

# PORTRAITURE AND THE PRIZE EDUCATION KIT

An education kit for K-6 Creative Arts with KLA links  
and 7-12 Visual Arts

ART  
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# ARCHIBALD.PRIZE.08

ART GALLERY OF NEW SOUTH WALES  
TOURED BY MUSEUMS & GALLERIES NEW SOUTH WALES

[www.thearchibaldprize.com.au](http://www.thearchibaldprize.com.au)



# PORTRAITURE AND THE PRIZE

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## Education kit outline

This education kit has been prepared by the Public Programmes Department of the Art Gallery of New South Wales in conjunction with Museums & Galleries New South Wales, to accompany the annual Archibald Prize exhibition.

It has been designed to assist primary and secondary students and teachers in their enjoyment and understanding of the Archibald exhibition and the issues surrounding it, at the Art Gallery of New South Wales or throughout the 2008 Archibald Prize: New South Wales Regional Tour.

The education kit is comprised of three sections. Section 1 includes background information on the Archibald Prize and general information on the genre of portraiture. Section 2 includes related K–6 and 7–12 student activities, questions for discussion, suggested case studies, related vocabulary, and artist and reference lists. Revised K–6 activities in Part 2 have been developed to compliment the current K-6 syllabus and the Key Learning Areas. Section 3 includes K–6 and 7–12 student activities and questions for discussion related specifically to the 2008 Archibald Prize. Sections 2 and 3 have been written with reference to the NSW Creative Arts Syllabus, Years K–6 and the NSW Visual Arts Syllabus Years 7–12.

The Kit is updated and extended each year to coincide with the announcement of the winner of the Archibald Prize.

## Acknowledgements

Sections 1 and 2 of this kit has been prepared by Leeanne Carr, coordinator Secondary and Asian Education Programs, and Tristan Sharp, Senior co-ordinator Education and Victoria Collings co-ordinator of K-6 and Family Programs and updated by Danielle Gullotta, coordinator K–6 programs Art Gallery of New South Wales. Section 3 2008 material has been co-ordinated by Danielle Gullotta. Contribution to K–6 and 7–12 questions and activities have been made by Julianne Ross Allcorn and Annette Gadsby, John Colet School and Andrew Thompson, International Grammar School. Editors: Leeanne Carr, Victoria Collings and Danielle Gullotta

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Cover: Crowds visit the Art Gallery of New South Wales to view the  
1944 Archibald Prize, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 22 January 1945

## Museums & Galleries NSW introduction

Museums & Galleries NSW (M&G NSW) is the key development agency for the museum and gallery sector in NSW, primarily funded by the NSW government through Arts NSW.

We are proud to be the Touring Agency for the 2008 Archibald Prize Regional Tour, and value our partnership with the Art Gallery of NSW and our links with regional galleries and museums across the state.

Museums & Galleries NSW has a long history of supporting and promoting innovative cultural and educational resources through galleries. The Archibald Prize is an excellent exhibition to introduce and further educate students on the exhibition process, within the context of contemporary Australian art, specifically painting and portraiture.

This year, the 2008 Archibald Prize Regional Tour travels to five galleries across New South Wales, offering teachers and students opportunities to engage with their local gallery through an accessible educational resource.

All schools are encouraged to take advantage of the 2008 Archibald Prize Education Kit as an informative resource, with diverse topics devised in line with the current NSW curriculum.

Maisy Stapleton  
CEO, Museums & Galleries NSW

## 2008 Archibald Prize Regional Tour

Bendigo Art Gallery, 31 May – 29 June 2008

Goulburn Regional Art Gallery, 11 July – 17 August 2008

Bathurst Regional Art Gallery, 29 August – 12 October 2008

Lake Macquarie City Art Gallery, 31 October – 7 December 2008

Port Macquarie Hastings Regional Art Gallery, 15 December 2008 – 18 January 2009

Lismore Regional Gallery, 23 January – 28 February 2009

Tour dates are subject to change. Please contact venues for confirmation of dates.

# 1

## GENERAL: THE ARCHIBALD PRIZE AND PORTRAITURE



Florence Rodway, *Jules Francois Archibald* 1921  
Art Gallery of New South Wales © AGNSW

### J.F. Archibald

J.F. Archibald had no desire to become famous and during his lifetime, he shunned publicity and remained evasive and enigmatic. A portrait of him, commissioned by the Trustees of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, was made after his death and remains as one of the pictorial records of a man who avoided having his photograph taken. Yet J.F. Archibald is the man behind one of Australia's oldest and best known art prizes for portraiture.

He was born in Victoria in 1856, christened with the name John Feltham. When he was fifteen, he started his career in journalism on a country newspaper in Warrnambool, Victoria. His passion for newspapers led him to Melbourne searching for work in 'the big smoke'. He lived a bohemian life, frequenting Melbourne's city boarding houses, streets, theatres and cafes. A life he imagined to be quite European, which led him to change his name to Jules François and later to leave money in his will for a large fountain to be built in the middle of Sydney's Hyde Park to commemorate the association of France and Australia in World War I.

Realising the power of print, in 1880 he and a friend founded the *Bulletin* magazine, a radical journal for its time addressing issues of nationhood, culture and identity. This journal was influential in shaping opinions and raising issues in the public's consciousness. He also employed the best young artists to be its illustrators. His interest in art led him in his later years to serve as a Trustee for the Art Gallery of New South Wales, keen to promote the work of younger artists and writers. In 1900, he commissioned Melbourne portrait artist, John Longstaff to paint a portrait of poet Henry Lawson for fifty guineas. Apparently he was so pleased with this portrait, that he left money in his will for an annual portrait prize.

The Archibald Prize, from its outset, has aroused controversy while chronicling the changing face of Australian society. Numerous legal battles and much debate have focused on the evolving definitions of portraiture. It has become one of the most popular annual art exhibitions in Australia.

### The Archibald Prize

Each year in accordance with the bequest of Jules F. Archibald (1856–1919) the Trustees of the Art Gallery of New South Wales invite artists to submit paintings in competition for the annual Archibald Prize, to be awarded to the best portrait preferentially of a man or woman distinguished in Art, Letters, Science or Politics. The artist must have been a resident of Australia during the previous 12 months. The entries are judged by the Trustees of the Gallery and the winner currently receives a prize of \$50,000, sponsored by Myer.

**The People's Choice**, running since 1988, is an opportunity for the public to vote for their favourite portrait in the Archibald exhibition and is awarded to the painting voted most popular by visitors. Both the artists and the selected voter each receive a prize of \$2500, plus a \$1000 gift card from Myer.

**The Packing Room Prize** is awarded by the team behind the scenes who receive, unpack and hang all the entries in the exhibition. First awarded in 1991, it is adjudicated by the Gallery's Storeman, Steve Peters, with the winner receiving \$500, plus a \$500 gift card from Myer.



Florence Rodway, *Jules Francois Archibald* 1921  
Art Gallery of New South Wales © AGNSW

## A chronology of events

**1900** Jules François Archibald, then editor of the *Bulletin*, commissioned John Longstaff to paint a portrait of the poet Henry Lawson. Apparently Archibald was so pleased with the portrait that he decided to 'write his name across Sydney' by bequeathing money to the arts. When he died in 1919 he left one tenth of his estate of £89,061 in trust for a non-acquisitive annual art prize to be awarded by the Trustees of the (then) National Art Gallery of New South Wales (now the Art Gallery of New South Wales)

**1921** The first Archibald Prize of £400 was awarded to W.B. McInnes for his portrait *Desbrowe Annear*.

**1922** Gother Mann, Director of the National Art Gallery of New South Wales, in listing the conditions of the prize stated that 'portraits should be as far as practicable painted from life and may be of any size. No direct copies from photographs will be considered eligible.'

**1923** W.B. McInnes' winning *Portrait of a Lady* was criticised as the sitter was not named and it was therefore impossible to determine if the condition of the prize, that the portrait be 'preferentially' of a man or woman 'distinguished' in 'the Arts, Letters, Science or Politics', was fulfilled.

**1938** Nora Heyson was the first woman to win the Archibald Prize with her portrait of Madame Elink Schuurman, the wife of the Consul General for the Netherlands. Max Meldrum made the much quoted statement 'If I were a woman, I would certainly prefer raising a healthy family to a career in art. Women are more closely attached to the physical things of life. They are not to blame. They cannot help it, and to expect them to do some things equally as well as men is sheer lunacy.'

**1942** William Dargie won the prize with his portrait *Corporal Jim Gordon, VC*. The work was painted when Dargie was an official war artist in Syria. The ship carrying the portrait back to Sydney sank and the painting spent some time underwater.

**1943** William Dobell won the award for *Joshua Smith*. Raymond Lindsay, writing for *The Daily Telegraph*, noted 'it is daring to the point of caricature, but its intense vitality lifts it from any such moribund definition. It has all the qualities of a good painting.' When the award was announced, two other entrants Mary Edwards and Joseph Wolinski, took legal action against Dobell and the Trustees on the ground that the painting was not a portrait as defined by the Archibald Bequest. The case was heard from the 23–26 October in the Supreme Court of NSW before Justice Roper, who dismissed the suit and ordered the claimant to pay costs for Dobell and the Trustees. This was followed by an appeal and an unsuccessful demand to the Equity Court to restrain the Trustees from handing over the money.

**1946** For the first time the Trustees had to insist upon a pre-selection of works. More than half of the entries were eliminated.

**1948** William Dobell won both the Archibald and Wynne Prizes. His winning portrait *Margaret Olley* was purchased by the National Art Gallery of New South Wales.

**1952** William Dargie's winning portrait *Mr Essington Lewis, CH* provoked an art students' demonstration. Students, including John Olsen, marched around the Gallery, gave three cheers for Picasso and left. A woman in the demonstration tied a placard around the neck of her Dachshund, which read 'Winner Archibald Prize – William Doggie.'

**1953** The first show of the Archibald 'rejects' took place from 20–27 February at the Educational Galleries, Bridge Street.

**1964** The Trustees decided not to award the prize on the grounds that the entries were not of a sufficient standard.

**1975** John Bloomfield's portrait *Tim Burstall*, painted from a blown-up photograph, was disqualified on the grounds that the portrait had to be painted from life. The prize was rejudged and awarded to Kevin Connor.

**1976** Brett Whiteley's *Self Portrait in the Studio* was a turning point, as it challenged traditional tenets of likeness and realism and stretched the definition of portraiture.

**1978** Brett Whiteley won the Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes becoming the first artist to win all three prizes in one year.

**1980** The Trustees, for the second time, decided not to award the prize on the grounds that there was no entry worthy of the award.

**1981** John Bloomfield threatened to take legal action to prevent Eric Smith being awarded the prize for Rudy Komon, as he claimed Smith had not adhered to a condition of entry, that the portrait should be painted from life.

**1985** The Perpetual Trustee Company, which administered Archibald's will, took the Australian Journalists Association Benevolent Fund to court. The AJA was named as first defendant in the case because it stood to inherit the money if the Archibald Prize failed to fulfill the criteria that the prize was still a 'good charitable bequest.' Justice Powell found that the Archibald Prize did fulfill this and directed that the Perpetual Trustees Company should transfer administration of the Trust to the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

**1988** The People's Choice Award was established.

**1994** The entry fee for artists was increased to \$25, and there were 174 fewer entries than the previous year.

**1995** The Archibald Prize application form was amended to read: 'For the purpose of this prize the Trustees apply the definition of a portrait as determined in the judgment of 1983: "a picture of a person painted from life". This refers to John Bloomfield's unsuccessful attempt in 1983 to sue for the return of the 1975 Archibald Prize. (see 1975)

**1996** To coincide with the 75th anniversary of the prize a mini-retrospective of selected past winners was mounted.

**1997** The eligibility of a painting of 'Bananas in Pyjamas' television characters B1 and B2 was questioned by the Trustees, as it was not a portrait of a 'man or woman'. Artist Evert Ploeg pointed out that his subjects were distinguished in the arts and that the portrait was painted from life, the only difference being that the subjects were in costume.

The *Salon des Refuses*, now an annual exhibition (held outside the Art Gallery of New South Wales), of works that were not hung in the Archibald Prize was organised to protest against the predominance of established regulars in the Archibald exhibition.

**1999** Euan Macleod's winning work, *Self Portrait/head like a hole*, received wide spread acclaim as a strong, imaginative painting. It was described by the *Daily Telegraph* of 20 March 1999 as 'arguably the most abstract painting ever to win the prize'. The Trustees' announcement was greeted with raucous whooping and cheering for the first time Chairman David Gonski could recall.

