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SYLLABUS CONNECTIONS: 2009 ARCHIBALD PRIZE

Framing the Archibald:

K–6 and 7–12 discussion questions and activities

- The power of the pose
- Playing a role
- Patrons of the arts
- Light and dark
- The sitter's world

Analysing the winner

K–6: Visual Arts and links with key learning areas

Years 7–12: framing questions

- Guy Maestri *Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu*

Focus works:

issues for discussion

K–6: Visual Arts and links with key learning areas

7–12: Issues for discussion

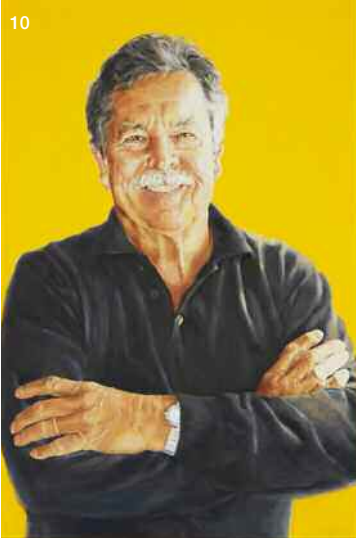
- Vincent Fantauzzo *Brandon*
- Paul Jackson *Flacco's chariot*
- Garry Shead & Adrienne Levenson *Soffritto di Lucio*

Archibald Prize 09: finalists

Note: Unless otherwise cited, background information and artists quotes are taken from the Archibald Prize exhibition wall texts, AGNSW 2009

THE POWER OF THE POSE

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10. Ngaire Devenport *Ken Done*

oil on linen

Ngaire Devenport has known internationally renowned artist and designer Ken Done for 50 years... Eight years ago she took up oil painting, which she has continued to develop with encouragement from Done... 'He has given me a great deal of confidence in my talent,' she says. 'He's been saying to me for years that I should try for the Archibald – so it was fitting that I should paint him...'

This is one of the few portraits in the exhibition where the subject is smiling. What does this portrait tell you about Ken Done as a person? What other pose do you think the artist could have used to capture his character?

How does the colour yellow make you feel? What do you associate with yellow? If the background was changed to red or blue, how would it affect this portrait? How important is the use of colour in this painting? Read the wall label. Discuss how the artist and sitter decided on yellow.

Research Done's career and find images of his work. Imagine he was to paint a self-portrait. What do you think it would look like? Compare this to any actual self-portraits by Done that you find.

Compare the body language in this portrait with Richard Onn's *Coupe SX010F* and Jan Williamson's *Nancy Kunothe Petyarr*, also on this page. Discuss how the position of the person's arms communicates mood or meaning.

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28. Richard Onn *Coupe SX010F*

oil on linen

Senator Bob Brown is a member of the Australian Greens and a life-long activist who has fought tooth-and-nail to preserve Tasmania's wilderness. 'As a kid my first images of Bob Brown were of him being hauled away by loggers in a 1987 anti-forestry protest,' says Richard Onn. 'My perception of politicians as a school boy were that they only wore suits and sat behind a desk. This bloke was different. Thirty years on, Bob is still fighting for the future of the planet, human rights and equality.'

Stand in this pose. How does it feel to use your body this way? How does Bob Brown's body language communicate his personality?

Read the banner. What else can you see in this painting? List possible symbols, and explore how the artist has arranged them to convey meaning.

Describe the mood of this work. What role is played by light, shadow, colour and texture?

Research Brown's political career. How has the artist suggested the importance of the environment to Brown? What is important to you? Discuss whether you would be willing to take a stand on an issue.

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38. Jan Williamson *Nancy Kunothe Petyarr*

oil on stretched canvas

Nancy Kunothe Petyarr is an elder and senior artist of the Iyenty people at Utopia and a custodian of the Mountain Devil Dreaming represented in her work. 'To me, her face and stance portray the pride and respect she is given in her community. I was particularly taken with her hands and wondered at the lifestyle she had led, which is so foreign to most Australians,' says Jan Williamson.

Nancy Kunothe Petyarr is a custodian of knowledge and wisdom in her community. Explore how Jan Williamson has captured Kunothe Petyarr through body language, facial expression and use of colour. Imagine a conversation between the artist and subject during the creation of this portrait.

Where is Kunothe Petyarr? Inside or outside? Why do you think this? Read the wall label. What things might you include in the background to suggest her world?

What do you think Kunothe Petyarr is staring at? Is she confronting the audience or is she passive in stance? Why do you think that is?

Discuss the use of colour and light in this work. What could purple symbolise?

Kunothe Petyarr is a well-known Indigenous artist from Utopia in Central Australia. First, imagine the types of artworks she creates, then find images of her work. Are the works as you imagined?

