for luxury goods? Imagine what Ling has purchased in all these labelled bags.

Ling's work is known for its vivid colours and bold illustrative style. Describe how Ling has treated his figure? What do the dots remind you of?

Read the accompanying wall text. Consider the importance of the title My name is Fartunate – self-portrait? Discuss the role of irony in this self-portrait and his response to consumerism in contemporary China.

Explain how this painting illustrates the influences of the contemporary world and new technologies upon the artist's practice.



14. Ken Done *Me, March 2011*

acrylic and enamel on canvas

'This portrait took me a little over 70 years and one hour to paint,' says Ken Done. 'I've entered a number of times. All have been rejected. This new work I wanted to be simple, strong and direct: painted with one brush, an almost continuous line and two yellows, one flat and one enamel. You will often find cadmium yellow in my works.'

How important is the use of the intense yellow to the success of this portrait? Done commented that he often uses cadmium yellow in his paintings. What do you think this colour communicates about Done's personality? Would you respond differently to this portrait if the colour scheme was different?

Describe the expression on Done's face. Do you think this portrait was laboured or created with ease? Discuss your response after reading the accompanying text.

Why would Done portray himself in such a minimal style? Find examples of his body of work and assess if this portrait reflects his artistic practice.

Compare and contrast *Me* by Done to *Self-portrait on a horse* by Zhong Chen in the exhibition.

A DIFFERENT ANGLE: UNCONVENTIONAL PORTRAITS



37. Tim Storrier *Moon boy* (self-portrait as a young man)

acrylic on canvas

Tim Storrier is renowned for mysterious, poignant landscapes that capture the melancholy vastness of the Australian outback.

Storrier offers the following poetic statement about his self-portrait:

On a nostalgic whim using memories of old lost clothes
I painted them hanging on a structure to resemble a figure
Arranged in ways to suggest the posture, stance and attitude
Informed by the emotions and moods of a youthful self long ago,
Passed

Such method can bring life to the memory of people long gone ...
scarecrows of nostalgia ...

Identify the artefacts and clothes you can see in Storrier's *Moon boy*. Imagine what a young Storrier was like. What clothes and artefacts would you select to represent yourself in a self-portrait?

Access the impact the saturated blue has in landscape and the arrangement. What is the mood of this work? How does this work make you feel?

Visualise walking in this landscape. What time of the day is it? Describe the weather conditions?

How does *Moon boy* challenge the traditional notions of portraiture? What other genres are represented in Storrier's work?

2. Giles Alexander *Space or bust* (portrait of Sam Leach)

oil and resin on linen

'I decided to go back to what is perhaps the primordial portrait – the bust – and to combine that historical reference with a more futuristic, sci-fi bent', said Giles Alexander. 'One of the main areas of interest for both Sam [Leach] and I is the illusion of space: painting a three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface – one of the major challenges tackled by Western painting since the Renaissance. So I thought I'd take that one step further and paint deep space with Sam floating around like a Roman emperor having won both the Archibald and the Wynne.'

What is your initial response to this painting? Describe what you can see. Explore how this painting gains the audience's attention. Imagine you are in a space ship looking out of an oval window. How would you react to this bust floating in space?

Discuss why Sam Leach has been depicted as a Roman emperor. Do you think the bust appears to be floating in space?

Examine the techniques Alexander has employed to create the illusion of depth. Discuss the use of black.

Why do you think Alexander has chosen to use resin to create the glossy reflective surface? Does this add to the meaning of the artwork?

6. Natasha Bieniek *October*

oil on board

'In my self-portrait *October* my objective was to explore the dual aspects of scale and representation in a contemporary manner', says the artist. 'Since my self-portrait is only about the size of a matchbox, sections of the painting have been executed with a pin instead of a brush to ensure an accurate and realistic depiction. The normal physical space between the painting and the viewer is forcibly narrowed. This intimacy seeks to form a singular relationship between the viewer and the work.'

Observe the attention to detail. Consider the process for creating this miniature painting. Visualize Natasha Bieniek with fine brushes, a magnifying glass and working with the point of a pin.

Why do you think Bieniek has posed lying down on the floor? How does the lighting add to a sense of drama in this tiny portrait?

Reflect on the role of miniature paintings in the history of portraiture. What would be the advantage of having such a small portrait?

How does the small scale of this portrait change the way you view it? In the exhibition, stand back and watch the way other visitors view the portrait.

Does the scale of this work challenge the audience in an exhibition such as this?