**2000** Rendered in Dulux house paints because they were 'rich, inexpensive and bright' Adam Cullen's winning work *Portrait of David Wenham*, drew praise for the Trustees from the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 25 March 2000 for their imaginative choice commenting that 'the daggiest award in Australian art is beginning to look serious'.

**2001** A record increase in the number of entries may have been stimulated by awards to more adventurous works during the previous two years. Public attendance at the Archibald, Wynne and Sulman exhibitions reached its highest ever daily average, at 1725 visitors per day (compared with 1388 per day in 2000).

**2003** A size limitation is introduced. Entires can be no larger than 90,000 square centimetres, for example, 3 metres by 3 metres or 4.5 metres by 2 metres. This was a decision made after the 2002 exhibition, with excessively large works creating handling, judging and storing difficulties, as well as restricting the number that can fit in the exhibition. Another restriction introduced for the 2003 Archibald Prize is the limit of one work per artist. The inaugural Citigroup Private Bank Australian Photographic Portraiture Prize is held in conjunction with the Archibald, Wynne and Sulman Prizes.

**2004** Craig Ruddy's portrait *David Gulpill – two worlds* wins the 2004 Archibald Prize and the People's choice award. Only the second time in 16 years has the public agreed with the judge's decision. A record number 60,133 people voted in this year's People's Choice for the Archibald Prize.

How popular is the Archibald Prize? According to London's *The Art Newspaper*, March 2005, Australia's best-loved portrait prize came ninth in a listing of contemporary art exhibitions around the globe for 2004. With 116,501 visitors, the Archibald Prize found itself in the company of Gerhard Richter and Rachel Whiteread at the Bilbao Guggenheim, James Rosenquist at the New York Guggenheim, and Chuck Close at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

**2005** John Olsen's self portrait *Janus Faced* is the winner of the 2005 Archibald Prize. Olsen has had an interesting relationship with the Prize. As a student he demonstrated against the Trustee's decision on the winning portrait (see 1952) and has only entered a portrait once before this year. Janus is the Roman god of doorways, passages and bridges. In art he is depicted with two heads facing in opposite directions.

'*Janus had the ability to look backwards and forwards and when you get to my age you have a hell of a lot to think about.*' John Olsen 2005

**2006** Marcus Wills' painting *The Paul Juraszek monolith (after Marcus Gheeraerts)* won the 85th Archibald Prize. Inspired by the etching *Allegory of iconoclasm* by Marcus Gheeraerts the elder, a Flemish engraver, illustrator and painter. Wills saw the etching in a book whilst researching and thought he would like to do something with it. Casting around for a subject for his own version, Wills thought of Paul Juraszek, a Melbourne-based sculptor, who creates mostly animals from myths and legends. "As it turned out he suited the subject even better than I could possibly have imagined," says Wills. Juraszek appears in the painting 29 times taking a good year to complete.

**2007** John Beard won for his painting of Janet Laurence, an installation artist whose work extends from the gallery into urban spaces. A former AGNSW trustee, she has undertaken numerous public commissions. John Beard's monochromatic portraits of fellow artists share similar qualities. While painting the structure, or architecture, of his friends' heads and faces, he also aims to capture the sense of fleeting, ever-changing expression. Beard focused the viewer's attention not just on the individual sitter but on the structure of the painting itself.

**2008** 2008 Del Kathryn Barton wins the 2008 Archibald prize now valued at \$50,000 for *You are what is most beautiful about me, a self portrait with Kell and Arella*. This self-portrait depicts the artist with her son and daughter. Barton's work is known for it's vibrant, figurative imagery, Barton's work combines traditional painting techniques with contemporary design and illustrative styles.

## Controversy and debate

First awarded in 1921, the Archibald Prize quickly became a prize eagerly sought by artists, not only because of the money it offered and the publicity and public exposure it generated, but because it also gave portrait artists an opportunity to have their work shown in a major gallery. Previously, portraitists had been largely restricted to public or private commissions and these exhibitions allowed their artwork to be viewed as a serious art form.

Early in its history the Archibald Prize attracted conservative artists who were not involved in the Modernist Movement characteristic of the Sydney art scene in the 1920s. Academic and tonal realism dominated the first decade—noting in particular W.B. McInnes who won the prize five times between 1921 and 1926. As a result, through the 1920s and 1930s many artists seeking the prestigious and important Archibald Prize painted 'prize' paintings, adapting their own styles to conform with the prize winning aesthetic of tonal realism.

With the Archibald terms stipulating a portrait of a 'distinguished' man or woman, the award mostly attracted celebratory portraits of notable Australians. Many of the Archibald contenders turned to the traditions of public portraiture of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which was to focus on the social role of the sitter—for example, as a monarch, bishop, landowner or merchant—rather than an individual with a unique personality and psychological make-up.

William Dargie's winning paintings from the 1940s very much reflected this ideal of the social role of the sitter, but his seventh portrait in 1952, *Mr Essington Lewis, CH*, a technically conservative and predictable portrait, sparked art students' demonstrations and the first exhibition of rejected Archibald entries.

Nevertheless, even in its first two decades, there were occasional diversions from the social role of the sitter, such as Henry Hanks *Self Portrait* in 1934, in which he depicted himself as an unemployed painter and tattily dressed. He was criticised for apparently ignoring the award's terms specifying the portrayal of a 'distinguished' man or woman.

But it was William Dobell's prize winning portrait of fellow artist Joshua Smith in 1943, which finally broke with the conventions that had been established with the Archibald. Hunt describes the portrait as being 'haunted with vivid expressive colours, linear distortion and almost mannerist attenuation of form'. Opposition to the win was intense and two Royal Art Society members, Joseph Wolinski and Mary Edwards, took legal action against Dobell and the Trustees, alleging that *Joshua Smith* was 'a distorted and caricatured form' and therefore not a portrait. In contrast, the supporters of Dobell described the portrait as both 'a likeness or resemblance of the sitter and a work of art', which allowed for distortion for the purpose of art.

In response to critics Dobell said that when he painted a portrait he was '... trying to create something, instead of copying something. To me, a sincere artist is not one who makes a faithful attempt to put on canvas what is in front of him, but one who tries to create something which is living in itself, regardless of its subject. So long as people expect paintings to be simply coloured photographs they get no individuality and in the case of portraits, no characterisation. The real artist is striving to depict his subject's character and to stress the caricature, but at least it is art which is alive.'

The case stimulated massive press coverage and public comment—by those both familiar and totally unfamiliar with art. Ultimately, the Dobell case became a lively debate about Modernism. The question of whether the painting was portraiture or caricature equally asked the questions of what constituted a portrait and what was the relationship of realism to art in general. Justice Roper upheld Dobell's award on the grounds that the painting, 'although characterised by some startling exaggeration and distortion... nevertheless bore a strong degree of likeness to the subject and undoubtedly was a pictorial representation of him.'

By the 1960s Archibald artists were facing the problems of trying to reconcile the essentially conservative and restrictive conventions of portraiture with the demands of modernism—which had no interest in naturalism or realism; in particular, the abstract art of the 1950s and 1960s contested with the figurative restrictions of portraiture. Hunt cites Judy Cassab as responding to this problem with her winning portraits *Stanislaus Rapotec* in 1960 and *Margo Lewers* in 1967 in which the figures are enlivened by respectively a green-black grid and blocks of blue. Nevertheless, within this perceived enlightened sense of judging, the Trustees reverted to traditional form with the award going to William Pidgeon in 1961 for *Rabbi Dr I. Porush*.

While the Archibald Prize never failed to stimulate debate, controversy yet again loomed when, in 1976, Brett Whiteley won with his painting *Self Portrait in the Studio*, marking a turning point for the prize. The self portrait is seemingly reduced to the artist's face reflected in a hand mirror within the vast expanse of the blue of his studio and its collection of objects. According to Hunt, Whiteley 'had produced an extraordinary, compelling work because he was committed to creating "something which is a living thing in itself", regardless of its subject.' Whiteley followed this win with an even more expressive work in 1978: *Art, Life and the Other Thing*, a triptych that explored three issues—the status of photographic representation in portraiture, the Dobell controversy and the representation of Whiteley's own battle with heroin addiction.

Whiteley's reference to photographic representation presumably dealt with yet another Archibald controversy: portraits painted from photographs. In 1975, John Bloomfield's large photo realist portrait *Tim Burstall*, the film maker, was disqualified as it was painted from a photograph and because Bloomfield had never met Burstall. In this case the debated point was the justification of portraiture as revealing the inner self of the sitter rather than being simply a faithful rendering of facial features. Bloomfield struck back in 1981 when he threatened legal action over that year's winning portrait by Eric Smith, *Rudy Komon*, which strongly resembled a 1974 photograph of Komon. Komon defended the award saying he had been sitting for Smith for twenty one years.

These two cases highlight the debate about the nature of portraiture: is it about getting a good likeness or is it about character revelation?

Adapted from Susan Hunt, *The Archibald Prize 1921–1993*, Art Gallery of New South Wales.



## Portraiture as genre: an overview

The Roman writer Pliny, tells us that portraiture originated in tracing lines around the human shadow, to record the features of a person who no longer stood in that place. The absence of a loved one through death or physical circumstance was erased by the presence of his Polygnoeus (c.450 BC) painted in outline on a Greek vase.

A portrait can be made for a number of reasons—as an historical record, a personal tribute, remembrance or token of friendship, a glorification of an individual's status or position, or a simple gratification of vanity and indicator of fashion.

Beyond these specific non-art purposes, portraiture offered special challenges, which attract some artists more than others. It poses more than questions of artistic form; it involves the study of humanity in a very specific way, probing the individual mind as well as recording the external appearance of a subject.



For many years portraiture has been one of the most reliable sources of bread and butter income for artists. If a portrait is commissioned, then both the price and the sale of the work (provided the sitter is satisfied with the result) are guaranteed. This is not the case with most of the other works an artist may produce, where he or she relies on a dealer to find a market and a good price, and in some cases may not sell at all. The obvious advantages of commissioned work are however to be weighed against the degree of compromise that pleasing a client may impose on an artist's way of working. Often, fashionable portrait painters developed styles that attracted commissions, and their clients were more than happy to join a celebrated list of notables immortalised in paint.

Modern art movements have challenged the traditional role and definition of portraiture. While the production of a good likeness still has the power to delight and amaze, the development of abstract and conceptual art forms this century has made many of the traditional delights of portraiture seem old-fashioned. At the same time, the experimental approaches of modernist artists have also expanded the interpretive tools of portraiture. A face can be expressively distorted, certain features exaggerated, the colours heightened, or the geometry of the figure brought out to emphasise the character or temperament of the sitter, or to highlight purely formal qualities of the figurative subject.



When an artist paints a portrait, the difficulty is that he or she has to get an individual likeness and make a picture that is formally resolved, or well composed. The likeness can be photographically exact or realistic, or it can be a more general impression of character and temperament conveyed by colour, line, tone or fragmented forms. Because the 20th and 21st Century is an age that is less sympathetic to the traditional goals of portraiture than any other, it is surprising that the art form has survived as strongly as it has. Competition from the camera has also challenged the role of the portrait painter in society - nonetheless, in Australia portraiture is currently widely practiced, and the annual and always controversial Archibald Prize conducted by the Art Gallery of New South Wales, has something to do with the lively state of the art.



### Activities

- According to Pliny, portraiture originated in tracing lines around the human shadow. As a class activity, try casting a shadow from each students' facial profile onto a piece of paper taped onto a wall or window of the classroom. This is easily done using either a slide projector (without the slide inside), or an overhead projector.
- Portraits are made for a number of reasons – historical record, personal tribute, remembrance or token of friendship, glorification of status, gratification of vanity, indicator of fashion and style and others. Use the printed list of the works in the current Archibald Prize and briefly note why each was made or what it is revealing about the person.
- The Archibald Prize requires an artist to paint a portrait of someone 'distinguished in art, letters, science or politics'. List some of the different professions of the sitters in the current exhibition. Comment on the ratio of men to women.
- List three portraits from the current exhibition that reveal something of the sitter's personality. Investigate how the artist communicates this to the audience?
- Choose two portraits from the current exhibition and two from art history, in which the background or surrounding environment is important in revealing the character of the sitter. How is this achieved? Explain. Compare and contrast these four works.



