

# ART HISTORY

Paper 9799/01

Analytical Studies in Western and non-Western Art

## General Comments

In this Paper, candidates not only have to respond to works on a formal level, but also discuss context. With 48 examples to study, the candidates showed an impressive grasp of the material, demonstrating detailed knowledge. Some Centres had decided to focus on three of the categories – Painting, Sculpture and Architecture for instance. This is a perfectly acceptable approach. Certain works which appeal to the teacher and candidates from the fourth area can be studied. If there is a question on them in the exam, a candidate can then choose which three questions to answer out of the four set.

Relevant terminology was used effectively and accurately in the best scripts. There were only occasional lapses where material from Section (a) and Section (b) was confused. There was no penalty for this other than the loss of marks that could have been awarded if the points were made in the relevant section.

Some answers were solid blocks of text with no paragraphs. Again, no-one lost marks for this, but for clarity's sake, it is advisable to break the text up. Although the marking is not done mechanistically a significant point made in a single paragraph may better help the candidates analyse the work.

## Question Specific Comments

**Question 1** Caravaggio, *The Supper at Emmaus*, c. 1601

(a) Discuss the use of tone and colour in this painting.

Many candidates identified Caravaggio's use of chiaroscuro. Christ's head brightly lit against the contrasting shadow of the innkeeper on the wall was a point made by many candidates. The stronger responses displayed a close familiarity with the painting. They were able to pick out specific details which showed how the artist had manipulated tonal effects, such as the reflected light on Cleophas' nose or caught on Christ's finger-tips.

(b) How does the work illustrate Caravaggio's revolutionary approach to religious subject-matter?

The striking naturalism, lack of idealisation, theatricality and the depiction of a split-second moment were cited as key elements in Caravaggio's new approach to religious subject matter. Some answers made explicit reference to the story from the Bible. Less commonly noted was the degree of illusionism used. The influence of the Council of Trent was discussed in the more in-depth responses.

**Question 2** August Rodin, *The Burghers of Calais*, 1884–6 (bronze)

(a) How has Rodin exploited the techniques of modelling and casting in this work?

The traditional properties and associations of the medium were outlined by most candidates. The variation between different patinations was identified when comparing the Calais version with its pronounced verdigris and the London dark cast at Westminster.

(b) Describe the circumstances of the commission for this sculpture, and the ways in which Rodin responded to that commission.

The sculpture exists in various versions. The London example was installed in Rodin's lifetime. It was therefore permissible to discuss the original commission in Calais and the later cast for Westminster.

**Question 3** Richard Rogers, Renzo Piano and Jean-François Bodin, *Centre Pompidou*, 1977

- (a) Analyse the structure of the building and its relationship to the site.

Despite the less familiar terminology associated with hi-tech architecture, candidates gave clear descriptions of the structure of the building. Only a few were able to name the gerberettes crucial to the cantilevering of the exoskeleton.

- (b) What was the social and political context for the commission and how did this affect the architects' ideas for the building?

The main factor missed in the background to the commissioning of the Pompidou Centre was the student riots of 1968 in Paris. Candidates seemed unaware of the level of social unrest which was an important stimulus to the creation of a radical new building.

**Question 4** Edvard Munch, *The Scream*, 1895

- (a) How has Munch used the medium of lithography in this print?

An understanding of the principles of the lithographic process gave authority to a discussion of the medium's formal and expressive effects. Most candidates made the point that the medium allowed the image to be disseminated to a large audience through its publication in *La Revue Blanche*.

- (b) Discuss what this image was intended to express.

The question is not one that can normally sensibly be asked of an artist and a work of art, but the documentary material available for this image is sufficiently well-known to give an accurate answer. 'Alone and trembling, I experienced nature's great scream' is one of the most famous utterances in art history. Many candidates were aware of this quote and Munch's personal history.

# ART HISTORY

---

Paper 9799/02  
Historical Topics

## General comments

The general standard of answers was very good. Examiners were pleased to read a considerable number of scripts of the highest possible quality which demonstrated a detailed and sensitive analysis of a large number of carefully selected works of art. This was particularly true in the responses to **Question 1** in Topic 3 and **Question 1** in Topic 9.

The more effective answers referred to a wide range of examples in questions where this was relevant; less effective answers included fewer examples and/or analysed them in less depth. Although not compulsory, Examiners would recommend that all candidates adopt the convention of underlining named examples on their scripts.