INSPIRING WOMEN: VISION AND DRIVE



39. Barbara Tyson *The country's woman: Her Excellency, Ms Quentin Bryce AC, Governor-General of Australia*

oil on raw French linen

Barbara Tyson's portrait of Quentin Bryce, the first female Governor-General of Australia, uses three layers of raw linen to metaphorically capture the essence of the growing refinement of a strong, elegant, organised and graceful leader. '... Quentin Bryce has been a constant reminder to strive for excellence and be a bold WOMAN', says Tyson. 'I chose to portray her stability and strength of character with a touch of humanity by the juxtaposition of her in casual attire beside the solid grand piano.'

Assess Governor-General's body language. Mimic her pose. How does her stance suggest a person of authority, influence and elegance?

How does the interior environment add to idea of elegance and refinement?

Gauge where the light source is coming from. Observe the depiction of light upon the figure. Discuss how this elevates the subject?

Observe the layering of canvas panels in the composition. Take note of how the artist treated the surface in each view. Read the wall text and discuss the ideas Tyson aimed to communicate to the audience.



26. Angus McDonald *Dr Ann Lewis AO*

oil on canvas

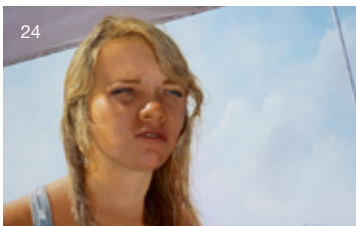
Dr Ann Lewis has played a prominent role in the Australian art world for over 40 years. Between 1964 and 1983 she ran Gallery A in Sydney where she represented artists such as John Firth-Smith, Ann Thomson and Michael Snape to name a few. She was an inaugural member of the Visual Arts Board of the Australia Council (1973–76) and was at the forefront of the push to give Australian Indigenous art prominence.

Describe the expression on Ann Lewis's face. Is she relaxed, strong or humble?

What does her pose tell the viewer about her character? Examine how the artist gains the viewers attention.

Explore the effects of light and shadow on the mood of this portrait. Chiaroscuro is an Italian term ascribed to the use of light and dark in painting. Find examples of famous artists who have used this technique in the past. Discuss how the use of chiaroscuro has contributed to the success of this portrait.

Research Lewis's contribution to the arts in Australia. Why is it important to have such people in these roles? What implications do you think this has had on the broader arts community in Australia?



24. Tom Macbeth *Jessica*

oil on linen

Jessica Watson is the youngest person to have sailed solo, non-stop and unassisted around the world, returning to Sydney on 15 May 2010, three days before her 17th birthday. 'Like many thousands of Australians, I followed Jessica's journey around the world quite closely and was swept up in the moment of her arrival and the patriotism it instilled in us,' says Tom Macbeth. 'Such a wonderful achievement for one so young!'

Imagine having sunlight in your eyes and the sea breeze upon your face.

Copy the expression on Watson's face. What do you think Watson is thinking? Do you think she is at ease or seems to be waiting in anticipation? Reflect on how you would cope if you were sailing solo around the world.

Consider the bright colour scheme. Do you think this scheme successfully communicates the harshness of the sea? Discuss how the artist has captured Watson's experience of sailing.

Is this a candid or a staged image? Do you think Macbeth painted from a photograph? Contemplate the process Macbeth followed to create this portrait.

Think about why so many people consider Watson to be an inspirational figure

REFERENCING THE PAST: APPROPRIATION



31. Rodney Pople *Artist and family (after Caravaggio)*

oil and photographic medium on linen

This is a portrait of Rodney Pople being beheaded by his wife Felicity Fenner, as their two sons look on. The composition borrows unashamedly from Caravaggio's *Judith beheading Holofernes* (1598). The narrative in *Artist and family* is deliberately ambiguous. The victim is an artist and his female assassin a curator of contemporary art. He seems horrified at his fate, yet his crime or misdemeanour is not possible to ascertain. This work continues a lineage in Pople's previous depictions of himself, friends and family based on well-known paintings from art history.

Pople has appropriated a painting by the Baroque artist Caravaggio and has depicted himself as the protagonist of this composition. Give an account of what is happening in this portrait? Observe the gaze of each figure.

How does the use of reds and burgundy add to the drama of the composition?

Investigate the use of photographic techniques in creating this artwork.

What does this image tell us about the artist's personality? How is Pople making a comment on the Archibald Prize? Research Pople's previous Archibald entries. Explore how Pople utilises humour and parody in his practice?

This work is a direct appropriation of the painting *Judith Beheading Holofernes* (1598) by Caravaggio. Compare both images and discuss the similarities and differences in the artists objectives in the creation of these works.