From top:

Agnolo Bronzino, *Duke Cosimo I de' Medici in armour*, 1503–1572

Rembrandt van Rijn, *Samuel Manasseh Ben Israel*, 1636

Tom Roberts, *Eileen*, 1892

Sidney Nolan, *Self Portrait*, 1943 © Estate of Sidney Nolan

William Dobell, *Dame Mary Gilmore*, 1957 © Sir William Dobell Art Foundation

All works from the Art Gallery of New South Wales

## Portraiture and the Prize: a selection of quotes

All the houses of Venice contain numerous portraits, and several noble houses have of their ancestors to the fourth generation, while some of the noblest go even farther back. The custom is an admirable one, and was in use among the ancients ... To what other end did the ancients place the images of their great men in public places, with laudatory inscriptions, except to kindle those who come after to virtue and glory!

Giorgio Vasari, writer and artist, *Lives of Painters*, 1568

Mr Lely, I desire you would use all your skill to paint my picture truly like me, and not flatter me at all; but remark all these roughnesses, pimples, warts and everything as you see me, otherwise I will never pay a farthing for it.

Oliver Cromwell, 1650

By portraits I do not mean the outlines and the colouring of the human figure but the inside of the heart and mind of man.

Lord Chesterfield, 1747

A history painter paints man in general; a portrait painter, a particular man, and consequently a defective model.

Sir Joshua Reynolds, artist, 1769-90

One is never satisfied with the portrait of a person one knows.

Johann Wolfgang van Goethe, 1808

Take note, young man, that the portrait should not be a reflection in a mirror, a daguerreotype produces that far better. The portrait must be a lyric poem, through which a whole personality, with all its thoughts, feelings and desires, speaks.

Arthur Schopenhauer, philosopher, 1856

To sit for one's portrait is like being present at one's own creation.

Alexander Smith, 1863

You would scarcely believe the difficulty of placing a single figure on a canvas, and of focusing all the interest on this solitary and unique figure while keeping it alive and real.

Edouard Manet, artist, 1880

It is for the artist to do something beyond this [imitation]: in portrait painting to put on canvas something more than the face the model wears for that one day; to paint the man, in short, as well as his features.

James McNeil Whistler, artist, *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*, 1890

Every portrait that is painted with feeling is a portrait of the artist, not of the sitter.

Oscar Wilde, writer, *The Portrait of Dorian Gray*, 1891

When I paint a person, his enemies always find the portrait a good likeness. He himself believes, however, that all other portraits are good likenesses except the one of himself.

Edvard Munch, artist

In order for a portrait to be a work of art it must not resemble the sitter.

Umberto Boccioni, artist, *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting*, 1910

I do not paint a portrait to look like the subject, rather the subject grows to look like his portrait.

Salvador Dalí, artist

The Archibald Prize has done nothing for art.

William Dobell, artist, 1948

I consider the individuality of the artist the least important thing in a painting.

William Dargie, artist, 8 times winner of Archibald during 1940's and 50's

The Archibald Prize is not so much a competition as a myth.

Robert Hughes, art critic, 1962

Sydney is a city that likes to perv on people. Portraiture is one of the most revealing and satisfying ways of exercising voyeurism.

Edmund Capon, Director, Art Gallery of New South Wales, 1996

My profile was lifted and sales of my work rocketed. Now, even if people don't know my work, the Archibald is known to people both in and outside the (art) industry, so it's a real advantage.

Wendy Sharpe, artist, 1999

I never call myself a portraitist. I use people as a starting point or as the subject matter of an artwork and I try to avoid a psychological investigation.

Adam Cullen, artist, 2002

The best of portraits like Rembrandt for instance are the kind of infinite disclosures of aspects of that person's existence through time and that's an ongoing thing and there's no closure in that.

Lindy Lee, artist, 2002

It gives people an opportunity to show their work in the Gallery who otherwise wouldn't. Some of whom are not professional artists which in some ways is an extraordinary liberty for a gallery, many of who otherwise wouldn't come to this place, which once again I think on both counts are really wonderful aspects for the prize.

Ben Genocchio, art critic, *The Australian*, 2002

Painting a portrait is as much about the sittings, about becoming acquainted with them and drawing them as it is about the painting.

Nicholas Harding, artist, 2003

There's a fantasy that winning the Archibald changes your life. That's a fairytale. What it does is focus people's attention on an artist's work.

Ray Hughes, Sydney Gallery owner, 2004

And when I am asked how many portraits have I done, I say how many breaths have I taken?

[ I have been ] doing portraits since I was 12.

Judy Cassab, artist, 2004

(The Archibald Prize is) of the people, by the people, for the people.

Edmund Capon, Director AGNSW, 2004

It's the one event where public opinion does not feel it has to subscribe to curatorial knowledge. People are always curious about other people's circumstance, their situation. There's a kind of discreet peering going on here. It's a very public event and I think the general public feels a strange sense of ownership of the Archibald. This is the one time they can feel almost participants.

Edmund Capon, Director AGNSW, 2005.

Sometimes painting becomes sculptural. The first effort became the study and the next was more free-flowing and easy, very fresh. I made it in a few hours, started it at Windsor and finished it at Woolloomooloo.

Ben Quilty, artist and 2005 & 2006 Archibald finalist

Quotes sourced from:

Rosalie Higson, 'Celebrating a lifetime's Poetic reflection', *The Australian*, March 5 2004

Joyce Morgan, 'Enter at your own Risk', *Sydney Morning Herald*, Spectrum, March 6-7 2004

Rosalie Higson, 'Some behind-the-scenes canvassing', *The Australian*, March 9 2004

Art Gallery of New South Wales, *Archibald Prize* video, 2002

Ian Crofton, *A Dictionary of Art Quotations*, London Routledge, 1988

*Look Magazine* March 1999

Lyndall Crisp, 'Hard call for hanging judges', *The Weekend Financial Review*, 2005

Alison Mills, 'Artistic journey takes painter from Paris to Pit Town', *Hawkesbury Independent*, April 2005

## List of winners (1921–2007)

1921	WB McInnes <i>Desbrowe Annear</i>	1949	Arthur Murch <i>Bonar Dunlop</i>
1922	WB McInnes <i>Professor Harrison Moore</i>	1950	William Dargie <i>Sir Leslie McConnan</i>
1923	WB McInnes <i>Portrait of a Lady</i>	1951	Ivor Hele <i>Laurie Thomas</i>
1924	WB McInnes <i>Portrait of Miss Collins</i>	1952	William Dargie <i>Mr Essington Lewis, CH</i>
1925	John Longstaff <i>Portrait of Maurice Moscovitch</i>	1953	Ivor Hele <i>Sir Henry Simpson Newland, CBE DSO MS FRCS</i>
1926	WB McInnes <i>Silk and Lace</i>	1954	Ivor Hele <i>Rt Hon RG Menzies, PC CH QC MP</i>
1927	George W. Lambert <i>Mrs Murdoch</i>	1955	Ivor Hele <i>Robert Campbell Esq.</i>
1928	John Longstaff <i>Portrait of Dr Alexander Leeper</i>	1956	William Dargie <i>Mr Albert Namatjira</i>
1929	John Longstaff <i>WA Holman, KC</i>	1957	Ivor Hele <i>Self Portrait</i>
1930	WB McInnes <i>Drum-Major Harry McClelland</i>	1958	William Pidgeon <i>Mr Ray Walker</i>
1931	John Longstaff <i>Sir John Sulman</i>	1959	William Dobell <i>Dr Edward MacMahon</i>
1932	Ernest Buckmaster <i>Sir William Irvine</i>	1960	Judy Cassab <i>Stanislaus Rapotec</i>
1933	Charles Wheeler <i>Ambrose Pratt</i>	1961	William Pidgeon <i>Rabbi Dr I Porush</i>
1934	Henry Hanke <i>Self portrait</i>	1962	Louis Kahan <i>Patrick White</i>
1935	John Longstaff <i>AB ('Banjo') Paterson</i>	1963	J Carrington Smith <i>Professor James McAuley</i>
1936	WB McInnes <i>Dr Julian Smith</i>	1964	No Award
1937	Normand Baker <i>Self Portrait</i>	1965	Clifton Pugh <i>RA Henderson</i>
1938	Nora Heysen <i>Mme Elink Schuurman</i>	1966	Jon Molvig <i>Charles Blackman</i>
1939	Max Meldrum <i>The Hon GJ Bell, Speaker, House of Representatives</i>	1967	Judy Cassab <i>Margo Lewers</i>
1940	Max Meldrum <i>Dr J Forbes McKenzie</i>	1968	William Pidgeon <i>Lloyd Rees</i>
1941	William Dargie <i>Sir James Elder, KBE</i>	1969	Ray Crooke <i>George Johnston</i>
1942	William Dargie <i>Corporal Jim Gordon, VC</i>	1970	Eric Smith <i>Gruzman – Architect</i>
1943	William Dobell <i>Joshua Smith</i>	1971	Clifton Pugh <i>Sir John McEwan</i>
1944	Joshua Smith <i>S. Rosevear, MHR, Speaker</i>	1972	Clifton Pugh <i>The Hon EG Whitlam</i>
1945	William Dargie <i>Lt-General The Hon Edmund Herring, KBC, DSO, MC, ED</i>	1973	Janet Dawson <i>Michael Boddy</i>
1946	William Dargie <i>LC Robson, MC, MA</i>	1974	Sam Fullbrook <i>Jockey Norman Stephens</i>
1947	William Dargie <i>Sir Marcus Clarke, KBE</i>	1975	Kevin Connor <i>The Hon Sir Frank Kitto, KBE</i>
1948	William Dobell <i>Margaret Olley</i>	1976	Brett Whiteley <i>Self Portrait in the Studio</i>

1977	Kevin Connor <i>Robert Klippel</i>	1997	Nigel Thomson <i>Barbara Blackman</i>
1978	Brett Whiteley <i>Art, Life and the other thing</i>	1998	Lewis Miller <i>Portrait of Allan Mitelman No 3</i>
1979	Wes Walters <i>Portrait of Philip Adams</i>	1999	Euan MacLeod <i>Self portrait/head like a hole</i>
1980	No Award		Highly commended: <i>Adam Cullen Max Cullen</i>
1981	Eric Smith <i>Rudy Komon</i>	2000	Adam Cullen <i>Portrait of David Wenham</i>
1982	Eric Smith <i>Peter Sculthorpe</i>		Highly commended: Jenny Sages <i>Each morning when I wake up I put on my Mother's face</i> + Garry Shead <i>Sasha Grishin</i>
1983	Nigel Thomson <i>Chandler Coventry</i>	2001	Nicholas Harding <i>John Bell as King Lear</i>
1984	Keith Looby <i>Max Gillies</i>		Highly commended: Jenny Sages <i>Jackie and Kerryn</i>
1985	Guy Warren <i>Flugelman with Wingman</i>	2002	Cherry Hood <i>Simon Tedeschi Unplugged</i>
1986	Davida Allen <i>Dr. John Arthur McKelvey Shera</i>	2003	Geoffrey Dyer <i>Richard Flanagan</i>
1987	William Robinson <i>Equestrian Self Portrait</i>	2004	Craig Ruddy <i>David Gulpilil, Two Worlds</i>
1988	Fred Cress <i>John Beard</i>	2005	John Olsen <i>Self portrait Janus faced</i>
1989	Bryan Westwood <i>Portrait of Elwyn Lynn</i>	2006	Marcus Wills <i>The Paul Juraszek monolith (after Marcus Gheeraerts)</i>
1990	Geoffrey Proud <i>Dorothy Hewett</i>		Highly commended: Jenny Sages <i>Hossein Valamanesh</i>
1991/92	Bryan Westwood <i>The Prime Minister</i>	2007	John Beard <i>Janet Laurence</i>
1992/93	Garry Shead <i>Tom Thompson</i>	2008	Del Kathryn Barton <i>You are what is most beautiful about me, a self portrait with Kell and Arella</i>
1993/94	Francis Giacco <i>Homage to John Reichard</i>		
1995	William Robinson <i>Self portrait with Stunned Mullet</i>		
1996	Wendy Sharpe <i>Self portrait – as Diana of Erskineville</i>		

### Regarding the non-awarding of the Archibald Prize for 1964 and 1980

On 22 January 1965 Hal Missingham, the Director of the Gallery, announced "After careful consideration the trustees unanimously decided not to award the prize for 1964, as they felt that no submitted entry was worthy of the award. They accordingly exercised their discretion under clause 10 of the conditions." This clause allowed the Gallery not to award the prize and to use the money to purchase any portrait that had won the prize. This was the first time the clause was invoked.