PLAYING A ROLE



22. Mathew Lynn *Heiress*

oil on canvas

Artists Mathew Lynn and Joan Ross both live at Blackheath in the Blue Mountains. 'At the pool one day I was inspired by the fur-like haircut she had then, and I asked if I could paint her somehow clothed in kangaroo fur, as this has been an important material in her own work, along with colonial imagery,' says Lynn. 'As we talked, this became the catalyst for her to make this colonial style dress, an artwork which she wore at the opening of her recent solo exhibition, *Come a little closer*.

Focus on the subject's face. Imagine her character. Look at the whole portrait. How does the costume affect what you think of her? Why do you think the costume is made of kangaroo fur?

Is this a formal or casual portrait? Do you think Joan Ross had to pose like this for a long time? Would the effect be different if she was in another setting?

Imagine you had this dress in your dress-up box. Describe what it would feel like to wear. Who would you be when you wore it? Invent a character and write a monologue.

What does the word 'heiress' mean? Read the wall label. Discuss why Lynn has described this portrait as 'an image that is meant to resonate with all the complexities of the meeting of Indigenous and European culture and experience in our country'.

Throughout history, people from different cultures have used masks and costumes. Brainstorm different reasons for this.



31. Ben Quilty *Jimmy Barnes – there but for the grace of God no 2*

oil and aerosol on linen

Jimmy Barnes is one of the best-selling Australian musicians of all time. A reformed drug user, he is now an outspoken pro-family, anti-drug advocate. Ben Quilty asked Barnes to act as if he were totally inebriated, head lolling back, eyes rolling in their sockets. He built up the image in his signature impasto style and then literally squashed the heavily laden surface against another blank canvas – an imitation of the ink blot tests created by psychoanalyst Hermann Rorschach.

Is this a static or active portrait? How does the image reflect the role Jimmy Barnes has played in the Australian music industry? How does it suggest he is a singer? Locate other subjects in profile within the exhibition.

Observe this painting up close and from a distance. How is your appreciation of the portrait affected by your distance from it?

Read the wall label. Consider the process Ben Quilty developed to achieve the painting's surface qualities, and the experimentation he went through to control texture. Experiment in class with various mediums to imitate this process.

Imagine this picture was used for the cover of Jimmy Barnes' album *Double happiness*. Create your own cover for the album by creating or sourcing an appropriate artwork, cropping it to fit, applying typography and adding additional elements.



37. Mark Thompson *Greta Scacchi as Queen Elizabeth in Mary Stuart*

oil on canvas

Internationally renowned star of stage and screen, Greta Scacchi is best known for her many film roles. However she has also won acclaim on the Australian and British stage. Last year, she received a Sydney Theatre Award Best Actress nomination for her memorable portrayal of Queen Elizabeth in the Ensemble Theatre production of Schiller's classic play *Mary Stuart*. Mark Thompson painted her in costume after a performance.

Imitate the expression on Greta Scacchi's face. How do you feel? What does the expression suggest? Why do you think Scacchi has dressed and posed this way?

Describe the dress, make-up and accessories. Identify the Australian flora and fauna. Imagine what it would feel like to wear this costume. What flower would you choose to hold, and why?

Imagine you are the subject in this portrait. What pose would you choose? Model your chosen pose and ask a friend to sketch your portrait. Move and act in character.

Research the acting career of Greta Scacchi. Find out about her role as Queen Elizabeth in the play *Mary Stuart*. Has Mark Thompson successfully captured the queen's character?

PATRONS OF THE ARTS



3. Adam Chang *Spirit of an ancient culture*

oil on canvas

Brian Sherman was awarded the Order of Australia in 2004 for service to the community as a philanthropist and benefactor to a range of arts, education and sporting organisations, and to business and commerce. In this portrait, Adam Chang has combined rational realism with expressionism. He has also infused Chinese aesthetic form with a deeper conceptual insight.

Imagine the canvas was larger. What objects would you add to tell the audience more about Brian Sherman?

What does this painting remind you of? Consider why Adam Chang has created a monochromatic work. What colours would you select if you painted this portrait in colour? How would your colour scheme impact on the work?

Read the wall label. What do you think the title alludes to? Why do you think the artist has chosen this title?

Research Sherman's contribution to the visual arts. Investigate how patrons, benefactors and philanthropists contribute to the arts.

Compare the three portraits on this page – Adam Chang's *Spirit of an ancient culture*, Hong Fu's *Dame Elisabeth Murdoch* and Nicholas Harding's *Margaret Whitlam* – and consider how they convey a sense of power in different ways.