The use of essay plans was rather variable. Some of the better candidates produced essay plans which covered a whole side, others restricted themselves to a few scribbled points and many produced nothing at all. Given the challenging nature of the questions, the Examiners recommend that all candidates get into the habit of using essay plans wherever possible. When complete, a diagonal line should be drawn through the plan to show that it is not part of the final answer. If a candidate is unable to complete an answer because of a lack of time, credit may be given for any relevant points made in the essay plan.

Not all topics were answered by candidates. Within the topics that candidates used, not all questions were attempted. Only those questions for which responses were received will be included in this report.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Topic 1: The Art and Architecture of Classical Antiquity**

No candidates chose to answer any questions in this topic.

### **Topic 2: Art, Religion and Society in Romanesque Europe c. 1000–1200**

#### **Question 1**

This question was answered by only a few candidates. Although some of the pilgrimage churches, such as Saint Sermin, Toulouse, were analysed in adequate detail, some candidates chose churches such as Saint Gall which were clearly not on the pilgrimage routes and therefore not relevant to the question. The church at Cluny was allowed on the grounds that it may have been as a stopping point by pilgrims, but it was difficult to use this for comparative purposes due its monastic nature.

#### **Question 2**

This question was answered by a considerable number of candidates, some of whom concentrated exclusively on one example of a portal while others ranged more widely and discussed as many as three valid examples.

Most candidates correctly identified the important stylistic features of portal sculpture such as the hierarchical arrangement, different scales and crowded compositions though relatively few went on to discuss the relationship between distorted anatomy and ecstatic spirituality.

In addition, given the phrasing of the question it was disappointing that the great majority of candidates had nothing to say about the technical aspects of the work including the use of deep undercutting to enhance the effect of light and shade and also the use of polychromy.

### Question 3

This question was quite popular and was answered by several candidates. On the whole, the answers were of a high standard and candidates analysed a wide range of suitable examples in considerable depth, clearly identifying the relationship between design and illustration on the one hand and functions on the other. In a small number of cases, only one or two examples were discussed but this was compensated for by the detailed and extensively developed analysis which they undertook.

#### Topic 3: A New Heaven and a New Earth: Gothic Art and Architecture c. 1140–1540

### Question 1

This question was chosen by a large number of candidates and the answers were of a very high standard. The great majority of candidates correctly identified the essential features of the new style though only the better ones pointed out that this was a synthesis of elements such as rib vaults and pointed arches which had already appeared on an individual basis in late Romanesque architecture.

Similarly, although most candidates pointed out the Royal context of the new work, not all of them discussed Suger's influence and the descriptions of the new style in his 'De Administratione'.

On the other hand, it was very pleasing to note that most candidates used architectural terminology in their descriptions in an assured and precise manner.

### Question 3

This question was also quite popular and answers were generally of a high standard. What was particularly pleasing to the Examiners was the fact that candidates were able to refer to a very wide range of pertinent examples in their answers.

All candidates correctly indicated that tomb imagery in the period was concerned with both the afterlife and the status, character and achievements of the deceased. Only the better ones suggested that the balance between the two underwent a change during the period. Likewise, the slighter weaker candidates did not mention how the use of expensive materials could reflect status and there were very few references to the use of the Cardinal or Theological Virtues as 'character witnesses'.

### Question 4

This question elicited some exceptionally good answers from quite a large number of candidates. All candidates identified all three of Sluter's principal works for the Duke, which they analysed in a detailed and sensitive fashion. There were excellent accounts of the naturalistic treatment of the work, though the use of polychromy to enhance the realism was only mentioned in a few cases.

The better candidates also discussed the way in which the statues were liberated from the underlying architecture in such a way that they were free to interact with one another and with the viewer.

Some of the most accomplished answers made reference to work by Sluter's contemporaries and/or predecessors to highlight his innovations.

#### Topic 4: Man, the measure of all things: the Early Italian Renaissance 1400–1500

### Question 1

There was a mixed response to this question from the few candidates who answered it. They all displayed a good understanding of the fresco technique and in some cases described the various stages in considerable detail. While this was credited, in order to receive a high mark it was necessary to link the technique with problems that arose and the way in which these were overcome.

Better candidates made several valid suggestions including the use of work patches and the way in which these were apportioned within the workshop. On the other hand, it was disappointing, given the phrasing of the question, that no candidate said anything about the collaboration between workshops on large projects such as that in the Sistine Chapel for Pope Sixtus IV.

## Question 2

This question met with a varied response from a relatively small number of candidates. The better ones correctly identified the most relevant of Donatello's figure sculpture from the period given (Saint George, Saint Mark, the 'Zuccone' and the wooden Saint John the Baptist) though there was little or no mention of their original location. Candidates who discussed statues which were outside the period given (e.g. the wooden Magdalen and Judith and Holofernes) were given credit providing that their analysis was relevant to the question.

