



**General Certificate of Education (A-level)
June 2012**

History of Art

HART2

(Specification 2250)

Unit 2: Themes in History of Art

Report on the Examination

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HART 2

General Comments

All six questions were attempted. Questions 5 and 6 were the least popular, while question 1 was by far the most popular.

AO1 was generally sound and secure. Sometimes artworks were imprecisely or incorrectly identified, with generic titles offered, such as Henry Moore's Reclining Figure or Mother and Child. There were many incorrect dates and misspellings of artists' and architects' names. Erroneous information or misunderstood theory occasionally formed part of students' responses. On rare occasions, examples were cited that were outside the date range of the specification. Occasionally, students failed to take account of the requirements of the question, rendering parts of their discussion invalid.

AO2 was usually clearly demonstrated with substantiated judgements and sustained discussion. However, there were cases of subjective and unsubstantiated judgements, often based on partial understanding of complex theories only partially applied. Sometimes, students failed to address the question at all and wrote everything they knew about the work, most of which was irrelevant.

AO3 was evidenced to a consistently high level, with the majority of students presenting a clear and coherent response. However, a small number of students displayed a lack of clarity and organisation, which led to vague and repetitious responses. Less able students frequently wrote irrelevant material occasionally citing examples outside the scope of the question.

Question 1 *Subjects and Genres*

Compare **and** contrast the representation of the human figure in **two** paintings **or** in **two** sculptures, each by a different artist.

On the whole, this question was successfully addressed with a wide range of valid examples used. The most popular choices were Michelangelo's and Donatello's David and Titian's Venus of Urbino and Manet's Olympia. Occasionally, students cited examples which did not qualify as representations of the human figure. Some students chose to use groups of figures which sometimes led to generalised and limited responses. A number of students ignored the instruction to 'compare and contrast' and wrote two distinct descriptions of each chosen example. Many students that fully addressed the demands of the question produced good and occasionally excellent responses. Examples from the modern period such as Epstein's Rock Drill and Moore's Reclining Figure, although infrequent, were well understood and led to some interesting discussions of representations of the human figure.

Question 2 *Form and Style*

Discuss the formal features and the stylistic qualities of **two** works of art, each by a different artist. You may choose your examples from painting **and/or** sculpture.

This was one of the most popular questions and most students selected paintings. Botticelli's Primavera, Munch's The Sick Child and Picasso's Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. R. M.) were frequently discussed. Rodin's Kiss or Boccioni's Unique Forms of Continuity in Space were also cited. Students frequently responded in two distinct sections, with some concentrating on iconographical features alone. In the majority of cases, students were able to identify the formal features and stylistic qualities of their chosen examples. Responses to this question were, on the whole, well focused and generally well answered.

Question 3 *Form and Function*

Analyse the relationship between form and function in **two** domestic buildings, **or** in **two** religious buildings.

Many students responded well to this question. Although many valid examples were discussed, some students failed to link form **and** function and often addressed one or the other. The most frequently cited examples were Le Corbusier's Villa Savoye, Lloyd Wright's Falling Water, the Parthenon and the Pantheon. Occasionally, students offered one domestic and one religious building for discussion: an unfruitful approach and outside the requirements of the question. Some students used examples that did not qualify as domestic or religious architecture and, despite sometimes competent discussion, did not meet the demands of the question. On the whole, architectural features were well understood and articulated discussion of architectural language was relevant.

Question 4 Historical and social contexts

Analyse two works of art **and/or** architecture **and** discuss the historical contexts of each.

This question was answered by a significant number of students. The majority used examples from painting with Goya's The Third of May, 1808, Picasso's Guernica and Delacroix's Liberty Leading the People the most popular choices. In some cases, the historical context was rather poorly identified in a protracted discussion of stylistic and formal features. Some students frequently concentrated on the historical context and failed to analyse the examples sufficiently. Where a balance was struck between the demand to analyse the work **and** discuss the historical contexts students wrote well-executed responses. Architectural examples were seldom used.

Question 5 Patronage

Discuss how public patronage has contributed to the appearance and meaning of **two** paintings **and/or** sculptures.

Students often seemed to have difficulty distinguishing between public and private patronage. Inappropriate examples were cited such as Botticelli's Birth of Venus, Uccello's Battle of San Romano and Raphael's Sistine Madonna all of which were commissioned for private contemplation. Frequently, the patron and location were not identified but formal analysis and discussion were generally well articulated. The relationship between public patronage and appearance and meaning was addressed well by the more able students, but frequently one or other was neglected. Donatello's and Michelangelo's David were popular choices as was Donatello's St George.

Question 6 Gender, nationality and ethnicity

Analyse **two** works of art which depict heroism **and/or** motherhood.

This was not a popular question. Most students selected examples of heroism. The most cited depictions of heroism were paintings and Delacroix's Liberty Leading the People, David's Marat at his Last Breath and Géricault's The Raft of the Medusa were popular choices for discussion. Several students made a case for the depiction of Liberty as a metaphor for 'mother' of the nation, conflating motherhood and heroism, but not always successfully.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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