12. Hong Fu *Dame Elisabeth Murdoch*

oil on canvas

The widow of Australian newspaper publisher Sir Keith Murdoch and mother of media mogul Rupert Murdoch, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch has devoted her life to philanthropy. Hong wanted to paint her to honour her for her 100th birthday on 8 February 2008. 'She is very popular in Melbourne, where she lives, and in Australia generally,' he says. 'She has made a very big contribution to the arts in Australia by donating money to galleries for over half a century.'

Do any of your family members remind you of Dame Elizabeth Murdoch? Explain why? List five words to describe Dame Elizabeth's personality. Describe the expression on her face. What do you think she could be smiling about? Discuss how Hong has created such a warm portrait. How does the application of paint add to the character?

How does the cropping impact on the audience's reaction to the work? Do you think you would react differently to this painting if the whole figure were included?

Research Dame Elizabeth's life. What is a philanthropist and why are they important to the arts?



16. Nicholas Harding *Margaret Whitlam*

oil on linen

Nicholas Harding's first portrait of Margaret Whitlam was hung in the 2003 Archibald Prize. Harding, who usually works from memory, began work on a new portrait in 2008, but the expressive likeness was missing and another sitting was arranged. 'I was able to see her expressive form as it needed to be painted and I immediately returned to the studio and finished the portrait,' he says.

Observe the surface of this painting. Describe how Nicolas Harding has applied the paint. List the types of tools he might have used to create the textures. Act out the movements he might have made. Do you think this work was painted quickly or over a long period of time? Find other paintings in the exhibition that use paint in a similar way.

What does Margaret Whitlam's pose tell us about her character? Is she relaxed, strong or humble? Discuss.

Research Margaret Whitlam's contribution to the arts. Why is it important to have such people in these roles? What impact does it have on the broader arts community in Australia?

LIGHT AND DARK



23. Abbey McCulloch *Nell*

oil and charcoal on canvas

A television presenter specialising in the arts, Nell Schofield currently presents a weekly film show for Showtime. She has also reported for ABC Radio National and written for many publications including *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *Vogue Australia*. Abbey McCulloch is still new to the process of portraiture. 'There is a fleeting moment between capturing the character and destroying it and it's that space I enjoy,' she says.



Identify the colours Abbey McCulloch has chosen for this portrait. How do these colours make you feel? What do you associate with them? Imagine this portrait was painted using warm colours. Would this change your reading of the painting? Plan a self-portrait in a similar style. What colours would you choose? Explain what those colours symbolise about you.

McCulloch has achieved a fresh style through restraint in line and colour. Create a continuous line drawing of a person near you. Compare the qualities of your lines to this portrait.

Observe how McCulloch has flattened the composition. Does this portrait have more in common with graphic design and illustration than traditional portrait painting? Debate in class.

14. Peter Hanley *Remembering Titian*

oil on canvas

Titian is widely regarded as one of the best portrait painters of all time. Peter Hanley certainly believes so. Painted some time around 1510, Titian's famous portrait *Man with a blue sleeve* (also known as *Man with a quilted sleeve*) is one of his benchmark works. 'One of the great joys I had in painting this self-portrait', says Hanley, 'was to experience some of the challenges Titian would have felt'.

Discuss the impact of light and shadow on the mood of this painting. Identify the source and angle of the light. Investigate the artist's manipulation of light when arranging this scene.

Find an image of Titian's *Man with a blue sleeve*. Compare and contrast it with Peter Hanley's self-portrait. Investigate the symbolism behind the figures resting on the edge of their own initialled coffins. Discuss the concept of *memento mori* (Latin for 'remember, you will die').

According to the artist, this self-portrait 'was done using a mirror to allow for maximum realism. In twisting close to 90 degrees, I discovered how stiff my neck became after hours of painting!' Experiment with mirrors and draw yourself in a similar pose. Develop your sketches into a painted self-portrait; focus on capturing your three-quarter view. Keep a diary to document this experience.



35. Megan Seres *The rest is silence (Brendan Cowell as Hamlet)*

oil on linen

'After the death of Hamlet's father, the over-analytical Hamlet is besieged with suspicions, apparitions and wild imaginings,' says Megan Seres. 'Like Goya's macabre *Black paintings*, with their images of monsters, ghouls and other supernatural figures, Hamlet's dark and disturbing journey was brought into the light by Brendan's ability to let the darkness slide out of the hidey-hole of his imagination into the heart of truth.'

Is this a double portrait? Describe the two faces you see. Identify the expressions on each face, and mimic these expressions in a mirror. How do you feel? Sketch the expressions in your visual diary.

The actor Brendon Cowell has assumed the role of Shakespeare's Hamlet. Research the play *Hamlet* and outline the plot. How has Megan Seres created drama and tension in this painting? How would you have portrayed Hamlet? Where does the title of this work come from? What do you think it means? How is it represented in the painting?