## Question 3

Responses concentrated on the portraits painted at the court of Urbino and analysed these quite well and in considerable detail. Given the scope of the question, it would have been useful to have covered a wider range of painting and also the work of architects such as Laurana and Francesco di Giorgio.

## Topic 5: The Renaissance in Northern Europe 1420–1570

No candidates chose to answer any questions in this topic.

## Topic 6: Faith Triumphant: Seventeenth Century Art and Architecture

### Question 1

This question was answered by several candidates all of whom achieved a satisfactory standard. Bernini's Saint Teresa and a variety of paintings by Caravaggio were analysed in a relevant manner with candidates correctly identifying the heightened sense of realism in these works and their dramatic effects on the viewer. In addition, several candidates demonstrated a clear understanding of the importance of materials and techniques in producing these effects, particularly in the case of the sculpture.

On the other hand, the answers were quite short and would have benefited greatly from a more detailed and extensively developed analysis of these works of art.

### Question 5

This question was answered by a small number of candidates all of whom achieved a satisfactory standard. In the majority of cases, candidates restricted themselves to a discussion of the figures in Las Meninas and avoided portraits such as Pope Innocent X, Juan de Pareja and Don Sebastian de Moro which would have given them greater scope to answer the question. Although the Water Seller of Seville is not strictly speaking a portrait, it was allowed on the grounds that it reveals the inner character of the sitter.

In all cases, the answers could have been longer, with more examples and with a more detailed analysis.

## Topic 7: Defining the Nation: Art and Architecture in Britain c. 1700–1860s

No candidates chose to answer any questions in this topic.

## Topic 8: Art, Society and Politics in Europe c.1790–1900

No candidates chose to answer any questions in this topic.

## Topic 9: The Shock of the New: Art and Architecture in Europe and the United States in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries.

### Question 1

The general standard of responses to this question, which was answered by large number of candidates, was extremely good. Many answers were competent, others verged on flawless. The best candidates analysed a very wide range of relevant paintings from the period in a sensitive and detailed manner, using them to display the changes in the artist's work between the given dates. Less competent answers involved fewer examples treated in less depth. At the lower end of the spectrum, a few candidates wrote extensively on Picasso's work before 1900 or spent too much time analysing Les Demoiselles D'Avignon to the exclusion of works executed between 1900 and 1907.

### Question 3

A large number of candidates answered this question and there were many excellent answers all of which used Un Chien Andalou as their sole example. While all candidates correctly identified most of the features which enabled his work to be considered Surrealist, relatively few suggested that this was not completely the case and that there were aspects of the work that did not fall into this category. Likewise, some of the slightly weaker candidates omitted to mention the technical aspect of the work including dissolves and fade outs.

### Question 5

Very few candidates answered this question. There was some uncertainty about how to interpret the term 'contemporary' and as a result Käthe Kollwitz was misguidedly chosen as the sole subject for the answer. Although this artist belongs to a different section of the syllabus, credit was given for relevant analysis and a limited amount of contextual detail.

# ART HISTORY

---

Paper 9799/03  
Thematic Topics

## General Comments

Candidates answered on either Topic 1 (Art and Architecture in the City) or Topic 4 (The Nude). All questions within Topic 1 were attempted, but only a limited number of the questions for Topic 4 were attempted.

All those answering Topic 1 wrote about Barcelona, which is also the city used in exemplar material. It should perhaps be emphasised that candidates are free to write about any city, and the questions are designed to allow for the widest possible choice. Across both Topics there was evidence of close knowledge of individual works, usually described with suitable terminology and detail. The best answers integrated formal description with convincing discussion of contextual and conceptual issues. The standard of English varied. The very best essays were extremely well written and logically organised. Some answers which had excellent content deserved better spelling, grammar and paragraphing. While marks were not deducted for mechanical mistakes in English, candidates should be aware that 'Excellent, sustained organisation and development of argument' implies a high degree of articulacy, and that syntactical errors can obscure the development of particular points. It was good to see candidates using some Spanish and Catalan words and names, some even attempting accents. Several answers were strikingly long, often because the candidate had a great deal of knowledge to display; sometimes essays contained a certain amount of padding, presumably to achieve a notional optimum length, and would have been better if they were more concise and directed to the point of the question.

