





## Advanced Higher Art and Design: Expressive portfolio evaluation

<b>Candidate name:</b>	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	<b>Candidate number:</b>	XXXXXXXXXX
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<b>Centre number:</b>	XXXXXXX
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State your theme or stimulus and give a summary of your creative intentions

My theme is the destruction of our planet due to the evolution of industrialisation. Artificial light created by filament bulbs helped create major leaps in the workforce as they expanded work hours. However with these advancements in the industrial revolution society started to develop major issues such as pollution and mass deforestation that is still happening today.

Give a brief explanation of how your contextual analysis relates to your practical work

Charlotte Smith's installation 'Ephemeral Rays' from 2013 influenced me with her idea of the strength and importance of light in our society and this gave me the idea that due to light's strength and power our environment has become decayed over time. Her installation is made with lightbulbs and I also used lightbulbs in my work. Unlike Smith's idea of the lightbulb being a symbol of life, I created a symbol of the destruction and pollution caused by mankind.

### Instructions to candidates

Evaluate the impact of important creative decisions and the effectiveness of artwork with reference to the theme or stimulus, creative intentions and specific turning points.

**(6 marks)**

I knew that I wanted to produce a conceptual piece, involving imagery which communicated my theme of destruction, and specifically the destruction of the environment. I explored the theme by taking photos of the trees and deforestation in the Galloway Forests. I decided to develop these images using a mixed media approach and I thought I could incorporate them into the background in some way, so I experimented with different surfaces, like cardboard and dripped ink and wax to give a sense of decay. I had the idea of using these along with a contrasting man-made imagery. To me the lightbulb is a symbol which everyone recognises and which suggests positive things, such as ideas, creativity and benefits of technology. I tried drawing and painting the bulb and used textural techniques and drip techniques with ink and bleach to try to achieve a mood of decay, but I felt that this wasn't really successful because it didn't express the idea of destruction very well. I wanted to use the imagery in a way which had more negative connotations of technology, and I had a breakthrough when I started using 3D approaches. I experimented with dipping lightbulbs in black and red wax, which gave a more sinister look. This led me to consider working in 3D for my final piece.

The idea of creating an installation began to interest me. I experimented with creating backgrounds based on my original developments from the deforestation photographs. I then, using the inspiration from Charlotte Smith, hung the bulbs around the front of the piece making it become a true installation, with the curved surface of the background making the viewer able to walk through. The dripped ink suggests that the trees were growing from the tree line but had been distorted by pollution. As I was building the installation, I decided to add red wool and I feel this suggests the idea of blood and that the lightbulbs cause a distortion in the growth of the environment. The tree stump covered with broken glass emphasises the destruction caused by industrialisation.

The video of walking through the piece shows how it lets the viewer be surrounded and involved in the piece. The footage of the lightbulbs breaking creates a sinister atmosphere to the realism of what we are doing to the environment. If I had experimented more with a sound element, I feel this aspect could have been used to add atmosphere to the piece.

## AH Expressive Portfolio Commentary: Destruction

### Section 1 - Practical artwork

**Demonstrating a visually coherent and sustained expressive art enquiry, showing relevant investigative research and development of ideas, leading to the considered resolution of artwork(s)**

**Highly effective**

The idea of creating a contrast between technology and nature represented by light bulbs against a background of trees to show deforestation makes a powerful image. The candidate develops the theme of lightbulbs and trees through a series of photographs, sketches, paintings and experimentation with materials. The lightbulbs drip and the ink dribbles vertically to form a forest and these ideas can be seen in various forms throughout the development. The project is resolved in an installation with a short video in which red wool is added to represent nature bleeding. The process is coherent, purposeful and well directed. It is however, a single idea based on Smith's "Ephemeral Rays" and the creative process is rather confined to a linear development, as if the outcome was already conceived before the process of working it out had started. Photography is used as research and it is integrated successfully into the final works, but the development of this idea is missing.

**Showing a personal applied understanding of art practice by skilfully and creatively using materials, techniques and/or technology to explore and experiment with visual elements**

**Highly effective**

The expressive freedom in the use of materials is impressive. Ink, bleach, wax, Tippex, paint and collage are particularly effective. The experimental sketches are always exploring a new aspect of technique or combining with just enough drawing to represent the fragments of a lightbulb. Photographs are well chosen, but not taken further or used as collage. The installation, which resolves the work, features hanging bulbs and punctured cardboard, it brings together much of the "creative play" in the development of ideas. It appears in photos and well-made video clips. There is also what looks like a fragment of this larger work is in the folio.

### Section 2 – Contextual analysis

**Selecting an artwork with relevance to their enquiry and discussing the impact of related contexts through analysis of its features**

**Highly effective**

The analysis of "Ephemeral Rays" installation by Charlotte Smith explains the relationship between the site (Chatham House) and the work, its title and its meaning along with detailed observations of the effect of light on the materials. This is done with well-chosen illustrations, expressive writing and well justified observation of light, shadows, repeated forms and even dust on the light bulbs. The context is an attempt to give some background to the idea of an installation taking us through "ready-mades", "Merzbau", performance art, to Cornelia Parker. Though this is a massive task, the examples are generally well explained, and they are relevant to the topic. It is not advisable to see the context for an artwork as a chronological account of similar works that led up to it, but in the case, since the candidate is trying to explain the nature of installation as an idea, the background is appropriate.

### Section 4 - Evaluation

**Evaluating the impact of important creative decisions and the effectiveness of their artwork with reference to the theme or stimulus, creative intentions and specific turning points**

<b>Highly effective</b>	The description of how the installation was conceived and then made adds information to the viewing of the photos of the work and the video. Creative decisions are explained and some are evaluated, making reference to the candidate's intentions. There is reflection on the effectiveness of aspects of the portfolio and the final artwork.
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