Chiaroscuro is a term for the use of light and dark in painting. Find examples of famous artists who have used this technique in the past. Discuss how it has contributed to the mood and success of Seres's painting.

Research the actor Brendon Cowell. Compare this portrait to publicity shots. How different does he look in this painting?

THE SITTER'S WORLD



13. David Griggs *Zoloft nation* (self-portrait)

acrylic on canvas

David Griggs sometimes suffers from depression and says he was 'very much mentally on the edge' when he painted this work, which loosely acknowledges Edward Munch's 1893 painting *The Scream*. At the same time, Griggs believes *Zoloft nation* has a strong sense of hope, symbolised through the text on his right arm. 'The word Atticus (my son's name) is painted in bold font as Atticus is one reason why I never slip completely over the edge.'

How does this portrait gain your attention? What might David Griggs be looking at or thinking? Write a description of Griggs. What type of person do you imagine him to be? What music might he listen to?

This painting features images of skeletons. How do they make you feel? What do they make you think of? Research skeletons in different cultures, such as Mexico's Day of the Dead festival.

Griggs has used skeletons and masks as symbols to communicate ideas about his world. Create a self-portrait using props or symbols to represent your world.

How does this painting challenge the traditional notions of portraiture? What other genres does it represent? Does the large scale of the work challenge the audience in an exhibition such as this?



25. Alexander McKenzie *Richard Clapton*

oil on linen

As ever in Alexander McKenzie's work, the painting is full of symbols. The graphic on the t-shirt is an obvious reference to The Rolling Stones, who were one of Richard Clapton's early influences. The Chinese lantern refers to the fact that his father is Chinese. McKenzie invariably uses water in his paintings 'for visual effect but also its symbolism'.

Imagine you are the subject of this portrait. What can you smell, touch, hear and taste?

Describe Richard Clapton's body language in this pose. Does he seem comfortable or awkward?

List the objects you can see in the painting. What type of artist is Clapton? What clues does Alexander McKenzie us? What else do these objects tell us about the sitter's world?

Research McKenzie's painting practice. Compare and contrast this particular portrait to his previous Archibald entries and his landscape paintings.



39. Michael Zavros *Ars longa, vita brevis*

oil on canvas

'Hippocrates' wisdom that art is long, life is short – *Arts longa, vita brevis* – is a profound truth,' says Michael Zavros. 'In painting a self-portrait I wanted to move away from a literal representation of myself, and I was thinking about how contemporary society's attitude of conspicuous consumption encourages the consumer to see material things as the evocation of one's personality.'

Stand back from the painting. How have objects been arranged to suggest the human face?

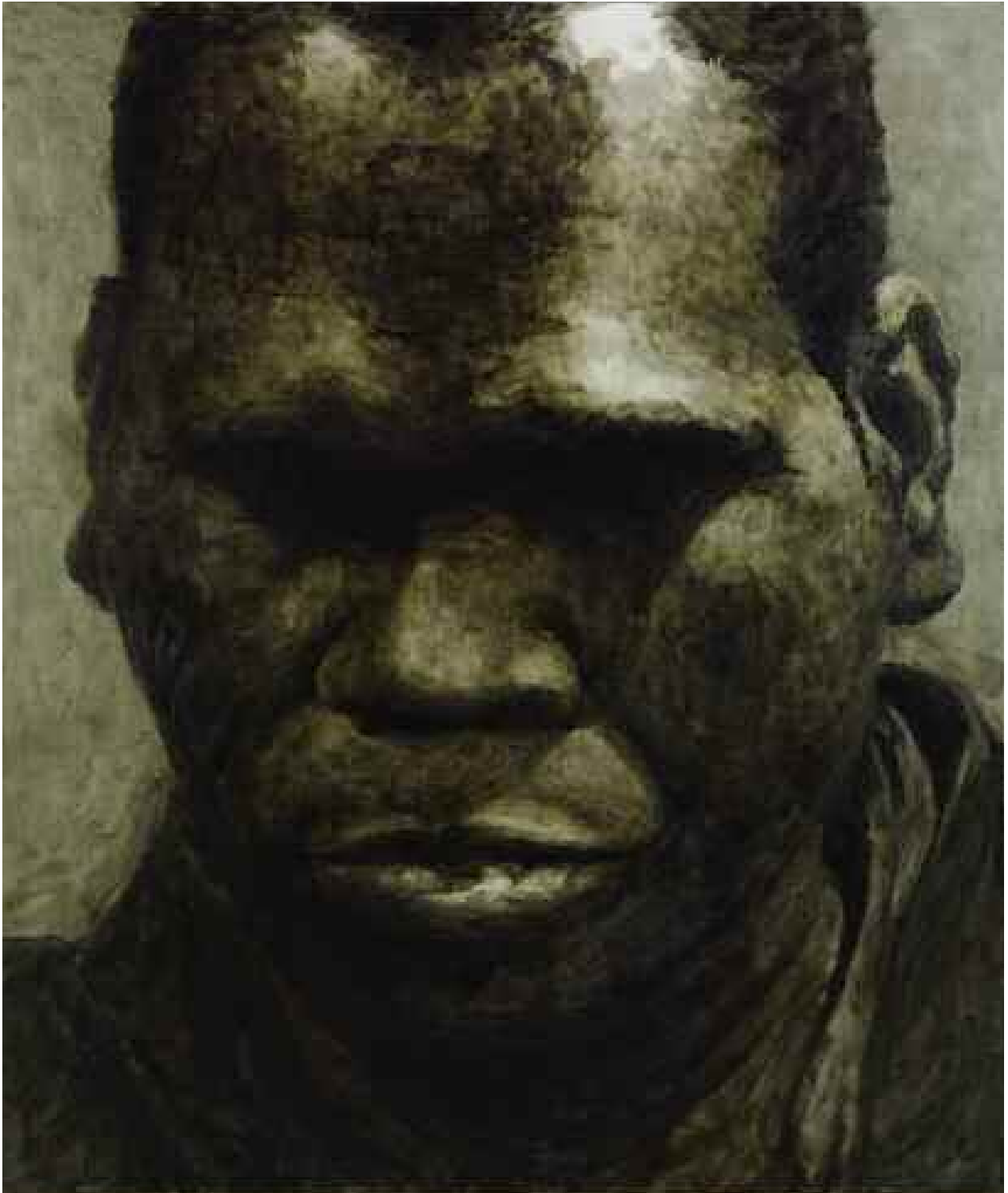
List the objects in the painting. Can you identify their labels? Where might you buy these products? Who might buy them? What do they tell us about Michael Zavros?

