



Senior Secondary Student Visual Arts Portfolios

Words from Judges

The senior secondary Visual Arts students explore art, and develop their enquiry and thinking skills through portfolio building, with a view to achieving the aims of learning to learn and lifelong learning. According to the portfolios submitted this year, most of the students are committed to learning, and more media art works are submitted than previous years. Broadly speaking, the quality of the artworks is high. The performances of the portfolios are summarised, and the strengths and weaknesses are extracted for schools' reference.

To Learn	To Avoid
Development of a Theme	
<p>A theme is the key idea and the embedded emotion for creating a body of works instead of simply a beautiful phrase. Hence, it is crucial to have a clear and focused theme, a message, for each portfolio.</p> <p>The theme should be adopted as the main axis for developing the art pieces throughout the entire portfolio. As importantly, the portfolio should be able to show how the student progresses from one piece of artwork to another.</p> <p>For example, the student expressed her love to her two dogs till the end in the portfolio "Rewinding the Exquisite".</p>	<p>The theme of is too broad and the key message is unclear, thus losing the direction for art making.</p> <p>Some students developed their artworks in a way of narrating a story, with exposition, rising action, climax and conclusion. The art pieces seemed like derived under the same theme, but in fact very different messages were conveyed in each piece of work. As a result, each art piece was developed from one independent portfolio. In that case, the students could neither learn in-depth enquiry nor enhance their abilities of art expression. They also bear an extra heavy workload for building a number of portfolios disregard that ONLY ONE is required.</p> <p>For example, there was no key message under the theme "Desire". The student thus developed the art pieces in four different directions, e.g. desire for materials, love beauty, greed in eating. The whole research process from exploration of a theme to art appreciation, and so on was repeated once for making each piece of artwork.</p>
Exploration in Art: Art Appreciation and Criticism	
<p>Students appraise quality artworks that are related to their themes and art making, and meticulously analyse the artwork from different aspects, such as the forms (the use of colours and techniques, composition), subject matters and ways of presentation for evaluating the works.</p> <p>Moreover, students transform and integrate what they learn from the art pieces into their own art making.</p> <p>For example, in the portfolio "Extinction", the student identified some appropriate art pieces and analysed their use of lines, colours and painting techniques. At the same time, she appreciated Xu Bing's way of presentation to inspire her own art making.</p>	<p>Some students appraised artworks which are irrelevant to their art making, or some of them could not distinguish the difference between image referencing, and art appreciation and criticism.</p> <p>Some students only included artist's background information, simple description of artwork, or very thin formal analysis in their art appreciation without considering the relation between the artistic presentation and the intention of creation. This kind of appreciation is shallow.</p> <p>Some other students directly employed the images or the presentation techniques of the artworks for their own art making without considering the relevancy of the messages to be conveyed.</p>



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Exploration in Art: Image Development	
<p>A good process involves rich image exploration, multiple attempts of composition, and the use of reference materials to support image refinement and development. Moreover, much efforts can be put on careful consideration and experimentation of subject matters, and the use of media and techniques for the betterment of art making and developing different layers of meaning in the art pieces.</p> <p>For example, in developing the second piece of work of the portfolio "Pressure", the student made a few attempts to improve the composition and way of presentation with reference to artists' works, thus the quality of expression was gradually improved.</p>	<p>An inadequate process does not involve sufficient image development. Some students proceeded directly to art making after drafting one or two sketches, or several attempts of unrelated compositions without any in-depth enquiry of any one of them. They resulted in crude or immature final products.</p>
Reflection and Learning Progression	
<p>In developing the portfolio, reflection and progression should complement each other. After finishing a piece of work, students reflect on their outcomes to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the artworks, e.g. the form and technique, the way of presentation, and review whether the art piece can express the key message effectively. Moreover, students select a point of reflection (e.g. technique, subject matter) for enhancement and start exploring the next piece of work with a view to strengthening the impact and power of artistic expression.</p> <p>For example, in the portfolio "Rewinding the Exquisite", the student consistently expressed her feelings and love towards her two dogs from the beginning till the end. The several art pieces of the portfolio demonstrated her attempts to improve her abilities of expressing her reluctance of leaving the dogs in a more impactful and touching way.</p>	<p>Some reflections involved lengthy or fragmented emotional expressions, or descriptions of the art making processes and difficulties (e.g. usually time management), but failed to make use of the opportunities of reflection to review on their own learning and improve the next art piece for expressing the initially defined message with better effectiveness and proficiency.</p> <p>Some reflections only focused on skills and techniques. But even then, they used a different medium in the next art piece, thus failed to show any improvements in relevant skills and techniques.</p> <p>None of the above mentioned situations helps students' progression in art.</p>
Development of a Portfolio	
<p>The research workbook should demonstrate students' authentic process of learning and art making. It is not only for recording, but helps students think and develop their artworks.</p>	<p>Either documenting in great detail during the developing process or re-creating the research process after completion of the artwork is not desirable and a waste of time. More importantly, both ways do not contribute to learning.</p>