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5. Kate Beynon *Painting shirt (self-portrait)*

acrylic and mixed media (Swarovski crystals) on linen

'This self-portrait is a bit different to others I've painted in the last few years; there's no dragons or lion-dogs,' says Kate Beynon. 'I've depicted myself wearing my favourite "painting shirt": a Frida Kahlo T-shirt my parents gave me ... It has a print of Kahlo's 1939 double self-portrait *The two Fridas* on it, featuring two versions of herself, one in Tehuana Mexican style dress and one in European Victorian era style, in part reflecting her mixed heritage. Both figures have exposed hearts. While painting this work I was thinking about the ways artists represent themselves in self-portraits, as well as what artists wear when they are in a creative zone.'

Beynon depicts herself confidently by directly engaging with the viewer. Compare the expression on Beynon's face to the portraits on her T-shirt. What do you think Beynon is thinking?

Beynon has appropriated the double portrait by Frida Kahlo. Consider why artists connect themselves to artists of the past. How does this add to the meaning of the work?

Kahlo was interested in understanding the different elements making up her identity. Do you think Beynon is also exploring her own identity? Discuss

The canvas is circular. Compare this format to other works in the exhibition. Why do you think this format was used?



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29. Andrew Mezei *Professor Penny Sackett, astronomer and physicist*

oil on linen with mixed-media underpainting including acrylic

Professor Penny Sackett was Australia's chief scientist from November 2008 until March 2011. Mezei commented 'I wanted to portray Professor Sackett's calm and steady personality. I placed three circles in the composition; the globe, the mirror, and the small bolt above her head. I set them in orbit, rotating around the focal point of the subject. This also reflects the broader human condition, as we are all contained within a bubble in space, as suggested by my self portrait in the convex mirror.'

List what you can see in this interior space. What type of person is Professor Sackett? What clues does the artist give the viewer? How do these objects inform us about the sitter's world?

Focus on the circular mirror. What can you see reflected? How does this image impact on the viewer's understanding of this portrait? Determine what has captured Professor Sackett's gaze.

Observe the surface quality of this painting. Can you see any brush strokes? What impact does the intense red fabric have on the composition? Reflect on the techniques Mezei practised to create this work.

Find images by the Dutch masters. Assess whether you think Mezei was influenced by the techniques and compositions of these artists.

NATURE AS THE MOTIF: PATTERN AND DESIGN



41. Apple Xiu Yin *Hearing · Meditation*

oil on canvas

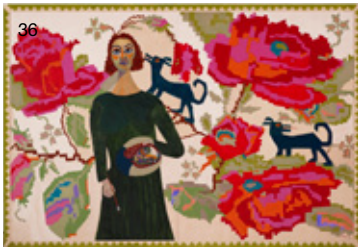
'Cheryl Barker is an astounding soprano. She has played many roles in opera but one in particular caught my attention: Madame Butterfly in which she showed her understanding of women from Eastern cultures. In this painting she assumes the role of an Eastern lady hearing birdsong, showing a beauty, which comes from a meditative mind. I have created a mere illusion, which hopefully leaves people thinking.'

List all the things you can see in this painting. Imagine how wearing silk clothes would feel. Compare the portrait to the image of the figure illustrated on the fan.

Mimic the pose of Cheryl Barker. Describe the expression on her face. How does it make you feel? Imagine you were asked to pose for this painting, how would you have posed?

What is the mood of this painting? Reflect on the title *Hearing · Meditation*. How does the title influence your reading of the portrait? Assess the mood of the painting. How does it make you feel? How does the body language of Cheryl Barker communicate the ideas suggested by the title of the work?

This painting is life size. Does the scale of the work influence the audiences' reading of the painting? Discuss.



36. Xenia Stefanescu *Woven in the tapestry of life*

fine acrylics

'For me a painting is a decorative object, it is not only about the subject so I wanted the background to be very rich. I have painted myself like a timeless Egyptian fresco – middle-aged, not too young, not too old. I have also pictured myself on the palette, where I look older. But I don't feel old in myself, I always feel the same,' said the artist.

What is the first thing you notice about this painting? Identify the type of flowers in the background? Describe the type of animals featured in this painting. Are they friendly or frightening?

Analyse how Stefanescu has stylised her portrait. Notice how the central portrait engages the viewer and how the portrait on the palette is gazing up at the central portrait.

Describe how the artist has made this painting appear like a tapestry? Explain what you think Stefanescu meant by saying: 'For me a painting is a decorative object, it is not only about the subject so I wanted the background to be very rich.' Discuss.



3. Del Kathryn Barton *Mother (a portrait of Cate)*

watercolour, gouache, acrylic and pen on polyester canvas

'For a number of years now I have been dreaming up paintings of Cate (I am one of her biggest fans),' says Barton. 'When the opportunity unexpectedly arose, I met with her to discuss the portrait. After understanding that Cate's preference, for a number of meaningful reasons, was to be painted with her beautiful boys, and being very passionate myself about imagery of motherhood, I threw myself into the process of this challenging project.'