What objects would you use to create your own self-portrait? Research the work of Giuseppe Arcimboldo (1527–93) and compare and contrast it to the Zavros portrait.

Read the wall label and consider the title of this work. How does the reference to the skull juxtapose with the brands? What is the artist trying to communicate?

Explore how this painting challenges the genre of portraiture. Does it also challenge the rules of the Archibald Prize? Discuss.

Archibald Prize 2009
Winner



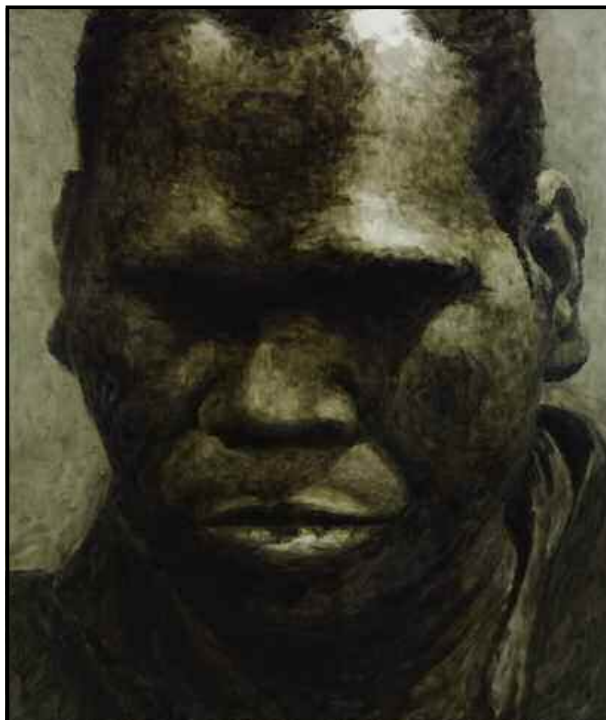
26. **Guy Maestri**
Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu

oil on linen

Analysing the winner

Years K–6

Visual Arts and links with key learning areas



GUY MAESTRI
Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu
oil on linen

With his extraordinary voice and hauntingly beautiful album *Gurrumul*, Indigenous singer Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu has become something of a cultural phenomenon over the last year. Born blind, the gifted musician leads a traditional lifestyle on Elcho Island in Arnhem Land and sings in his native Yolngu language, but his fame is spreading the world.

Offered a 40-minute window of opportunity to meet him early one Saturday morning at Sydney airport, Guy Maestri seized it. 'I was introduced to Gurrumul by Michael Hohnen, his bass player, record producer and close friend, who explained to him about the Archibald and why I wanted to paint him,' he says.

Maestri did many sketches and studied Gurrumul's face intently. 'I usually work in a very liberal, gestural way but this time I built up the image quietly and slowly with many glazes in an attempt to capture the beautiful quality of his skin. I worked on it for over a month, mostly while listening to his music. The whole process became quite an emotional experience.'