In 1980 the trustees again unanimously decided that no entry was deserving of the prize.

# 2

## SYLLABUS CONNECTIONS: THE ARCHIBALD PRIZE AND PORTRAITURE

### Suggested case studies: Years 7–12

Each interview is followed by issues for discussion which support critical investigations of key agents in the Archibald Prize process.

#### THE TRUSTEE

##### **Judging the Prize: An interview with Janet Laurence, artist and AGNSW Trustee.**

Janet Laurence is a mixed media, installation artist whose work has been included in major survey exhibitions and collections, nationally and internationally. She exhibits regularly in Sydney, Melbourne and Japan. Her work explores a relationship to the natural world from an architectural context. It extends from the gallery space into the urban fabric, and has involved collaborations with architects and landscape architects. Janet Laurence has been a trustee and judge for the Archibald Prize since 1997.

Q. What is it like to be a judge for the Archibald Prize?

A mixture of things. It is an enjoyable experience. It is quite fun to be involved in the frivolity of the Prize. On the other hand, I also realise it's serious for the artist.

Q. How intuitive is your approach to judging the Prize?

The judging process is quite fast. You like to think you've got in mind what portraiture is today when selecting the works. At times there seems to be no time for real discussion about what portraiture is.

Q. What is the basic process? Describe it step by step.

The 11 members of the Board of Trustees at the Art Gallery of New South Wales are the judging panel for the Archibald Prize. The process of eliminating works and choosing the finalists occurs over a number of viewings.

The panel sit in a line and the paintings are brought into the room for viewing. At this stage, there are works that are definite no's. All other works go into the next round. In the 2nd round the discussion starts. This is where you bring in other considerations.

The culling process is quite fast.

The finalists are then hung in the Gallery space as an exhibition and the panel then chooses the winning portrait.

Q. What are the advantages and disadvantages of judging in a group?

At times it can be difficult yet it can also be interesting to discuss ideas with others. It makes it fun and can also make selection more difficult. Half of the group do not have an art background and are not used to looking at art all the time. They are also sensitive to that and listen to the art oriented members of the panel. They also feel that their experience offers another view point. The prize is a public exhibition and therefore public opinion counts.

Q. Does the winning entry tend to stand out?

Finalists tend to stand out. At least half the finalists are unanimously selected. Some finalists are at first not considered.

Q. Do you think the Archibald Prize has moved with the times?

Yes, slowly. This exhibition is personality driven. It keeps it the sort of show it is. It tends to be driven by the non art public. The Prize attracts an audience that enjoys seeing pictures of people rather than the paintings themselves. This is good because the audience can see what paintings can do to the people.

Q. How do you view the role of the Archibald Prize in and outside the art industry?

Regarding the audience outside the art industry it brings people to the Gallery who wouldn't necessarily come to the Gallery. It therefore broadens the audience. Inside the art industry it is not viewed very seriously. On the other hand it is also an opportunity to develop an artist's career and to be hung at the Gallery and be seen by so many people. A lot of artists don't enter the Prize.

Q. Has your opinion about the Prize changed since judging it?

I am much more aware of what it can do for an artist's career when they win it. I am also aware of what goes into it. There is a lack of contemporary artists entering. More contemporary artists would bring a fresh and exciting outlook. The trustees have a varied appreciation for art and at times contemporary art is difficult to place in the restrictive framework of the judging process and to allow it to shine. Adam Cullen is an example where the contemporary artist is successful in achieving the winning portrait.

Q. Do you view the Prize differently as an artist as opposed to being a judge?

I do view the Prize differently.

As an artist I feel for the artist entering. Not all works are given as much attention, however, in saying that, the artist knows what they are entering.

- How intuitive is the judging process? Create a judging panel for the Prize in your classroom and choose a winner from this year's finalists. Consider who would be on the panel and why? What criteria would you consider in making your selection?
- Discuss how you came to your decisions.
- In what way does public opinion count in the success of the Prize? Compare the winner chosen by the Trustees to the Packers Prize winner and the People's choice award.

## THE CRITIC

### Discussing the Prize: The role of the media

Read the article *Enter at your own risk* by Joyce Morgan in the Sydney Morning Herald *Spectrum* section March 6–7 2004 and consider the following case study issues.

- What role does the media play in the success of the Prize? How important is an article in the Sydney Morning Herald for the artist who wins and for the Art Gallery of New South Wales? In what way does it influence the audience who will come to see the exhibition?
- Collect articles from a variety of sources and develop your own critic on the Archibald Prize. Consider the language used as well as the style and aim of the critic.
- Who is the greatest winner; the artist, the audience or the Art Gallery of New South Wales? Discuss.
- Research 2 artists that have not been mentioned in this article and discuss their experiences since winning the Prize.

## THE ARTIST

### Winning the Prize: an interview with Adam Cullen, contemporary Australian artist

Adam Cullen lives and works in the upper Blue Mountains of New South Wales. He won the Archibald Prize in 2000 and has been a finalist from 1999–2006. His work has been exhibited in a number of national and international exhibitions including the São Paulo Biennale 2003 and Perspecta exhibitions. His work is represented in collections in all state galleries as well as a number of private collections. Adam Cullen is currently making paintings, large scale sculptures, videos, etchings, prints and books.

Q. Why did you enter the prize in the first place?

For a gag. I thought it was about time a contemporary artist entered.

Q. Does your approach differ when creating a portrait for the Prize as opposed to creating a portrait for an exhibition?

No.

Q. How do you choose your subject?

I usually choose a person who has had a good couple of years in the public arena.

Q. Has your artistic career changed since winning the Archibald Prize in 2000? If so, in what ways?

It has increased my audience and helped make my work more acceptable to a mainstream audience. It's aided in legitimising my practice.

Q. Describe the experience when you won the prize, that is, with the Gallery, the media, the critics etc. Hysterical, strange and overwhelming. The experience has helped me to understand aspects of how popular culture works.

Q. Has winning the Archibald Prize influenced your art practice and contributed to your success as an artist?

People take you more seriously. I'm more aware now of what I actually do. I take myself more seriously.

Q. Was there increased interest in your work? Did you receive more commissions or exhibitions?

Yes. Curators seem to take more interest.

Q. What are the advantages and disadvantages of winning the Archibald prize?

The advantages are obvious. The disadvantage is the label and tag – this may or may not put some contemporary curators or clients off.

Q. How has your profile changed inside and outside the art industry since winning the Prize?

It increase your exposure so one day you're an unknown contemporary artist and the next you're accepted into the art fraternity. You are all of a sudden legitimised.

Q. Why do you keep entering?

It's a horse race – and I like gambling. The money helps and it's entertaining.

Q. How do art prizes affect the career and value of an artist and their work?

They don't really and they shouldn't.

Q. How do you view the role of the Archibald Prize in the Contemporary artworld?

It has no relevance what so ever.

Q. Do you think your winning portrait and other portraits you have entered pushed the boundaries of what is generally accepted and entered in the Prize?

I heard that I inspired others to enter. I think the Prize should be more open to new paintings.

- Investigate Adam Cullen's art practice and body of work. Describe his technique and approach to artmaking. What are the key themes and ideas in his work? Collect articles from a variety of sources and consider how winning the Prize has contributed to his success as an artist.
- Do Archibald Prize winners reflect contemporary art practice? should they? Discuss by comparing the work of this years Prize winner with that of a contemporary Australian artist.
- Choose an artist that has been a finalist for the Archibald Prize and research their body of work. How does the portrait they enter show similar or differing approaches to their art practice.
- Is portraiture, popular culture and celebrity evident in his work? Discuss. List some of the other portrait subjects – would you consider them 'regular' subjects for portraiture and the prize?



## THE EXHIBITION MANAGER

### Exhibiting the Prize: An interview with Stefanie Tarvey, exhibitions officer, AGNSW

An article from *Look Magazine*, Art Gallery Society of New South Wales, April 2005

#### Behind the famous faces

Organising the Archibald is no simple task. Just ask exhibitions officer, Stefanie Tarvey. She's been doing it for ten years – with a little help from her colleagues – and she's seen it all.

Q. When do you start organising the Archibald?

After each Archibald closes, we have a post-mortem. We analyse how things can be improved – small refinements rather than big changes. The exhibition schedule dictates when the works will be coming in for the next Archibald. This year, because of Bill Henson being on later so it could line up with the Sydney Festival, the Archibald won't open until April 30. It's normally early to mid March. We try to get the entry forms out three or four months before. Artists ring up or write to us to get their names put on the mailing list.

Q. How many departments and staff are involved?

Deborah Spek in administration deals with a lot of it. She maintains the mailing list and deals with a lot of the queries. She is down there helping when the works come in. I couldn't do it without her. Steve Peters is the public face. He is responsible for unpacking the works and handing them back. There is also marketing, publicity, public programmes, exhibition staff and the installation crew.

Q. What is the cut off date for entries this year?

April 15. So there are five days between Monday April 11 and Friday April 15 when the works come in. Friday is always absolute hell. As well as individual artists bringing their work in, freight companies come in. For example, one will bring in a whole truck load picked up from Melbourne. On those five days we stay back late and try to unpack as many as we can.

Q. When does the judging commence?

The trustees will come in on Saturday April 16 to choose works for the Wynne. You have to have all the works unpacked because you don't know which ones are for Wynne or Sulman or Archibald. The works for the Archibald are chosen the following day. The installation crew 'walk' each of the works past the trustees for them to choose the paintings to be hung.

Q. What sort of issues arise from year to year?

Size, fragility, works that are delicate, works that don't have protective framing, works that are wet, works that have things sticking out that could damage other artworks. You are also dealing with some emotional artists: people who are worried about getting their work here, people who don't know which prize to enter their work into. About two years ago we introduced a size restriction because things were becoming unmanageable. It's now 90,000 square centimetres – about nine square metres – which is still generous.

Q. How many entrants were there last year?

There were 732 – that's the second highest year. The highest figure is 751 but that was when people could put in two works. When we introduced the size restriction we also pulled it back so people could only enter one work. There were 2046 works for all the competitions in 2004, which gives you an idea of how many we are dealing with.

Q. Is it a difficult exhibition to install?

It's not like hanging an exhibition that has some intellectual rationale behind it. Edmund Capon or Barry Pearce will decide where the works should go. Sometimes it might be a tight hang and other times we have much more space. It just depends on how many works the trustees want in the final selection. They are conscious of the limitations of space and how it will look as an exhibition.

Q. Is there special attention to where the rostrum is placed for the announcement?

Basically you can't swing a cat in there so they have to put it in the middle room. The trustees come in on the morning of the announcement at about 7.30am. At that stage they're seeing it hung on the wall properly lit, with extended labels. That's when they make their final choice. The show is already hung. It's not as if we can move it around. There'd be no excitement if the rostrum was already in front of the winner, would there?

Connell Nisbet *Behind the Famous Faces* Look Magazine April 2005





## THE ARCHIBALD EXHIBITION PROCESS

The Archibald Prize is a stand alone exhibition. The procedure is vastly different to an exhibition that is organised by a curator. It is treated as a competition rather than a conventional exhibition.

Submission forms are sent to artists on the mailing list, open to anyone enquiring, three months prior to the exhibition. This encourages first time entries, as well as repeat entries on a yearly basis.

Submitted works for the Archibald, along with Wynne and Sulman Prizes, arrive at the Gallery over a five day period and are judged over a three day period. 732 works were entered in the 2004 Archibald Prize. Approximately 40 works are chosen as finalists.

The Art Gallery of New South Wales Board of Trustees selects the finalists for the Archibald Prize. There are currently 10 members on the Board. The finalists are hung in the exhibition space and lit appropriately before the Trustees make their decision on the winning portrait.

Edmund Capon, Director of the Gallery oversees the hanging of the Archibald Prize finalists in the exhibition space. He is not involved in the judging procedure.

The winner of The Archibald Prize is selected on the morning of the announcement, the day prior to the opening of the exhibition to the public.

The People's Choice Award and Packing Room Prize are considered to be very popular with the general public. These awards rarely reflect the decision made by the Board of Trustees.

Source: Stefanie Tarvey, Exhibition Officer, Australian Art Department, Art Gallery of New South Wales.