What is your initial response to this painting? Does the title of the work impact on your reading of the image? Reflect on the theme of the mother in art.

Observe the eyes of the children. Compare these to the mother's. What message do you think Barton is conveying within the eyes?

Locate the starling birds, hydrangea and waratah flowers in this composition.

List the various types of marks. Observe the layering techniques used by Barton. Barton's work has been described as richly illustrative, having applied intricate details. Describe the patterns and repetition Barton utilises.

STRIKING A POSE: COMPOSITIONAL ARRANGEMENT



18. Nicholas Harding *Hugo at home 2011*

oil on Belgian linen

This portrait is of internationally acclaimed star of stage and screen Hugo Weaving. 'Hugo's love for family and home became the appropriate context for a portrait,' says Harding. 'Solutions to the compositional puzzle began to define themselves as drawing progressed in the Greenwood-Weaving lounge room, cups of tea close at hand.'

Observe the surface of this painting. Describe how Harding has applied the paint to the canvas. List the type of tools the artist may have used to create the textural qualities. Act out the movements the artist would have made. Do you think this work was painted quickly or over a long period of time? Find other paintings in the exhibition that have used paint in a similar way.

Do you consider this to be a formal or casual pose? Explain your response. Reflect on how you would have asked Hugo Weaving to pose. How does the title *Hugo at home 2011* influence the way you interpret this portrait?

Harding commented that he aimed 'to capture the actor in an unguarded, pensive moment, looking away to the garden outside to evoke a sense of privacy'. Do you think Harding has been successful in portraying the real personality of the actor? Explain.



7. Deidre But-Husaim *Roy Ananda (chin support)*

oil on linen

Roy Ananda is an artist, whose current work centres on speculative, process-based sculptural practice. 'Roy is a friend and fellow artist whom I've known for many years,' says Deidre But-Husaim. 'We met when we were both attending Adelaide Central School of Art. Roy's recent series of smaller-scale works "chin supports" compelled me to create a series of paintings of him employing one of them.'

What makes this portrait a unique entry? Does this portrait give you any clues to the subject's profession?

Describe the expression on the Ananda's face. From which direction is the light source coming from? Is the subject actually resting their head on the trestle table?

Imagine what Ananda is thinking while posing for his portrait.

The title of the portrait is *Roy Ananda (chin support)*. Consider what the phrase 'chin support' could suggest.



27. Alexander McKenzie *Richard Roxburgh*

oil on linen

Roxburgh is one of Australia's leading actors. 'The work reflects the cheeky, youthful enthusiasm that I see in Richard, somewhat irreverent with that wonderful quality of not taking himself too seriously while taking the work very seriously indeed. The bike is a reference to his energy, momentum and youth, and hopefully captures some of the roguish, swashbuckling Australianness that he has off-camera.' McKenzie says he likes the contradiction of having the bike standing in water and the pictorial effect it creates.

Imagine you are the subject of this portrait. What can you smell, taste and hear in this environment? Locate the creatures in the shallow water pools.

Take notice of the light beaming from the bicycle headlight and the light house light beam in the distance. Comment on how McKenzie is able to use light and reflections in the water to create a moody image.

Describe the body language of Roxburgh. Does Roxburgh seem comfortable or awkward? What type of person do you think Roxburgh is? What clues does the artist give the viewer? How do these objects inform us about the sitter's world?

Research the painting practice of Alexander McKenzie. Compare and contrast this work to his previous Archibald entries and his landscape paintings.

Archibald Prize 2011
Winner



32. Ben Quilty
Margaret Olley

oil on linen

Analysing the winner

Years K–6

Visual Arts and links with key learning areas



BEN QUILTY
Margaret Olley (detail)
oil and resin on wood

When Ben Quilty first asked legendary painter Margaret Olley to sit for him she said no. ‘Her lack of ego is so appealing,’ says Quilty. ‘Margaret didn’t understand why anyone would want to see a portrait of her.’

Quilty met Olley when she was a guest judge for the 2002 Brett Whitely Travelling Art Scholarship, which he won. ‘She’s been a friend and great supporter of my work ever since,’ he says.

Born in Lismore in 1923, Olley was awarded the Order of Australia in 1991 for service as an artist and to the promotion of art. In 1996, she was awarded the Companion of the Order of Australia.

‘She’s such an inspiration,’ says Quilty. ‘She was a feminist ahead of her time. She’s vigorously passionate about social and political issues, as well as art, and is enormously compassionate. Margaret has such an infectious attitude to both life and death. Recently, I was amazed at how many new works she had on the go. She said to me, “I’m like an old tree dying and setting forth flowers as fast as it can, while it still can.” I thought that was such a powerful metaphor.’