Born in Mudgee, NSW in 1974, Maestri completed a Bachelor of Fine Art (Hons) in painting at the National Art School, Darlinghurst in 2003. He has had solo exhibitions at the Tim Olsen Gallery and was a finalist in the 2007 and 2008 Dobell Drawing Prize.

Years K–6

VISUAL ARTS AND LINKS WITH KEY LEARNING AREAS

Visual Arts: Is this a portrait of a young or mature person? What gives you this impression? **Describe** the expression on Gurrumul's face. Are there any clues provided as to the sitter's profession or interests? **List** the elements of this portrait that make it unique in the Archibald Prize.

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

Make preliminary sketches for a self-portrait. **Focus** on developing the composition and how the audience might interpret it. **Consider** the light and shadow on your face and identify areas where the bare canvas or paper can be left exposed to give a sharp highlight. **Build up** your painting with thin layers of acrylic washes applied loosely in the style of Maestri. **Exhibit** the completed paintings in class and invite other classes to view the exhibition.

English: **Write** a diary account for Maestri on the day he meets Gurrumul at the airport. Imagine how Maestri felt finally meeting the musician and having only 40 minutes to sketch and plan his Archibald painting. **Outline** the steps he might have taken to create this work.

Music: **Listen** to Gurrumul's music and lyrics. **Record** your initial reaction. **Describe** his voice. Does it fit his portrait? What is unusual about the way Gurrumul plays guitar? Find out what other instruments he plays.

Gurrumul has won Aria and Deadly awards for his music. What are these awards and who votes for them?

HSIE: **Locate** Elcho Island on a map of Australia. **Research** its environment, flora and fauna. **Imagine** what it would be like to live there. Find out about the particular cultural traditions of Indigenous people in this region. **Read** and **discuss** Gurrumul's lyrics. How does his music draw attention to the cultural life of people in remote areas of Australia?

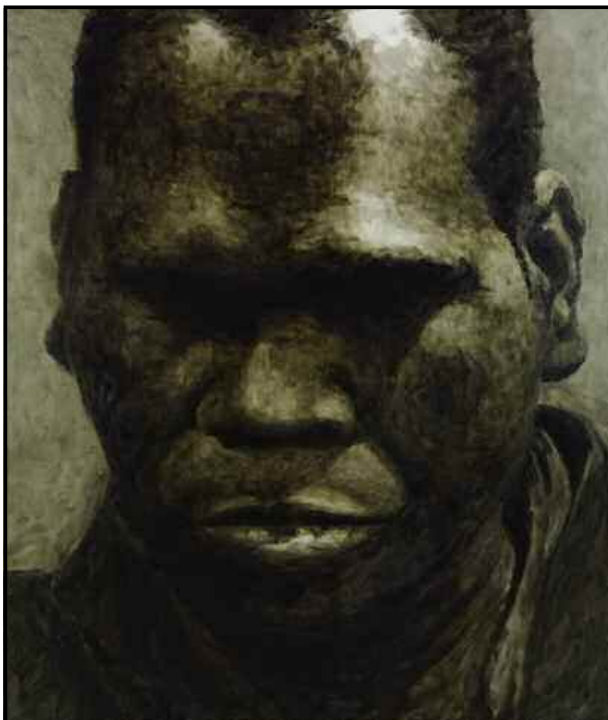
PDHPE: Gurrumul was born blind. **List** the five senses and discuss how each sense contributes to your life. **Imagine** what it would be like to be without one or more of these senses. **Explore** how your other senses may heighten.

Discuss how music and lyrics create moods and enable people to express themselves. What other forms of self-expression can you think of?

Analysing the winner

Years 7–12

Conceptual framework and Practice



GUY MAESTRI
Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu
oil on linen

Years 7–12

THE FRAMES

Subjective

What is your initial response to the portrait of Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu?

Describe the mood of this portrait and how the artist has portrayed the subject.

Why do you think Guy Maestri decided to paint a tonal portrait of his subject? What effect do you think it would have if the portrait was in colour? Would it have the same impact?

Gurrumul is blind. How has Maestri symbolised this? If the eyes are the window to the soul, what other facial features give an insight into the subject's personality? What do you think Gurrumul is like?

How do you think Gurrumul might have responded to his portrait winning the Archibald Prize?

Cultural

Do you think an Australian audience would react to and appreciate the portrait of Gurrumul differently to an international audience? Debate in class.

Survey how Gurrumul's music has brought traditional Indigenous languages to the attention of a wider audience. Investigate how art and music can assist to create a more tolerant society.