- Investigate curatorial practice and the exhibition process. Compare the exhibition process of the Archibald Prize with that of a curatorial lead exhibition. How do they differ in procedure, aims and outcomes? Investigate the role of the curator and artist in each process and consider the audience's engagement with the artwork as a result of each type of exhibition.

### Winners and Losers

- Winners and losers, who decides? Who wins and why? What influences these decisions? Does taste and fashion have a role to play?
- Consider the influence of conservatism versus innovation in art prizes. Do art prizes lead the way for, or are they followers of, Contemporary Art?
- How, and in what way, does controversy play a role in an art prize? Investigate the opposing dialogue of critical debate versus public opinion in such circumstances.

### Portraiture's Changing Face

- Research the evolving definitions of portraiture. Is there room for the avant-garde in this genre?
- Painting for a prize—what are the expectations?
- Do artists make portraits specifically for the Archibald Prize each year? Does this in turn make these exhibitions predictable and generate a 'house style' that can be recognised?
- Investigate how portraiture can document the changing face of a country or culture over time. Are the subjects in the Archibald representative of the particular time they are entered, or a certain section of society, or are they simply a reflection of an individual artist's interests. Research all of the winning works throughout the history of the Archibald Prize. Can they be read as a narrative of Australian culture over time?

### Your Say

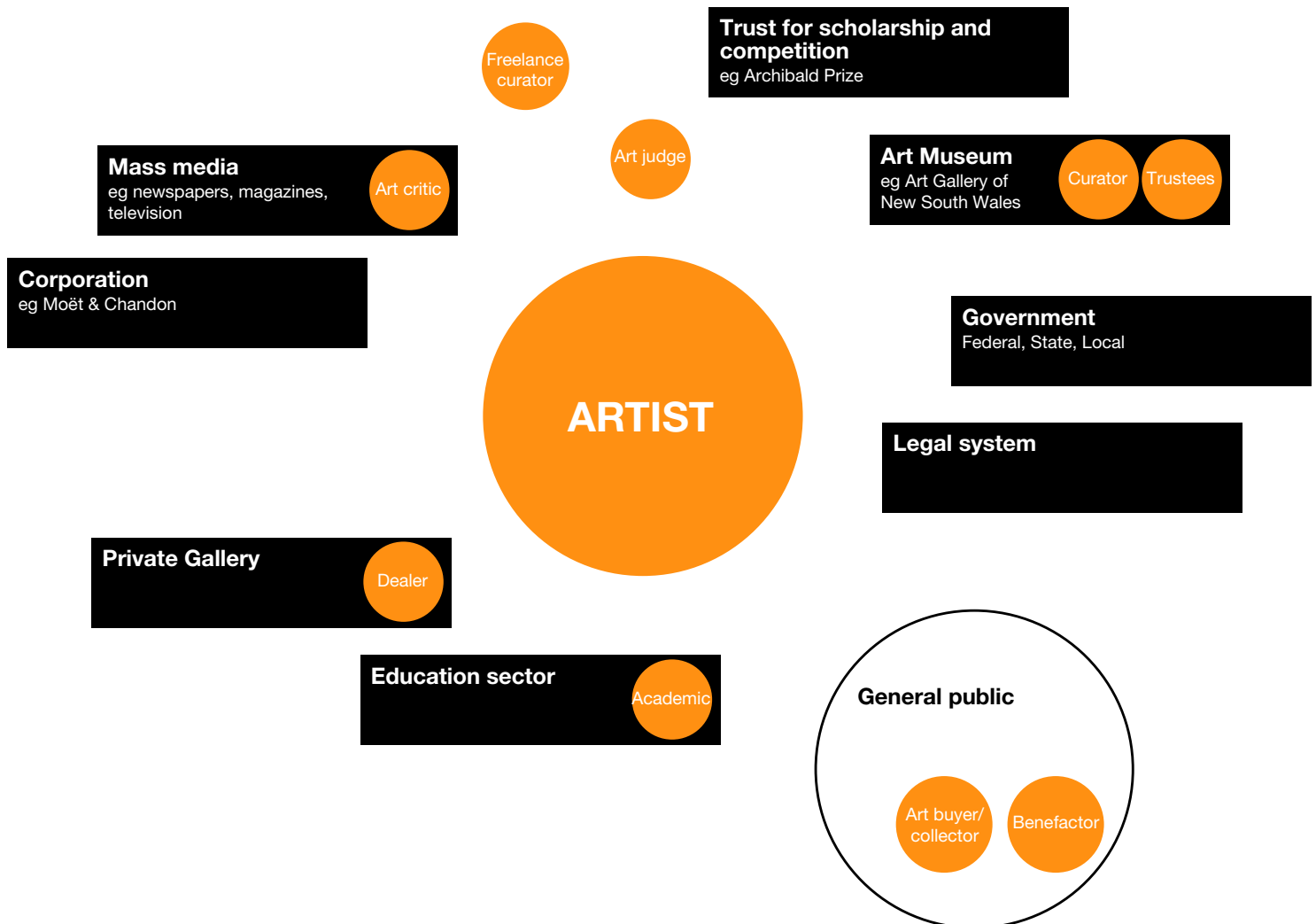
- The Archibald Prize is an opportunity for artists to show their work to a wider audience. Discuss the role of the audience with regard to an art prize. Why does it encourage such debate amongst a general, often non-art audience like no other exhibition?
- Investigate the purpose and role of the Peoples Choice Award and the Packing Room Prize. Compare the winning works from these awards with the Archibald Prize winner from the current exhibition. Do the choices for each award reflect the judges who made them? Which audience (art/non-art) does each award relate most to? Which choices do you agree with? Explain.

Locate and read these articles. Use as source material to investigate the issues above:  
 John McDonald, 'Not so glittering prizes', *Art and Australia*, vol. 25, no. 3, Autumn, 1988  
 Joanna Mendelsohn, 'Changing Cultures and Glittering Prizes', *Artlink*, vol. 17, no. 4, 1996

## The conceptual framework: The art-world web Years 7–12

Art does not exist in a vacuum. To understand the significance of prizes (e.g. The Archibald Prize), one must appreciate the complex connections between the various people and the institutions (agents) that make up 'the art world', a virtual web of dependencies and influences.

The diagram below represents some of the main agents in the Art-World Web.



### Activities

- Copy this diagram onto an overhead transparency, whiteboard or blackboard. In a class discussion, complete it by drawing in as many connections or relationships as possible with arrows between the agents. (See over the page for some ideas.) You may even add some agents of your own.
- As you complete the exercise, discuss the issue of motives and incentives by various agents.

## THE AGENTS:

art judges  
art museums  
curators  
trustees  
artists  
corporation  
education sector (schools, universities, academics)  
freelance curators  
general public  
art buyers/collectors  
benefactors  
government  
legal system  
mass media  
art critics  
private galleries (art dealers)  
trusts for scholarships and competitions

### Art judges

judge art works for scholarships and competitions  
may be artists  
may be benefactors  
may be art museum trustees  
may be university academics  
consults mass media

### Art Museums

display and reproduce work of artists, help make artists known  
buy art from private galleries  
try to attract general public  
try to attract benefactors  
try to attract corporations (as sponsors)  
employ curators  
administer trusts for scholarships & competitions  
appoint art judges (for competitions)  
consult mass media  
may apply to legal system

### Art Museum Curators

may liaise with artists  
recommend purchases for art museums  
write articles for art journals (mass media)  
consult mass media  
may be university academics

### Art Museum Trustees

may be artists  
may be benefactors  
may be art competition judges  
set policy for art museums  
consult mass media  
may be board members for corporations

### Artists

supply art to private gallery dealers  
may liaise with art museum curators  
enter competitions and apply for scholarships  
may be art judges  
may be art critics  
apply for grants from the government (e.g. Australia Council)  
may apply to legal system

### Corporations

buy art works from private galleries  
employ freelance curators  
try to appeal to general public  
help fund art museums (as sponsors)  
fund scholarships and competitions  
consult mass media  
advertise via mass media  
pay taxes to government (hopefully!)

### Education Sector

(schools, university, academics)  
train artists, museum curators & art critics  
may be artists  
may be art museum curators  
may be art critics

### Freelance Curators

organise some exhibitions for art museums  
write articles for art journals (mass media)  
recommend purchases for corporations or wealthy individuals  
consult mass media  
may be university academics

### General public

support art museums (exhibition entry, catalogue sales etc.)  
consult mass media  
buy goods & services from corporations  
pay taxes to the government

### Art buyers/collectors

may commission artists  
buy art from private galleries  
may be benefactors  
consult mass media

### Benefactors

may be (private) art buyers  
help fund art museums  
fund trusts, scholarships and competitions  
may be art competition judges  
consult mass media  
may apply to the legal system

### Government

funds artists (through grants)  
e.g. Australia Council  
funds art museum  
appoints art museum trustees  
funds universities  
funds legal system

### Trusts for Scholarships & Competitions

fund artists  
help make artists known (e.g. used on artists' CVs)  
may apply to legal system

### Legal System

settles legal disputes with artists, mass media, art museums and trusts for scholarships & competitions (e.g. AGNSW & Dobell versus Edwards & Wolinski 1943)

### Mass media

try to attract general public (as readers/viewers etc.)  
advertise for corporations  
reproduce works by artists  
employ art critics  
may apply to the legal system

### Art Critics

comment on artists, private galleries, art museums & art competitions  
supply material for mass media  
consult mass media  
may be university academics

### Private Galleries (art dealers)

financially support artists  
make artists known to general public & art buyers  
try to attract, and supply art to, art buyers  
supply art to art museums, and may consult art museum curators  
consult mass media  
supply art to corporations

## Framing the Archibald: questions for discussion

### Years 7–12

#### Subjective Frame

- Imagine the relationship between artist and sitter. How does this impact on the final work? Would it be different if they were strangers, acquaintances or old friends? In what ways? Could an artist paint a successful portrait of an enemy or someone they didn't admire or agree with?
- As viewers do we engage differently with figurative and abstract works? If so, how and why? How important is the gaze of another human figure to the way we connect with a portrait painting?
- While it is fairly easy to ascertain how an artist might represent a sitter's physical appearance, how is the psychological dimension of another person communicated? How much of the artist's personality appear in the portrait of the sitter? How much does our interpretation of the sitter's personality depend on our emotional response? Are the representational problems involved in painting another person the same when painting oneself? Can artists be objective about themselves?

#### Cultural Frame

- Consider the role of patronage in relation to portrait painting. How does an artist cope with the tension between what the sitter looks like and how they would like to appear? Has portraiture as a genre survived through patronage alone? If not, what else has kept it alive?
- Discuss the role of portraiture in society. Do portraits operate as a reflection of the character of society at large as well as that of the individual? Can they reflect national sentiment? Has the role of portraiture changed? Is it as relevant now as in the past? Where do we find portraits today besides public exhibitions like the Archibald Prize? Consider snapshots in magazines and newspapers and representations on banknotes or in passports. Are these portraits?
- The Archibald Prize has been described by a journalist as the 'Melbourne Cup of the art world'. Why are sports analogies used to describe this exhibition? What makes the Archibald Prize such a popular exhibition, while at the same time evoking a degree of criticism and controversy?
- The Archibald Prize requires an artist to paint a portrait of someone 'distinguished in art, letters, science or politics'. Research a sample of the people artists have chosen to paint for previous Archibald Prizes. Have ideas of prestige and importance changed over time? What about the status of different professions, the ratio of men to women, diversity of race and codes of dress?

#### Structural Frame

- Research the conventions of European portraiture e.g. poses, compositions, gestures and expressions, signs and symbols, techniques and styles, ideas of beauty. Where do these conventions originate from? Are they operating in the Archibald Prize? Are new ones evident?
- Must a portrait always include a person's face? What happens when a portrait is defaced? Would the back of a person's head, a body without a head or just a detail of a face or figure qualify as a portrait? What about an object, animal, building, tree or some other non-human element? Could this be considered a portrait of someone?
- What has been the impact of the invention of photography on portrait painting? Can you tell if a painting has been painted from life or from a photograph? How are painted portraits and photographic portraits different? How are they similar? Is one medium more effective or authentic than another?
- Should a portrait aspire mainly to be an exact likeness or an art object? How important are the roles of exaggeration, idealisation, realism and expressionism in representing another person? Consider the role of the audience. Would a portrait be executed differently if it were for private viewing as opposed to being on display in a public competition?
- Need portraits be of individuals only or can they include more than one person? Who or what is the subject of the portrait in this case?