As for the bright palette: ‘You just need to walk into her home, which is also her studio, to see that you couldn’t use anything but striking colour. It’s full of translucent works-in-progress, beautiful drawings, sculptures and flowers, so I wanted the portrait to reflect that.’

Most of Quilty’s work to date has been about masculinity but he says, ‘Margaret has had such a powerful bearing on my career. She has asked me constantly for a year to stop painting ugly skulls and paint something beautiful.’ Quilty has just finished a series of paintings of his wife.

Born in Sydney in 1973, Quilty has a Bachelor of Visual Arts from Sydney College of the Arts and a Bachelor of Visual Communication from the University of Western Sydney. He has worked as a full-time artist since 2002. In 2007, he won the National Self Portrait Prize. In 2009, he was named runner-up in the Archibald Prize and won the Doug Moran National Portrait Prize in 2009. This is his sixth time as a finalist in the Archibald Prize.

Years K–6

LOOKING AND INTERPRETING

Visual Arts: What is your first impression of the portrait of Margaret Olley? **Assess** the mood of this portrait. What do you think Olley was thinking while posing for this portrait? **Mimic** Olley’s expression. **Look** at your own reflection in the mirror and sketch yourself with this expression.

Visual Arts: Observe how the paint is smudged and smeared together in this portrait. **Imagine** the type and size of the tools Quilty used to create this painting.

Do you think this portrait has been laboured over or was it painted quickly? **List** the range of colours you can see. **Locate** the large areas of white exposed canvas. What impact does the exposed canvas have upon the portrait?

Visual Arts: Create a portrait of someone you know well in a similar style to Quilty. **Use** impasto paint, thick brushes and a palette knife to manipulate the texture of the portrait. **Plan** to keep some areas of the portrait free of paint to work as areas of highlight.

Links to KLAs

English: Find an image of William Dobell’s Portrait of Margaret Olley painted in 1948 and compare it to the portrait by Quilty. **Imagine** meeting Margaret Olley. **Write** a list of questions to interview her about her experiences of posing for the Archibald Prize in 1948 and 2011.

HSIE: Research the life and artistic career of Olley. **Discuss** what Quilty meant by saying Olley was ‘such an inspiration ... a feminist ahead of her time’. **Talk** about some of the reasons why it would have been difficult for a woman to establish an artistic career in the 1940s and 1950s in Australia.

Analysing the winner

Years 7–12

Visual Arts



BEN QUILTY
Margaret Olley (detail)
oil and resin on wood

Years 7–12

THE FRAMES

Subjective

View this painting up-close and from a distance. Examine how the viewer's appreciation of this portrait is affected by distance and proximity to the canvas.

Consider the process Quilty has developed to achieve the surface qualities.

Does the fact Olley was the subject of William Dobell's winning portrait in the 1948 Archibald Prize impact on your viewing of this portrait by Quilty?

Is this a static or active portrait? How does the profile suggest Olley is an artist? Survey the Archibald Prize and identify other sitters who directly gaze out at the audience.

Structural

Notice how the portrait of Olley has been cropped. What is the impact of the cropping for the success of the composition? Describe the expression on Olley's face. How does Olley's gaze hold the viewer's attention?

Quilty commented that the bright palette was inspired by Olley's own art practice and home which is filled with striking colour. Discuss how the manipulation of colour plays a vital role in the success of this portrait.

Consider the process Quilty has developed to achieve the surface qualities. Review the experimentation the artist would have gone through to achieve this control over the texture of this portrait. Read the wall label and in class experiment with various mediums to imitate this process.

Cultural

Find an image of William Dobell's 1948 Archibald prize winning portrait of Margaret Olley. Compare and contrast these portraits, one depicting Olley in her youth and the latter depicting Olley over half a century later.

Consider the reasons why Quilty selected to paint Olley as his subject for the Archibald Prize. How does this image reflect the role Olley has played in the Australian art world?

Postmodern

Discuss how winning entries in the Archibald Prize since its inception have reflected changes in artists' and audiences' taste over time. Evaluate issues that may have influenced the 2011 Archibald Prize. Discuss reasons for the continued interest in the Archibald Prize.

Focus works



35. Jiawei Shen
Self-portrait as Quong Tart's contemporary
(after John Thomson)

oil on canvas

Jiawei Shen

Self-portrait as Quong Tart's contemporary (after John Thomson)

oil on canvas

Jiawei Shen's self-portrait is modeled on a photograph by John Thomson (1837–1921), a pioneering Scottish photographer, geographer and traveler whose images of China and Southeast Asia brought the land, culture and people of the Far East alive for the 'armchair' travelers of Victorian Britain.