Structural

Observe the overlapping brushstrokes and how light and shade has been created on the face. Maestri says he 'built up the image quietly and slowly with many glazes in an attempt to capture the beautiful quality of his skin'. Describe the types of brushstrokes and detail he has used to capture Gurrumul. Do you think he painted this with the canvas placed horizontally or vertically? How can you tell?

Research Maestri's painting practice. He has said he usually works 'in a very liberal, gestural way' but in this portrait he has altered his approach. Compare this work to Maestri's gestural landscapes. Discuss how and why an artist may alter their style to suit particular subject matter.

Study the composition. Would your response to the painting be different if it was smaller? Observe the scale of works in the Archibald Prize exhibition. Investigate reasons why many of the works are oversized (ie larger than life-size). Does this add to their success as portraits or does it help them stand out in the exhibition? Debate in class.

Post-modern

Compare the *Gurrumul* album cover to Maestri's painting. Debate the similarities and differences in the composition of both. Why do you think the artist selected a similar close-up? How do you think audiences might respond to a portrait that has much in common with a well-known public image? Discuss how this could be both an advantage and disadvantage.

Practice

How does this image challenge traditions in the portraiture genre? Discuss how winning entries in the Archibald Prize since its inception have reflected changes in artists' – and audiences' – taste over time. Evaluate issues that may have influenced the 2009 Archibald Prize. Discuss reasons for the continued interest in the Archibald Prize.

Focus works



11. Vincent Fantauzzo

Brandon

oil on linen

11. Vincent Fantauzzo

Brandon

oil on linen

Vincent Fantauzzo was highly commended at last year's Archibald Prize for his triple-image portrait of his friend Heath Ledger, painted just weeks before the actor's death. The painting also won the People's Choice Award.

This year his subject is Brandon Walters, who played the young Aboriginal boy Nullah in Baz Luhrmann's film *Australia*.

Fantauzzo decided to focus on Walters' face for a couple of reasons. 'He has a very intense gaze and amazing eyes so I wanted the focus to be on that,' he says. 'And I wanted the feel of the harsh Australian sun across his face but for him to remain partly in shadow as well because he can be quite shy and intense – so I was trying to capture those ideas in one composition.'

Born in 1977, Fantauzzo has a Bachelor of Fine Art (Painting) and a Master of Fine Art from RMIT University, Melbourne. Last year he was awarded an artist's residency at Chancery Lane Gallery in Hong Kong where he had a solo exhibition. He has also had solo exhibitions in Mumbai, the recent LA art fair and one at Sydney's Boutwell Draper Gallery, which coincided with the opening of the Archibald. He was a finalist in last year's Metro 5 Art Award, EMSC Award and Duke Gold Coast Art Prize.

K-6: Visual Arts and links to key learning areas

Visual Arts: How does this portrait gain your attention? What is Brandon Walters looking at? Is the shaft of light used as a symbol? If so, what do you think it might symbolise? **Assess** the mood of the portrait. **Discuss** the impact the close-up focus and cropping have on the image.

In pairs, use a digital camera to take a variety of posed portrait shots. **Download** and **manipulate** the most successful shots and experiment with cropping, and altering the contrast and colours.

Discuss how a contemporary artist working with traditional mediums such as oil paint can use technology as a tool.

Science and Technology: Cinematographers use various shots to create specific effects and moods. Investigate the different types of shots available and experiment with a digital or video camera to create a series of sample film stills or video footage.

HSIE: With Walters's role in Baz Luhrmann's film *Australia*, many people here and overseas will associate this portrait with this country. **Brainstorm** other images that could be used to represent our nation. **Make** your own 'portrait' of Australia.

English: **Examine** the way the light falls on Walters's face. Is he hiding? Is he peeking out from somewhere? Who might he be watching? **Write** a narrative from his point of view.

7-12: Issues for discussion

What is your initial reaction to this work? How is this painting different to others in the exhibition? Do you think the reaction of an Australian audience to this portrait would be different to that of an international audience? Explore the reasons why or why not.

Observe the attention to detail and surface of the painting. Describe the types of brushstrokes. Do you think Fantauzzo used photography and computer technology to devise the composition?

Fantauzzo created the portrait of Walters using a traditional landscape (horizontal) format. Why do you think he selected this format? What impact does it have on your interpretation of the portrait? Create a series of portraits in different shapes such as circles, triangles and squares. Compare the portraits and discuss if the format alters the portraits' meaning.

What does this work have in common with a film poster or advertisement?

How does this image challenge the selection criteria for the Archibald Prize? Why do you think this work was selected to be a finalist? Look up the conditions of entry for the prize and find the text that enables this painting to be selected as a finalist. Investigate the role of the Board of Trustees as specified by the bequest of JF Archibald.