Sometimes the same work was discussed in different answers: this is permitted, and can allow candidates to analyse works in different ways according to the question. However, as a strategy it also carries the risk of seeming repetitive and restricted. There was some legitimate and effective use of works studied for Paper 1. As a general rule, it is better to base each answer on a fresh discussion of works not written about at length elsewhere in the paper; and if Paper 1 works are considered, it must be very clear that candidates are responding to the question set and not recycling material.

## **Topic 1: Art and The City**

### **Question 1**

There is a potential overlap between **Question 1** and **Question 6**, both of which concern urbanism. **Question 1** is the wider question. The evolution and significance of a particular district may not be tied to a single planning project: it may have changed owing to multiple projects and the vicissitudes of history. (Conversely, a city planning project may not be district-specific; for example traffic schemes.) Some wrote on the Eixample here. Other chosen areas were the Raval, Barceloneta and Park Güell. The best answers impressed with a high level of factual knowledge, and covered topics such as social and political issues, funding, demography and location. Recent internal politics and debate (such as that concerning the gentrification of the Raval) is harder to get acquainted with, but Centres may like to compile relevant material from newspapers and other online sources over time. Surprisingly, there was very little discussion of the Gothic Quarter.

### **Question 2**

Several candidates answered this question, with MNAC being the most popular choice. The best answers considered the signals given off by the appearance of the building, and situated it in history. There was some interesting discussion of the Romanesque works, though some other aspects of the collection were not mentioned: the paintings of Fortuny or the well-represented Noucentisme movement, for example.



### Question 3

Popular choices were Santa Maria del Mar, Casa Milà, the Palau de la Música Catalana, Sert's Fundació Miró and (to a lesser extent) Meier's MACBA. Top answers combined careful description of the buildings themselves with reference to surrounding issues (medieval guilds and Santa Maria, for example). It is important to relate the building to some general style (gothic, modernisme) and show an awareness of what that label implies. Brief comparison with other buildings can help to bring out points.

### Question 4

This was a popular question, and there were many well-prepared answers on the Columbus monument, the Tàpies Homage to Picasso, and Blay's sculptural group outside the Palau de la Música Catalana. The most impressive answers went into great detail on the symbolism and materials of the chosen works. Some essays deviated into vague references to the importance of heritage, which looked like padding. 'Monuments' generally implies a public sculpture or other memorial work. Some essays described buildings: this is a possible reading of the term, but the discussion should still engage with the idea of the work being a monument *to* something: Camp Nou as a monument to Catalan nationalism, for example. A list of facts about buildings does not really engage with the question as worded.

### Question 5

Popular choices were Gaudí, Tàpies and Picasso. There was some good discussion of the relation between Gaudí and city patrons. Gaudí's references to work outside Barcelona were granted as relevant, since these formed a part of the Modernisme movement, which had its most powerful impulse from within the capital. There was some detailed reading of Tàpies' works in the context of fascism. Candidates interested in this artist might wish to pursue his interventions as writer and critic as well as visual artist. Little was said about the training received by any of the artists, and this may be a subject worth pursuing.

### Question 6

There were many very good answers on the Eixample, following a narrative from the inception of the scheme to its partial realisation in impressive detail. There were also good answers on Barceloneta, explaining the reasons for the redevelopment and its consequences. A key term in the question is 'evaluate', and the best answers offered a reasoned conclusion on the advantages and disadvantages of the chosen scheme. No comments by contemporary residents were offered: these are by no means essential, but gathering some might be considered as a project for any future field trip.

### Question 7

A few attempted this question. Some good knowledge was shown of the city's layout. Of the two key terms, power and prestige, 'power' proved the harder one to think around. Some mention of political power (the Generalitat and the Ajuntament) would be appropriate here. The symbols of power remaining from the medieval period would also be relevant. There was some interesting consideration of cultural prestige and the image the city presents to the modern tourist.

### Question 8

Candidates wrote interestingly about Casas and Picasso, with the best showing a real interest in social and political history. There were some excellent detailed readings of the paintings of Casas. Some were a little sketchy on detail: it is not quite enough to refer to 'the Liceu bombing' as if the reader knows all about it already. Something needs to be said about anarchism and why there was social unrest at this particular time. The best essays on Picasso concentrated on some early works. There was also some discussion of the depiction of poverty in the paintings of the blue period, though it is hard to distinguish here between the generic and those specifically based on a city experience.



#### Topic 4: The Nude

##### Question 27

There was some good close description of work by Giselbertus, Masaccio and some others. While details in the works themselves were well described, more might have been said about the Christian attitudes to the body and sin which help to explain these images. The relevant chapter in Clark's *The Nude* would be an excellent source for this topic.