One of his well-known photographs was A Hong Kong artist (1870–72) about which Thomson wrote: 'There are a number of painters established in Hong Kong, but they all do the same class of work... making enlarged copies of photographs.' When Shen moved to Australia in 1989, he found himself in a similar situation when he worked as a portrait sketch artist for tourists in Darling Harbour.

Mei Quong Tart (1850–1903) was a leading 19th century Sydney merchant from China. A famous, well-loved personality, he made a significant impact on the social and political scene at a time of strong anti-Chinese sentiment in Australia. Shen began researching him 15 years ago and has painted many works on the subject.

Based on the composition of Thomson's photograph, Shen has copied the costume, hairstyle and furniture, and painted himself as a 19th century Chinese-Australian artist. He is surrounded by many of his own paintings including his prize-winning work *Mary MacKillop of Australia* (1994), his portrait Princess Mary of Denmark, and several of his Quong Tart works. There is also portrait of his daughter Sidney under the desk and one of art critic John McDonald on the wall. His golden retriever Billy lies on the ground. Shen has never smoked but his grandma used a water pipe similar to the one in Thomson's photo so he kept it in the painting.

Born in Shanghai in 1948, and now based in Sydney, Shen is a largely self-taught artist. He was very well known in China in the 1970s where he won the National Art Exhibition Prize five times. This is his 12th time as an Archibald finalist. He was named runner-up in 1997. He won the Sulman Prize in 2006 and the Mary MacKillop Art Award in 1995. His work is held in many collections including the National Portrait Gallery of Australia and the National Art Museum of China.

K-6 Looking and interpreting

Visual Arts: What is your initial reaction to this painting? If you were able to walk into this studio, what would you see, smell, hear and touch? **Notice** how Shen has created the appearance of space and depth in this composition. **Sketch** an interior space include objects and furniture to give a sense of depth.

Research a historical figure you admire. **Find** visual images of this person. **Create** your own self-portrait modelled on your chosen person. **Include** objects and artefacts from the era of your role model.

Links to KLAs

English: What is Shen doing in this portrait? **Describe** the types of paintings that are in the studio. How many portraits can you see? **Invent** a story about this figure and the portrait he is painting in the composition. **Share** your stories in class.

HSIE: Research the life and achievements of Quong Tart (1850–1903). Why do you think Shen admires Tart? **Explore** the contributions made by early Chinese merchants in Sydney in the 19th century. **Find** out about the development of Chinatown in Sydney.

7-12 Issues for discussion

Search for an image of the original photograph taken by John Thomson (1837–1921). Compare the photograph and the painting. Identify the elements appropriated by Shen.

Locate the portraits of Mary MacKillop, Princess Mary, John McDonald and Shen's daughter Sidney. Examine the role of photography in the practice of portrait painting.

What are the positives and negatives in painting directly from photographs?

Reflect on Shen's early years in Australia establishing himself in the Australian art world. What impact do you think painting tourist portraits from photographs had on Shen's practice of painting? Research the art practice of Shen. How does this self portrait fit into Shen's art practice?



12. Lucy Culliton
Ray in Paris

oil on board

Lucy Culliton

Ray in Paris

oil on board

Art dealer Ray Hughes has been a colourful fixture in the Australian art world for over 40 years. Renowned for his huge appetite for life and art – not to mention his penchant for garishly bright ties – he has been the subject of many an Archibald portrait.

Lucy Culliton has shown with Hughes for 12 years now, during which time she has come to know him very well. 'He's fantastic, he looks after me brilliantly,' she says.

This portrait is the result of a trip they took to Europe together in November 2009. 'We spent four weeks in Europe looking at art and sitting in cafes,' says Culliton. 'I took my sketchbook so I did lots and lots of drawings of him as we sat having a dessert or a beer. Ray said, "there's your Archibald entry".'

A year passed, then Culliton looked at the sketches and decided to turn one of them into a painting. 'It came very easily,' she says. 'I felt as if I knew every bit of him: his eyes, his nose, his smile, his beard, he just felt very familiar.'

'It's the end of a day in Paris after seeing some beautiful galleries so he's totally blissed out, eating gelato.'

Born in Sydney in 1966, Culliton studied at the National Art School. She won the 2006 Portia Geach Memorial Award with her portrait *Self with friends*. She also won the 2006 Dubbo Lexus Mortima Prize and the 2000 Mosman Art Prize. She has had nine solo exhibitions and has been represented in various group shows including the 2010 Sulman Prize, the 2009 Wynne Prize, the 2003 Dobell Prize and the 2003 and 2007 Archibald Prize.

K-6 Looking and interpreting

Visual Arts: **List** the colours you can see. **Consider** how the colours of the shirt and tie resemble gelato flavours. **Imagine** what it would taste like to eat the bowl of gelato. What flavours do you think Ray Hughes has ordered?