#### Post-modern Frame

- Are there any artworks in the current exhibition that refer to other artworks or portraits?
- Are any artworks commenting on the genre of portraiture or the Archibald Prize itself? If not, how might an artwork achieve this?
- Is humour or parody evident in the works in the current exhibition? If so, what is being parodied? Can an artwork based on parody still be taken seriously?
- Are any artists in the current exhibition using portraiture to comment on other issues such as feminism, racism, stereotypes or clichés of representation? Can a stereotype be considered a portrait?

## Portraiture: general strategies Years K–6

### Visual arts

Draw a series of quick drawings using brush and ink. Start with five minutes for the first and then quicken your pace to create a one-minute drawing.

**Make** three drawings of yourself using three different perspectives. **Outline** your shadow in three different positions. **Photograph** your shadow in the environment. Overlap the images and use patterning and colour to complete the work.

**Create** a powerpoint presentation based on a portrait of your future self. **Consider** how you will look, what you will wear, the objects around you, and your profession.

**Collect** natural and made objects that represent you and place them in a shoebox. **Decorate** and personalise the outside of the box using collage and papier-mâché. In the classroom, **display** these 'identity boxes' and see if you can guess who owns which.

### English

**What** is a portrait? Why do we have portraits?

**What** does a portrait reveal about a person?

**Discuss.**

Find an image of a person in a photograph, painting or drawing. **Describe** that person to the class in detail. **Consider** all distinguishing features such as eye colour, shape of lips, hair style, weight, height, clothing and facial expression. Ask your classmates to **paint** an image of this person from your description. **Display** works alongside the original portrait.

**Write** a poem titled 'It's fun to be me'.

**Mime** different expressions and have your classmates guess them; build a word bank based on this exercise.

### Drama

**Set up** a costume box and dress up as a character. Use props, stage and lighting to develop an atmosphere. Think of historical as well as futuristic costumes, such as pirates, astronauts, doctors,

kings or queens, dancers.

**Choose** a portrait from the AGNSW collection.

**Create** a hat to go on the person portrayed in the work.

**Put on** a blindfold and then try to guess the identity of a classmate by feeling their facial features. Can you **guess** who it is?

**Watch** the video *Brushes with fame* on the Archibald Prize. **Make** a video of your own classroom portrait prize with interviews from artists and their models.

### Mathematics

**Measure** time through shadows in the playground. Work in pairs and **draw** each other's shadow on large sheets of paper – in the morning and the afternoon.

**Make** a pie chart based on the time you spend at school and at home. Consider recording the time spent on subjects, playtime, watching television, sleeping etc. **Divide** the day, week and year into work, leisure and sleep.

**Draw** a map of your local area. **Highlight** the location of your school and home. **Consider** scale and include a key with your map. You may wish to collect and look at a variety of maps first.

**Photocopy** your map and draw a self-portrait over it.

### HSIE

**Describe** and **make** a list of what makes people the same or different?

**Collect** examples of portraits (past and present) and **examine** the fashions through these images.

Before the invention of photography, **who** had their portraits made? **How** were these portraits created?

### Music

**Select** a portrait from art history and research the time that it was made. Listen to music from this period. **Consider** the dances, costumes and musical instruments from this period. **Create** a powerpoint presentation using images and music to describe the portrait.

### Science and technology

**How** do we communicate? **How** has this changed over time? **What** impact has technology had on the way we communicate? **Research** three forms of communication technology from the past.

**Present** your research to the class.

## Vocabulary: portraiture

artist and sitter	tradition
allegory	patron
body language	personality
caricature	portrait
character	pose
counterfeit	posture
commemoration	profile
commission	prestige
convention	psychological
countenance	realism
distortion	reflection
effigy	simulacrum
emotive	status
exaggeration	tonal modeling
expression	vanity
expressive	visage
fashion	
gestural	
life-like	
likeness	
idealism	
identity.	

## Artists: portraiture

### European artists:

Sandro Botticelli  
Angolo Bronzino  
Albrecht Dürer  
Artemesia  
Genteleschi  
Francisco Goya  
Hans Holbein  
Käthe Kollwitz  
Edvard Munch  
Rembrandt van Rijn  
Diego Velasquez  
Roger van der  
Weyden

### American artists:

Chuck Close  
David Hockney  
Edward Hopper  
Andy Warhol

### Modernist artists:

Frida Kahlo  
Henri Matisse  
Amedeo Modigliani  
Pablo Picasso  
Chaim Soutine  
Vincent Van Gogh

### English artists:

Francis Bacon  
Gilbert & George  
Lucian Freud  
William Hogarth  
Joshua Reynolds

### Australian artists:

William Dobell  
Joy Hester  
Trevor Nickols  
Mike Parr  
Tom Roberts  
Julie Rrap  
Susan Valadon  
Brett Whiteley

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Joanna Mendelsohn, 'Changing Cultures and Glittering Prizes' *Artlink* 'Emerging Artists' vol. 17 no. 4, 1996  
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### Text

Julian Bell, *Five Hundred Self Portraits*, Phaidon Publishers, London, 2000  
Anthony Bond & Joanna Woodall, *Self Portrait Renaissance to Contemporary*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney/National Portrait Gallery, London 2005  
Richard Brilliant, *Portraiture*, Reaktion Books  
William Dargie, *On Painting a Portrait* The Artist Publishing Company, London 1957  
Herbert Furst, *Portrait Painting*, The Bodley Head Limited, London 1927  
Mervyn Horton (Ed.), *The Archibald Prize An Illustrated History 1921–1981* Fine Arts Press Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney 1982  
Michael Koortbojian, *Themes in Art: Self-portraits* Scala Books 1992  
Barry Pearce and Hendrik Kolenberg, *William Dobell: the painter's progress*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1997  
Peter Ross, *Let's Face It The History of the Archibald Prize*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney 2002  
Remy Saisselin *Style, Truth and the Portrait*, Harry N Abrahams Inc. New York, 1963  
Norbert Schneider, *The Art of the Portrait 1420–1670*, Taschen, Koln, 1994

### Video

Richard Mordaunt and Diana Barbara, *Brushes with Fame: the story behind the Archibald Prize* Coolamon Films, 1997, VHS  
AGNSW Online Education kits: *Self Portrait Renaissance to Contemporary*, [www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/ed/kits](http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/ed/kits)

### World Wide Web

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia  
Louvre Museum, Paris, France  
National Portrait Gallery, Canberra, Australia  
National Portrait Gallery, London, United Kingdom  
Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, Washington DC, USA  
The National Gallery, London, United Kingdom

[www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au](http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au)  
[www.louvre.fr](http://www.louvre.fr)  
[www.portrait.gov.au](http://www.portrait.gov.au)  
[www.npg.org.uk](http://www.npg.org.uk)  
[www.npg.si.edu](http://www.npg.si.edu)  
[www.nationalgallery.org.uk](http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk)

# 3

## SYLLABUS CONNECTIONS: 2008 ARCHIBALD PRIZE

### Framing the Archibald: discussion questions and activities K–6 and 7–12

- Pushing practice
- Challenging the past
- Professional context
- Two plus one
- Animal attraction

### Analysing the winner

#### Years K–6

- Visual Arts and links with key learning areas

#### Years 7–12

- The Frames
- Conceptual Framework and Practice

### Focus works:

#### issues for discussion

- Eolo Paul Bottaro *The Archibald*
- Alexander McKenzie *Sarah Blasko*
- James Powditch *Aden Young in 'Once upon a time in the inner west'*

### Archibald Prize 08: finalists

Note: Unless otherwise cited, background information and artists quotes are taken from the Archibald Prize exhibition wall texts, AGNSW 2008

## PUSHING PRACTICE



### 10. Jun Chen *Ian Smith*

Ian Smith is a prominent Australian artist. His strong concept- and drawing-based paintings explore universal themes through personal and local imagery. Chen has painted Smith for the Archibald four times but this is the first to be selected. 'The first one, in 1998, was a full figure,' says Chen. 'In 2004 I painted him nude. Last year I did a half-body painting, which was hung in the Salon des Refuses. This year I said to him, "I think I should be painting your face."'

How does this portrait gain your attention? Why is the sitter gazing out of the picture? What is Smith looking at or thinking?

Describe how the artist has applied paint to the face and the background. List the types of tools the artist used to create the various surface qualities.

Research the work of Ian Smith. Compare and contrast the painting style of Smith and Chen. Do you think it would be a challenge for an artist to paint another artist? Give reasons for your answer.



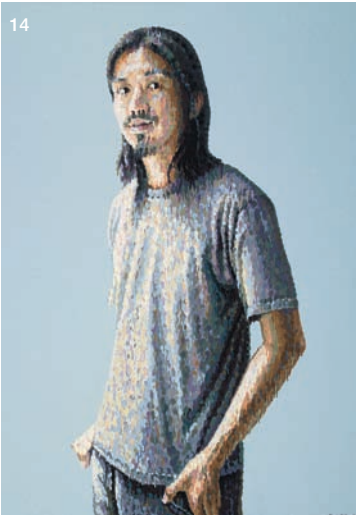
### 13. Peteris Ciemitis *Grabowsky*

"To me the triangulation of ear, eyes and mouth represents a metaphor for the interplay of intellect, heart and 'voice' in Paul's music," Ciemitis says. "The painting contains subtle links tracing connections between these elements, and back to the viewer through the fixed gaze."

Is this painting a portrait of a young or older person? What clues in the painting help you to come to this conclusion? Describe the sitter's personality.

Look at a close up reflection of yourself in a mirror. What is your initial reaction? Is this a flattering view of your image? How would you react if your cropped close-up was on display for all to see?

Note the use of pencil on Grabowsky's face. Identify the areas where lines or the absence of line suggest form. What sections of this image remind you of a landscape? Discuss portraiture as a means of mapping the facial landscape.



### 14. James Cochran *Akira*

'My own work – a form of pointillism, which I call the Drip Paintings – carries a strong urban sensibility and during the last year I had made two trips to Japan drawing inspiration from city streets. This influenced my connection to Akira with his innovative use of materials and his simultaneous respect for tradition.' (James Cochran)

Akira Isogawa is one of Australia's most celebrated fashion designers. Is he standing in a formal or casual pose? Cochran comments that he was intrigued by Akira's personality and delicate sensibility. Describe the expression on Akira's face. Create a speech bubble for Akira which expresses what he is thinking at this moment.

Cochran describes his drip paintings as a form of pointillism. Observe the painterly surface of the canvas. Note how the dots overlap and drip. Consider the process of creating this effect. What media or tool has the artist used to create this image? Suggest the type of experimentation used by the artist to achieve this control over the drips.

Investigate how colour theory has influenced the art practice of Cochran. List the colours you can see. How important is the use of colour in this painting? In what way does colour enhance the overall feeling of this artwork?

## CHALLENGING THE PAST



### 21. Zai Kuang *The sisters – Celia and Julia*

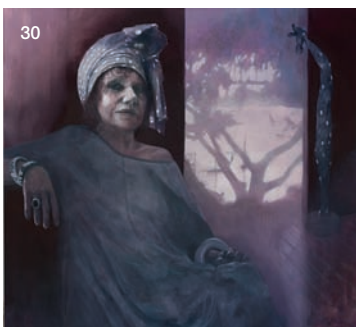
Most of Kuang's paintings are about domestic life. 'My aim is to explore spaces in a domestic environment,' he says. 'I want to create a tranquil atmosphere in my painting. I like to draw and paint figures and objects that I know well because they are familiar to me and I have a range of feelings for them.'

Where is each girl sitting? Assess whether the window is open or shut. How old are the children? Describe their expressions. Is it a warm or cool day? Explain why. Debate whether this work is a staged situation or it occurred by chance.

How would you feel sitting still for your portrait? Time how long you can hold a pose for.

Examine the personalities of Celia and Julia from this painting. Imagine the relationship between the sisters. Invent a reason why the child indoors is laughing. Write a story to accompany this painting.

How does the colour scheme used support Kuang's aim of creating 'a tranquil atmosphere' in his painting? Extend this image to create a larger picture. Adopt Kuang's colour scheme.



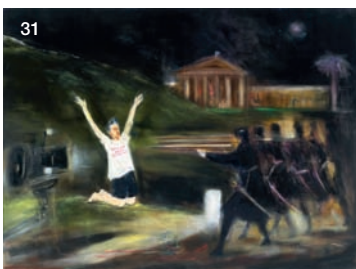
### 30. John Phillips *Wendy after two cups of coffee*

Artist John Phillips commented that his portrait of Wendy Whiteley doesn't portray her "in a singular moment, but is a moulding of what I was able to capture of her during sittings over a five-week period," ... "Fragments of her expressions and gestures combine on the canvas, in a way they perhaps never have done in the natural world."