##### Question 28

Again, the strongest aspect of answers was the detailed account of specific works, such as Manet's *Olympia*. Candidates argued that some images (such as Picasso's *Demoiselles*) were far from desirable and suggested misogyny. While awareness was shown of the ideas in John Berger, these conceptual matters might have been taken a bit further. The idea of 'male desire' needs unpacking. It may not only be sexual. Essays touched on the idea that women are traditionally depicted as passive, desirable *objects*, for example, and it would be good to see this taken further. Gill Saunders, *The Nude*, would be a useful stimulus for further exploration of this topic. On a less conceptual level, candidates would certainly gain from mentioning the dates of works and showing relevant factual knowledge, such as the original purpose, location and purpose of works.

##### Question 30

There was some interesting writing on images by Jenny Saville, Francis Bacon and Käthe Kollwitz. Some individual works were carefully described, and general and relevant points concerning the depiction of the body were put forward. There was a pleasing sense of real personal engagement with the chosen works. Over-generality is a danger. Candidates do need to discuss specific works, which ideally should also be dated, and the question invites some degree of comparison. To explain what new vision is being offered by an artist, some reference needs to be made to the traditions against which they are operating. Confident use of subject terminology is also looked for: 'Massive' or 'fleshy' are preferable to 'fat', for example. In general, detailed knowledge of individual works was the strongest point in answers on this topic, while wider cultural and historical context could have been taken further.

# ART HISTORY

---

**Paper 9799/04**

**Personal Investigation**

## **General Comments**

Candidates are asked to write a piece of independent research which should be approximately 3000 words not including bibliography and footnotes. Candidates are not directly penalised for work which is too long (within reason) and should state their word count at the end of the essay. This year there were a number of long investigations and there were also a few very short ones which displayed a lack of evidential detail. All work should contain a Rationale which attempts to set out the aims and methods of research, a contents page, a full list of illustrations and a full bibliography. Candidates are encouraged to include visits or interviews in this bibliography (which should be alphabetical). Candidates' work should be fully foot noted where relevant as candidates must show proof of reading. Some studies this year were very thin in terms of actual reading and research as well as illustrations. It must be remembered that this is an art historical piece of work so visual analysis is of paramount importance and should take centre stage both in terms of analysis itself and visual proof of ideas. All illustrations should be of good quality, although colour prints can be expensive, so no candidate is penalised for poor quality of illustrations. All illustrations should be fully titled and dated.

Topic areas were very varied and frequently ambitious. If in doubt it is advisable to check with CIE before choosing the topic area. Candidates may choose topics from within the course and must find a particular angle as they are not allowed to answer a question directly on their Personal Investigation in the examination. Topic areas which stem from the course but embrace the wider context of the subject are actively encouraged.

Candidates are often anxious about their own opinions and the extent to which these are valid in a research project at this level. Although we expect wide reading in order to contextualise the work candidates are encouraged to write fluent grammatical English which incorporates a sense of personal engagement with the topic.

The viva is of course a new development and a very welcome one. The viva is worth a third of the marks for this paper and can make a significant difference. Candidates performed very well in this with excellent presentations and a real sense of passion for the subject they had chosen. Most candidates added positively to their written work with their vivas. Many candidates had continued to think about the subject and even to continue reading and researching beyond the date of submission of the written work; thus the viva gave them the opportunity to talk about more recent ideas. Vivas lasted about 20 minutes and candidates seem to have enjoyed the experience.

## **Specific Titles**

Good practice is to have a cover page with a specific image and a title at the top with a more precise question under the image. Of course there are variations on this. It is impossible to cite all the titles but interesting pieces of work were done on the following; which are given as examples of the sort of titles that worked well.

- The Influence of Piranesi's Etchings on Robert Adam's Architecture with Specific Reference to Osterley House
- 'We went further up' Joseph Beuys & John Latham A Comparative Study
- Banksy's Rats
- 'Among the Multitude' The Ashcan School as documenters of social flux and uncertainty in the Progressive Era 1900-33
- Francis Bacon's Painting is the Art of the Fragmentary
- How J.P. Getty watered the "cultural desert".
- To What Extent Was Classical Antiquity a Religion for Mantegna?
- The Fiat Lingotto: An innovation in terms of Space and Place

Cambridge Pre-U  
9799 Art History June 2010  
Principal Examiner Report for Teachers

- In what sense are Fra Angelico's Frescoes at San Marco devotional?
- Death is a master from Germany: How does Anselm Kiefer attempt to reach redemption through confrontation in his series of paintings based on the work of Paul Celan?
- The Underground Palace. A discussion of Art, Architecture and Stalinist Propaganda In the Moscow Underground