Ask a friend to pose for you while having their favourite meal. **Plan** your composition so you include the meal. **Try** to capture the expression on the subject's face as they consuming this food. **Develop** your sketch into a painting and display it in class.

Links to KLAs

English: **Find** out the role Ray Hughes plays in the art world. **Compile** a list of descriptive words to describe the essence of Hughes in this portrait. **Use** these words in a poem based on this portrait.

Science and Technology: **Research** the history of gelato. When and where was it first prepared? When did gelato first become commercially available? **Find** a recipe for gelato and experiment with creating various flavours.

7–12: issues for discussion

Identify the different patterns in this portrait. How does this add to the mood of this portrait? The cropping of the portrait adds to the candid and playful nature of this work. Create a playful portrait of someone you admire with a focus on a casual pose and bright colours. Assess the success of the finished painting.

This painting is a frozen moment in time, just before Hughes' first spoon of gelato. Study the composition of this portrait. How has Culliton gained the viewer's attention? Describe the expression on Hughes' face.

Notice the angle this portrait was created from. Do you consider this to be a flattering angle to capture someone from? Explain why. Discuss the irony in this portrait.

Focus works



20. **Sonia Kretschmar**
The heart of things (portrait of Cassandra Golds)

acrylic on wood

Sonia Kretschmar

The heart of things (portrait of Cassandra Golds)

acrylic on wood

The subject of Sonia Kretschmar's portrait, Sydney-born author Cassandra Golds, writes books for children and young adults. Her writing has been described as part parable, part surrealist fable and part love story.

Kretschmar first became familiar with Golds' work when she was commissioned to illustrate the cover of her novel *Clair-de-lune* for Penguin Books in 2004. Since then she has illustrated two other novels by Golds: *The museum of Mary Child* (2009) and *The three loves of Persimmon* (2010).

'After getting to know her (via Facebook), and in celebration of her recent achievements of being shortlisted for both The Prime Minister's Literary Award and The NSW Premier's Literary Award, I thought the time was right to paint her portrait,' says Kretschmar. 'I met with her a couple of times last October, and had the chance to do some sketches as well as mull over the best way to represent her.'

'Reading a passage from her latest novel *The three loves of Persimmon*, I was struck by the lines: "Persimmon gazed at him. For a moment she had the strangest feeling that there was a bird trapped inside her ribcage, as if her bones were its prison and it was flapping frantically against them, trying to get out. She opened her mouth, but could find no words".'

'As birds, and cages, and cats all seem to be recurring themes in her work, those lines were the perfect catalyst for my concept,' says Kretschmar. 'Dressing her in a voluminous lace skirt seemed an apt reflection of her 'other time, other worlds' sensibility. The lines of text in the background are also taken from *The three loves of Persimmon*, which, coincidentally, describes the meeting of the main character with a young male artist who offers to paint her portrait "for an Art Prize". In a sense I think this portrait has been willed into existence on behalf of both of us!'

Born in Melbourne in 1967, Kretschmar has been a practicing artist and illustrator since the early 1990s. Her distinctive style has created a unique niche in Australian publishing with her covers winning awards from the Australian Publishers Association and Illustrators Australia. This is her first time in the Archibald Prize.

K-6 Looking and interpreting

Visual Arts: Describe what you can see in this painting. How does the shadow create tension in the painting? **Survey** how this painting is different from others in the exhibition. **Create** a drawing in a similar dreamlike style. **Select** a colour to dominate the portrait and set the mood of the painting.

Find examples of books illustrated by Golds. How would you describe her style as an illustrator?

Design a book cover for your favourite author. **Include** key symbols which occur in their writing.

Links to KLAs

Science and Technology: What is the natural habitat of budgerigars? What is the average life span?

Find out about budgerigar colour genetics. **Create** a chart to explain how colour genetics works.

Music: Focus on the menacing shadow of the cat which has unsettled the bird. **Invent** a story to accompany this portrait. **Compose** a piece of music to suit the image and your story. **Perform** your compositions in class.

Issues for discussion

Golds directly engages the viewer by gazing into their eyes. Describe the expression on Golds' face. What do you think she is thinking? Write a speech bubble for this portrait.

Discuss how this is a unique entry in this year's Archibald Prize. Research Surrealism in art. Discuss what are the key characteristics of Surrealism. Why do you think this work is described as being influenced by Surrealism?

Focus on the text quoted from Gold's book. Draw a sketch of how you would have illustrated this text. Compare your illustration to the painting by Kretschmar. Discuss the role of an illustrator.

Find samples of Gold's writing. Imagine the type of person she is. Does the Archibald portrait fit with the image?