Survey this painting. Identify the things you can see. Describe what Wendy is wearing. Is Wendy inside or outside?

What do you think Wendy is thinking about? Is this a casual or formal pose? How does Wendy's pose engage the audience? Write a dialogue between Wendy and the artist John Phillips.

Describe the mood this work is projecting to the audience. Explore the effects of light and shadow on the mood of this work. What role does colour play?



### 31. Rodney Pople *Art is what you can get away with – self portrait*

The title of this painting is a quote from Andy Warhol, a truism that also reflects Pople's attitude to making art.

Focus on the central figure. How has Pople depicted himself? What is the figure of Pople doing? Is Pople in danger? Why is there a camera documenting this event? Is this occurring during the day or night? What details suggest the time of day?

Do you recognise the building in the background? Compare Pople's clothing to the clothes worn by the soldiers. Which elements belong to the 21st century and which do not?

What does this image tell us about the artist's personality? How is Pople making a comment on the Archibald Prize? What could Pople be suggesting about the artworld?

This work is a direct appropriation of the Spanish artist Francisco de Goya's, *The shootings of May 3rd 1808*. Pople commented, 'It's about execution and spectacle – the execution and spectacle of ideas, of the artist and of the painting itself. In contemporary times, executions are staged in the public eye...'. Compare both images and discuss the similarities and differences.

Research Pople's previous Archibald entries. Explore how Pople utilises humour and parody in his art practice.



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### 24. Barry McCann *Simpatico*

Maggie Beer and Simon Bryant co-host *The cook and the chef* on ABC television. Barry McCann trained as a commercial chef and loves the program. McCann recalls Beer using the word 'simpatico' to describe how well certain ingredients worked together. 'But it's so applicable to them too,' he says, referring to the title of the portrait. 'They get on together so well, they are real mates.'

Watch an episode of *The cook and the chef* and describe how Maggie Beer and Simon Bryant relate to each other. Does the double portrait reflect a similar relationship? What would their conversation be at this moment? Invent speech bubbles for both figures.

Imagine what they are looking at. Read the body language of the figures. Do you think McCann directed the two sitters into this pose? Read the wall text and compare your responses.

Look at the objects in the background. List what you can see. Find five objects made of glass. Imagine the smells you could smell if you were present in this portrait. How does the artist suggest this?

Assess how McCann's experience with watercolour may have influenced his approach to oil painting. Discuss how an artist may move between various media depending on the objectives for the work.



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### 37. Nick Stathopoulos *At the movies with David Stratton – aka The big sleep*

When Nick Stathopoulos told esteemed film reviewer David Stratton about the portrait he planned to paint of him, Stratton was more than a little apprehensive. 'I can't blame him,' says Stathopoulos. 'On the surface it seems like I'm poking fun at a very staid and serious critic – and David is nothing if not serious about film.'

Imagine sitting in one of the vacant seats in the cinema. How would you feel? Invent an identity for the woman in the background. Read the text panel to discover her identity and significance to the composition.

Explain the role of a film critic. Discuss the irony within this picture. What is David Stratton supposed to be doing? Compose the review David Stratton would write for the film he is supposed to be watching. Explain how this artist comments on the world of David Stratton.



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### 39. Yi Wang *Long hair*

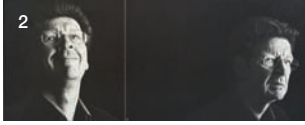
The word 'long' has the same pronunciation as 'dragon' in Chinese. 'There is some conflict about the dragon between China and western countries,' says Wang. Whereas in Western countries a dragon is often thought of as evil or at least frightening, in China the dragon is seen as something divine: 'a thing of worship and a kind of lucky charm'.

Suggest what Wang is looking at. Where is he? Assess the direction of the light source. Describe the range of colours used in this self-portrait. Debate whether Wang worked from his reflection in mirrors or photographic images.

Identify the motif on Wang's jacket. Describe Wang's clothing. What do they suggest? What do Wang's gaze and body language suggest about his personality? Devise a set of questions you would ask Wang about his art practice. How does this self-portrait of Yi Wang represent his world? Discuss in class.

Assess the composition of this self-portrait. Wang has placed himself in the bottom right of the image. How does this placement create tension within the space of the image?

Experiment with mirrors and draw yourself from various angles. Make preliminary sketches for your self-portrait focusing on developing the composition. Consider how the audience will interpret the composition. Exhibit the completed paintings in class.



### 2. Phillip Barnes *Black: White: Red all over*

Phillip Barnes was keen to paint a portrait that explored the tension between the private and public persona and felt that Symons fitted the bill. Barnes felt the monochrome captured the black and white way in which many see Symons. It is also a reference to Symons' science background and the fact that his father was a photographer.



Compare the two portraits of Red Symons. Describe the different expressions. Are these stereotypical expressions for this well-known face?

Observe the surface quality of this work. Note the distinct marks. Create your own portrait by experimenting with graphite over a painted surface.



Barnes usually uses colour. However he altered his approach in order to suit the character and vision for the portrait. Would the portrait have had the same dramatic impact if it was in colour? Debate.

Tension is created through the dramatic lighting of the face. Research artists who have used chiaroscuro in their art practice.

### 5. Danelle Bergstrom *Two Movements – Peter Sculthorpe*

Peter Sculthorpe is a celebrated Australian composer. His distinctive music has Asian and Aboriginal influences, often evoking the contours, harsh beauty and sounds of the Australian bush. Famous Sculthorpe works include *Kakadu* (1988), *Earth Cry* (1992) and *Requiem* (2004), which featured didgeridoo soloist William Barton.

Discuss the reference to music in the title of the work *Two Movements*. Find examples of his compositions and listen to these in class. Discuss the qualities in his compositions. How do they compare to this portrait?

Compare the profile image to the three-quarter view. What impact does the shadowy background figure have on the composition? Observe the areas of controlled brush strokes and sections left to chance. Describe the mood of this painting. Compose a monologue to accompany this work, incorporating descriptions of texture and technique.

Bergstrom often uses more than one canvas in her portraits to create a time sequence or to capture different aspects of her subject. Research Bergstrom's previous Archibald entries. Compare the portraits and create a list of elements that characterise her art practice.

### 18. Vincent Fantauzzo *Heath*

'I wanted it to be dealing with self, your own consciousness and your thoughts,' says Fantauzzo. 'An artist is their own biggest critic ... I felt that being a celebrity, you are always under constant scrutiny with so many demands made of you that you have to hold part of yourself back and not give too much away.'

What is the central figure thinking? Describe the expression on Heath's face. Is the central figure being pulled in two directions? Could this be his subconscious depicted? Could the two whispering figures be an angel and a devil? Write a script of dialogue between the three figures.

Observe the tattoo designs on Heath's body. Are these traditional or modern designs? Discuss the symbolism behind his tattoos. Research the history of tattoos and discuss their significance in various cultures.

Why do you think the subject is unclothed? What role does this play in engaging the audience?

Is your response to this artwork influenced by the actor's recent death?

Take a series of digital photographs of a person you know well. Print these images. Select the shots which depict various aspects of your subject. Use the images to create a collage based on your subject.

## ANIMAL ATTRACTION

8



### 8. Joanna Braithwaite *Chook, chook, chook*

'In these paintings where I cover myself in animals, humour is evident but there is also a strong underlying curiosity in regard to human relationships with animals and a respect for them and the things we share in common.' Joanna Braithwaite

Imagine what it would feel like to have chickens on your bare shoulders. What sounds would you hear? Identify how many breeds of chickens there are. What form do the chickens create?

If you were to paint a similar self-portrait, what animal or bird would you select to be surrounded by? Explain the reason behind your choice of animal. Create a self-portrait based on this theme.

Compare this painting to the other finalists. Identify the elements which make this a unique entry. Discuss the use of humour in this painting.

Research the art practice of Braithwaite. Find images of Braithwaite's work entered for the Portia Geach Art Award: *Birds of a Feather* 2005 and *Pleasant Point Revisited* 2006. Discuss the use of animals in her art practice.

9



### 9. David Bromley *Louise Olsen*

The portrait of Louise Olsen has been in Bromley's head for a long time. 'I wanted it to be fairly pared back so I went very acoustic with it,' he says. 'It has a reasonable boldness to it. But Louise isn't a very gregarious person so I wanted it to have a subtlety as well without too many raucous colours – even though the pieces she makes use luminous colours.'

Imagine what Louise is gazing at. Is Louise aware she is being painted? Discuss the impact of the bold black brush work. Explore the similarities this work has with commercial posters. Experiment in class with screen printing techniques to create a series of portraits of someone you admire.

Count how many butterflies are in the background. Discuss the symbolism behind their use. Why do you think butterflies are there? What does the background remind you of? Explain.

Examine the application of colour on the canvas. Assess where the artist has used a paintbrush or roller. Describe the colour scheme. What mood does the shimmery quality of the paint suggest?

Bromley combines figurative expressionism and pop art in an engaging colourful style. Research Bromley's art practice and map his development. Discuss artists who may have influenced his style. Find out the celebrities Bromley has painted before.

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### 23. Song Ling *Angelina Pwerle*

Angelina Pwerle is a prominent indigenous artist who lives and works in Ngkawenyerre, Utopia in the Northern Territory. Angelina Pwerle and Song Ling show at the same Melbourne gallery, Niagara Galleries. Ling's work is known for its vivid colours and bold, illustrative style.

Imagine your reaction to a kookaburra landing on your head. How heavy would the bird feel? Create the expression your face would make if you were in this situation. Describe the expression on Angelina Pwerle's face. Who is the boss? Angelina or the kookaburra?

How has Ling approached mark-making upon the canvas? Identify the elements of this work which have been appropriated. Discuss the impact of appropriation in this portrait.

Observe this painting up close and from a distance. Note the references to computer graphics, commercial posters and newsprint illustrations. Explore how this painting illustrates the influences of the contemporary world and new technologies upon the artist's practice.

Archibald Prize 2008  
Winner



3. Del Kathryn Barton  
*You are what is most beautiful about me, a self portrait  
with Kell and Arella*

synthetic polymer paint, watercolour, gouache and pen on polyester canvas

Analysing the winner  
 Years K–6  
 Visual Arts and links with key learning areas



DEL KATHRYN BARTON  
 You are what is most beautiful about me,  
 a self portrait with Kell and Arella  
 synthetic polymer paint, watercolour, gouache  
 and pen on polyester canvas

Del Kathryn Barton's self-portrait depicts her with her son Kell and daughter Arella.

'This painting celebrates the love I have for my two children and how my relationship with them has radically informed and indeed transformed my understanding of who I am,' she says.

'The title of the work – *You are what is most beautiful about me* – alludes to that utterly profound "in-loveness" that all mothers have for their children. Both my children have taken my world by storm and very little compares to the devotion I feel for them both. The intensity of this emotion is not something that I could have prepared myself for. The alchemy of life offered forth from my inhabitable woman's body is perhaps the greatest gift of my life.'

Known for its vibrant, figurative imagery, Barton's work combines traditional painting techniques with contemporary design and illustrative styles. Although she does a lot of figurative work, much of it self-referential; she doesn't do a great deal of portraiture. She was, however, represented in last year's Archibald Prize with a painting of art dealer Vasili Kaliman.

Born in Sydney in 1972, Barton has a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the College of Fine Arts, University of NSW, where she taught for three years until 2003. She has had regular solo exhibitions since 2000 and has participated in national and international group shows including the Helen Lempriere Travelling Art Scholarship, the Blake Prize for religious art and the Sulman Prize. She was a finalist in the 2007 Dobell Prize for Drawing.

### Years K-6

#### VISUAL ARTS AND LINKS WITH KEY LEARNING AREAS

**Visual Arts:** Look into a mirror. **Make** different facial expressions. **Select** an expression which you feel comfortable with. **Create** a line drawing of your reflection. **Use** watercolour washes over your drawing. Once dry, outline your line drawing with a marker pen. Then select areas to add decorative detail and bold areas of colour.

**Create** a family portrait from memory. **Develop** a range of symbols which relate to your family. **Exhibit** the family portraits in class.

**Focus** on the patterns and decorative details used by Barton. **Observe** how intricate patterns are placed side by side. What effect does this have? Where do you think Barton sourced these patterns? **Create** a chart of the various patterns in this work. What do these patterns remind you of?