Focus works



33. Craig Ruddy *Cathy Freeman*

plaster on canvas, acrylic and ink on glass

Craig Ruddy Cathy Freeman

plaster on canvas, acrylic and ink on glass

Recently named as one of the most influential woman in the world, Cathy Freeman is an inspiration to all. Through her dedication in sport and her commitment to further reconciliation she has provided strength and hope in uniting all Australians.

Carrying both the Australian and Aboriginal flags during her victory lap at the 1994 Commonwealth Games demonstrated her love and pride of her heritage. Since then she has continued to pour her energy into helping others through the Cathy Freeman Foundation.

During her athletic career she accomplished so many great achievements, winning gold at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, which is regarded by many as the greatest sporting event of our generation, and in 1998 was named Australian of the Year.

Craig Ruddy's work is created using expressive splashes of acrylic across the back of toughened glass and archival inks on the surface. The glass is suspended above the canvas, allowing light to move through it.

'I have admired her for such a long time and to meet her was a real honour,' says Ruddy. 'She has such a humble and down-to-earth charm. I really wanted to capture this along with her strength, determination and free spirited nature.'

K-6 Looking and interpreting

Visual Arts: List the colours you can see. **Record** the various types of marks you can see. Do you consider this to be a drawing or painting of Cathy Freeman? **Explain** your response.

Experiment drawing your portrait on sheets of clear acetate with maker pens. **Use** sketchy, wiggly and dotted lines. **Place** these over sheets of paper which you have expressively painted with broad strokes and drips of water colour. **Layer** these together and display in a class exhibition.

Links to KLAs

HSIE: Research the life and achievements of Freeman. **Write** an account of Freeman winning gold at the Sydney 2000 Olympics. **Reflect** on how Freeman has become an inspirational role model to many Australians.

PDHPE: Design a training program for your class over a few weeks. **Plan** a healthy eating plan, exercise routine and time your track work. **Keep** record of your progress. **Assess** whether the training program improved on your track times.

Issues for discussion

Describe the expression on Freeman's face. How does Ruddy portray the strength and determination of Freeman in this composition? Why do you think Ruddy has chosen to depict Freeman's head floating in the composition? Compare this portrait to others in the exhibition.

Ruddy's work is created using expressive splashes of acrylic across the back of toughened glass and archival inks on the surface. The glass is suspended above the canvas, allowing light to move through it. Discuss the role of chance in the techniques practiced by Ruddy.

Find images of Ruddy's previous Archibald Prize entries and compare them to this portrait. What elements do they have in common?

Archibald Prize 2011: finalists

1	Abdul Abdullah	Waleed Aly
2	Giles Alexander	Space or bust (portrait of Sam Leach)
3	Del Kathryn Barton	Mother (a portrait of Cate)
4	Jason Benjamin	It's not all Henry bloody Lawson
5	Kate Beynon	Painting shirt (self-portrait)
6	Natasha Bieniek	October
7	Deidre But-Husaim	Roy Ananda (chin support)
8	Marcus Callum	Portrait of a seated woman
9	Adam Chang	John Coetzee
10	Zhong Chen	Self-portrait on a horse
11	Adam Cullen	Charlie
12	Lucy Culliton	Ray in Paris
13	Susanne de Berenger	Ted Robinson
14	Ken Done	Me, March 2011
15	Matt Doust	White Cocoon
16	Geoffrey Dyer	The collector, David Walsh
17	Vincent Fantauzzo	Matt Moran
18	Nicholas Harding	Hugo at home
19	Jeremy Kibel	Portrait of Robert Jacks AO
20	Sonia Kretschmar	The heart of things (portrait of Cassandra Golds)
21	Michael Lindeman	Portrait of Wilfred
22	Song Ling	My name is Fartunate – self-portrait
23	Fiona Lowry	Portrait of Tim Silver
24	Tom Macbeth	Jessica
25	Amanda Marburg	DA
26	Angus McDonald	Dr Ann Lewis AO
27	Alexander McKenzie	Richard Roxburgh
28	Christopher McVinish	Portrait of Robyn Nevin
29	Andrew Mezei	Professor Penny Sackett, astronomer and physicist
30	Lewis Miller	Small self-portrait
31	Rodney Pople	Artist and family (after Caravaggio)
32	Ben Quilty	Margaret Olley
33	Craig Ruddy	Cathy Freeman
34	Jenny Sages	My Jack
35	Jiawei Shen	Self-portrait as Quong Tart's contemporary (after John Thomson), 2010
36	Xenia Stefanescu	Woven in the tapestry of life
37	Tim Storrier	Moon boy (self-portrait as a young man)
38	Pam Tippett	Self-portrait (for a change)
39	Barbara Tyson	The country's woman
40	Peter Wegner	Richard Morecroft
41	Apple Xiu Yin	Hearing · Meditation