**English:** Look into the eyes of the children. **Describe** their gaze. What are the children thinking? **Compare** the face of the children to that of the mother. **Create** a list of descriptive words. **Use** these words in a poem about motherhood.

**Maths:** Place a grid over a reproduction of this artwork and calculate the ratio of pattern to figures. Using circles, overlapping and isolated, create a tessellated pattern of your own.

**Science & Technology:** This artwork has a beetle in it. Why do you think the artist has included it? **Search** your local environment for beetles. Where would you expect to find them? **Make** drawings of some of the beetles you find. **Research** the characteristics of beetles. **Investigate** why some beetles are brightly coloured. **Create** a diagram explaining the life cycle of beetles.

**HSIE:** This artwork is a celebration of motherhood and the love a mother has for her children. **Research** both ancient and modern examples of cultures and societies that honour and worship the role of the mother.

## Analysing the winner

### Years 7–12

### Conceptual framework and Practice



DEL KATHRYN BARTON  
You are what is most beautiful about me,  
a self portrait with Kell and Arella  
synthetic polymer paint, watercolour, gouache  
and pen on polyester canvas

#### Years 7–12

#### THE FRAMES

##### Subjective

What is your initial response to the artwork? How does this work differ from others in the exhibition? What features dominate the composition? How does the artist express herself through colour? Imagine being one of the children in this image. How would you respond to seeing this painting in the Archibald prize?

'I feel like I'm revealing something of myself and the two people in the world I care about most ... It's not something I would ever show in a commercial context.' (Barton as quoted by the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 8–9 March, 2008)

What does Barton mean by this quote? Suggest why Barton is comfortable with entering a high profile competition and yet is hesitant to place this work in the commercial market.

##### Cultural

Does the title of the work impact on your reading of the image? Research the theme of the mother in art. Consider artworks from a variety of cultures and styles such as ancient cultures, Hindu religion, European Renaissance and contemporary art practice.

##### Structural

Barton's work has been described as richly illustrative, having applied intricate details. Debate in class whether this artist is an illustrator or a painter. Is there a difference?

Consider Barton's body of work. Look at particular examples and identify recurring symbols. How representative is *You are what is most beautiful about me*, a self portrait with Kell and Arella of Barton's practice? In what way does it differ?

##### Post-modern

Does this work have feminist concerns? Research female artists of the 1970s to the present day and discuss how Barton has explored feminism in the post-modern world.

Barton takes an intimate theme and exposes it to a wider audience in the public realm. Argue how this approach reflects post-modern qualities.

##### Practice

Barton cites artists Kiki Smith, Louise Bourgeois, John Currin and Shirin Neshat, Henry Darger, botanical art and fabric design. Research these artists and styles and investigate why she identifies with their approach to art-making.

##### Conceptual framework – Artworld – Audience

Art critic John McDonald describes Barton's practice as "[having] a Viennese ambience – a touch of Klimt and Schiele and a dash of Hundertwasser. A typical painting is unashamedly decorative ..." (*Sydney Morning Herald*, 8–9 March, 2008)

Debate in class as to whether this is a valid statement. Consider the role of the art critic and how they influence audiences. Find the article and assess McDonald's point of view.



**7. Eolo Paul Bottaro**

***The Archibald***

egg tempera and oil on linen

## 7. Eolo Paul Bottaro

### *The Archibald*

egg tempera and oil on linen

In his painting *The Archibald* Eolo Paul Bottaro has included as many past Archibald prize winners as he could, dating back to 1921.

His own self-portrait features at the bottom of the composition. 'I guess you have the burden of over 50 past winners on your shoulders when you enter the Archibald Prize so the figure is quite small in comparison to the huge hall', he says. 'The pressure of so many winning pictures is something probably every artist feels.'

The choice of works represented and their position in his imaginary gallery were largely dependent on their significance within the history of the prize, the personal impact of artist and/or subject on Bottaro's work, and how these figures relate within the broader sphere of Australian history.

The challenge for Bottaro was to make the picture work as a whole, not as a collage but as a unified painting. 'At one point it looked like a big quilt. Putting certain pictures next to others, I'd find they clashed and I often had to paint one out and reposition it.'

There was also the challenge of simulating the individual painting styles of the winners: 'I tried to do justice to each work and each artist. It was a headache I have to admit. The picture dominated the studio completely for a year and took six months of solid painting.'

The picture is painted with pure hand-ground pigments, using egg tempera first and then oil. 'That's just the way I work', say Bottaro, who is known for the compositional complexity of his realist figurative paintings.

Born in Melbourne in 1974, Bottaro graduated from the Victorian College of the Arts in 1994 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts. In 1997 he began researching fresco painting, which led to five months restoring a church in Sicily. He has had regular solo exhibitions since 1999 and has participated in many group shows including *Divisione Interna* in 2007 at Ballarat Fine Art Gallery and in 2008, *Muse*, a travelling show to Mildura Arts Centre and Benalla Art Gallery. He won the People's Choice Award at the 2006 Metro 5 Art Award.

#### Issues for discussion

Locate Bottaro painting his self-portrait. Explain why you think Bottaro has painted himself so small.

How many portraits can you see? Find one that makes you laugh. Select a portrait that reminds you of someone you know.

The dates 1964 and 1980 are significant in the controversy of the Archibald Prize. Why are they significant and how has the artist represented this controversy in his artwork?

Find the man standing in the brown coat. Who do you think he is? Imagine what he is thinking about these past winning entries.

How does this image reference art history and the history of the Archibald Prize? Discuss how the winning entries reflect the times in which they were painted.



26. Alexander McKenzie  
*Sarah Blasko*

oil on linen

## 26. Alexander McKenzie

### *Sarah Blasko*

oil on linen

Singer-songwriter Sarah Blasko's emotive, highly individual music has gained her a huge following in Australia and the US. Her second album *What the sea wants, the sea will have* has just gone platinum and won the 2007 ARIA Award for Best Pop Release.

She and Alexander McKenzie have known each other since childhood. 'Basically I wanted to paint her because I love her music, and the shared memories of being eight-year-olds together at barbecues, picnics and Christmas,' says McKenzie. 'Plus now she's a beautiful woman.'

'Our families were quite close when we were kids, then you hit a certain age and wander off and do your own thing and I didn't see her for 10 years. Then she started winning ARIAs and having sell-out concerts. I got in touch and she invited us to a gig at the Enmore Theatre and I was blown away. She's a terrific songwriter doing something truly unique.'

McKenzie painted Blasko at the ocean pool at South Cronulla beach: significant to both of them since they spent much of their childhood there. The location is also a nod towards the title of her ARIA award-winning album, while the composition of the painting references Leonardo da Vinci's *Madonna of the rocks*. 'It's a classically based idea and I have used a lot of symbolism in the painting as I do with my landscape work', says McKenzie.

Born in Sydney in 1971, McKenzie studied in Sydney before moving to the UK. Known for his evocative landscapes and luminous painting technique, he exhibits regularly in Australia and overseas. He was an Archibald finalist last year and is a finalist in this year's Wynne Prize for the fourth year running. His work is held in many collections including the Royal Bank of Scotland and Macquarie Bank in Australia.

#### Issues for discussion

Imagine you are the subject of this portrait. What sounds can you hear? What can you smell and taste in the air? How do you feel posing for your portrait outdoors by the sea?

Is the subject, Sarah Blasko, comfortable? Does the portrait give any clues to her profession? Which objects seem out of place in this painting? List the possible objects or symbols in this image that add meaning to the sitter. What is the significance of the sitter being barefoot?

Identify the various light sources in this painting. Was this work painted in the studio or on location? Give reasons for your answer.

Compare the album cover of Sarah Blasko *What the sea wants the sea will have* to this painting.



32. James Powditch

*Aden Young in 'Once upon a time in the inner west'*

mixed media

## 32. James Powditch

### *Aden Young in 'Once upon a time in the inner west'*

mixed media

Actor Aden Young has appeared in films such as *Black robe*, *Metal skin*, *Così* and *Paradise Road*. He was in the Sydney Theatre Company production of *Hedda Gabler* starring Cate Blanchett, the New York season of which featured in the ABC documentary *In the company of actors*. Most recently, he has been collaborating as editor with Paul Cox on *Salvation* and *Kalaupapa Dreaming*.

'We both live in Sydney's inner west in Marrickville and I met him when he shot his short film *The rose of Ba Ziz* at our place last year', says James Powditch.

Powditch is a huge film buff and collects old movie posters. His portrait of Young is conceived as a giant billboard. The six panels are painted on paper then glued down like a movie poster in the street over other old posters. Film references abound. The title is a play on the Sergio Leone 1968 spaghetti western *C'era una volta il West* (Once upon a time in the west). Young, with his classic matinee idol looks, is depicted as a cowboy, echoing a famous image of Steve McQueen in Sam Peckinpah's *Junior Bonner*. There are also references to *Apocalypse now*, *Reds* and *The warriors*. The text is a reworking of the original *Once upon a time in the west* poster and includes other jokes: The (Marrickville) Metro is a shopping centre Powditch and Young both use; Addison & Addison refers to the name of the road where they both live.

Born in Sydney in 1966, Powditch is well known for making inventive, witty, mixed-media constructions that incorporate painting, assemblage, collage and screenprinting. This is his first time in the Archibald, although his portraits have hung in the Salon des Refusés for the last four years. He is also represented in this year's Wynne and Sulman prizes – he has been a regular finalist in both since 2002. He won the 2007 Mosman Art Prize and was a co-winner of the Blake Prize for Religious Art in 2005. A finalist in last year's Dobell Prize for Drawing, his work has also featured in the ABN AMRO Emerging Artist Award, Sculpture by the Sea and the Woollahra Sculpture Prize. He has been regularly included in the Year in Art Exhibition at the S H Ervin Gallery. He has held numerous solo shows and is represented in regional and corporate collections.

#### Issues for discussion

What aspects of Powditch's own world does he reference in this work? List these references. How does Powditch's work reflect urban and inner city culture?

How does Powditch's work challenge the traditional notions of painting and portraiture? What other genres are represented in Powditch's work? Does the scale of this work challenge the audience in an exhibition such as this?

In what way is this work outside the mainstream idea of portraiture? Compare this work to the other finalists. Why do you think this work was selected by the selection panel?

## Archibald Prize 08: finalists

1	Martin Ball	Neil Finn
2	Phillip Barnes	Black: White: Red all over
3	Del Kathryn Barton	You are what is most beautiful about me, a self portrait with Kell and Arella
4	Anthony Bennett	Portrait of Jon Farriss in a Kylie t-shirt
5	Danelle Bergstrom	Two movements – Peter Sculthorpe
6	Roger Boreham	Dad, what a smile
7	Eolo Paul Bottaro	The Archibald
8	Joanna Braithwaite	Chook, chook, chook
9	David Bromley	Louise Olsen
10	Jun Chen	Ian Smith
11	Zhong Chen	Nicholas Harding
12	Zhansui Kordelya Chi	Julius
13	Peteris Ciemitis	Grabowsky
14	James Cochran	Akira
15	Yvette Coppersmith	In the garland
16	Richard Dunlop	Tim Olsen: the man in black
17	Neil Evans	Blue days, black nights
18	Vincent Fantauzzo	Heath
19	Hong Fu	Dr Joseph Brown
20	Robert Hannaford	Alison Mitchell
21	Zai Kuang	The sisters – Celia and Julia
22	Sam Leach	Self in uniform
23	Song Ling	Angelina Pwerle
24	Barry McCann	Simpatico
25	Neil McIrvine	David Disher
26	Alexander McKenzie	Sarah Blasko
27	Lewis Miller	Tom Lowenstein
28	Anna Minardo	The question
29	Paul Newton	Portrait of Donald McDonald AC
30	John Phillips	Wendy after two cups of coffee
31	Rodney Pople	Art is what you can get away with – self portrait
32	James Powditch	Aden Young in 'Once upon a time in the inner west'
33	Ben Quilty	Self portrait after Madrid
34	Leslie Rice	Quartered, drawn and hung: Adam Cullen on public display
35	Paul Ryan	Peter Booth, study with Cuban
36	Jenny Sages	Anita & Luca
37	Nick Stathopoulos	At the movies with David Stratton – aka The big sleep
38	Xu Wang	Nick Waterlow
39	Yi Wang	Long hair
40	Jan Williamson	Sue McPherson – artist