Focus works



18. Paul Jackson *Flacco's chariot*

Oil on linen

Paul Jackson

Flacco's chariot

Oil on linen

Flacco is the comic creation of stage and film actor Paul Livingston, known and loved for his appearances on television shows including *Good News Week*, *The Big Gig*, *Daas Kapital* and the *Flacco and the Sandman* TV specials.

Paul Jackson first came across Flacco when he saw him performing at Belvoir St Theatre in the mid 1990s. Jackson believes that the character 'walks the knife-edge of success and failure every time he steps on stage with his risqué punning and cut-and-thrust dialogue, not easily embraced by the timid. Ironically, I found Paul himself to be a self-confessed timid man, so his suit may represent a suit of armour or perhaps a strait jacket.'

So what of Flacco's 'chariot'? 'Do we not all long to be transported by something in our lives that will carry a special significance and leave us with indelible fond memories?' asks Jackson. 'Do we not carry within our "chariot" the baggage that we think we need for the journey?'

Born in Auckland in 1950, Jackson now lives in Sydney. He exhibits regularly in New Zealand and Australia in both solo and group exhibitions and is represented in many public and private collections around the world. This is his sixth time in the Archibald Prize. In 2006, he won the Archibald People's Choice Award with a portrait of actor Garry McDonald battling depression.

K-6: Visual Arts and links with key learning areas

Visual Arts: Locate the three images of Flacco in this painting. List other things you can see. Is Flacco in character? Does the chair look comfortable? What is the significance of the chair? Look closely at the illustrations on the chair. How does humour add another level to this work?

Examine the painting in terms of the elements of art: line, texture, colour, shape, form etc.

Drama: Imagine Flacco stepped out of the canvas. Act out what you think he might do to make an audience laugh. Invent your own comic character and develop an act. Hold a performance in class.

English: Look at the animals on Flacco's chair. Why is the mouse's tongue poking out? Create a speech bubble for each of the animals. Write a story to go with this portrait.

Science: Look at the shadow of Flacco's hand. What animal has it made? Create a shadow theatre in class. Explore the effects of different opaque and transparent materials. Make different shadow puppets and perform a play.

Maths: Count how many animals are in the painting. Count how many legs there are altogether. Brainstorm what animals have different numbers of legs (eg those with four legs, six legs, eight legs).

7-12: issues for discussion

Survey this painting. Identify the things you can see. Discuss the use of humour and irony. Explore how the artist has sort to convey ideas through the arrangement of signs and symbols.

Paul Jackson suggests that Flacco's 'suit may represent a suit of armour or perhaps a strait jacket'. Imagine this portrait was of Paul Livingston rather than the comic character Flacco. Do you think the pose would have been different? Would the irony of the composition be as successful? Debate in class.

What do you admire about this work? Imagine how the artist and subject negotiated this portrait. If you were the artist, how would you have asked Flacco to pose? What style would you have selected to paint in?

Focus works



36. Garry Shead & Adrienne Levenson *Soffritto di Lucio*

oil on linen

Garry Shead & Adrienne Levenson

Soffritto di Lucio

oil on linen

Lucio Galletto is the owner of Lucio's Italian Restaurant in Sydney's Paddington where he has served sophisticated Italian food for over 25 years. His patrons include artists, whose work lines the walls – a tradition he brought with him to Australia in 1977.

In his portrait, Gary Shead sets Galletto against the village of Ameglia, the area in Italy in which he grew up. 'He just makes you feel so welcome,' says Shead. 'He treats everyone like family and makes them feel special.'

Shead started the portrait a year ago then put it aside until shortly before the Archibald deadline. 'It went exceptionally well until I got to the face again,' he says. 'I had Lucio over a few times but I found him hard to capture. Adrienne started helping – and suddenly there he was.'

Adrienne Levenson studied at the National Art School. Personal assistant to composer Peter Sculthorpe since 1974, her portrait of him was hung in the 2000 Salon des Refuses. Shead also studied at the National Art School. A noted painter, printmaker and former filmmaker, he has had over 50 solo exhibitions and been included in more than 70 group shows. He won the 1993 Archibald Prize with a portrait of publisher Tom Thompson and the 2004 Dobell Drawing Prize. This is his 14th time in the Archibald..

K-6: Visual Arts and links to key learning areas

Visual Arts: Imagine you are Lucio Galletto in this dreamlike environment. What can you smell, taste, touch and hear? List what you can see in the foreground, middle ground and background. What type of person do you think Galletto is? Can you find clues the artists have given us?

Observe the way Garry Shead has overlapped sketchy, stylised images and compare this to the technique used on the face by Adrienne Levenson. **Discuss** the different styles used by the two artists.

English: This portrait is a collage of images and references to Galletto's life. **Compile** a list of words to describe this work. **Research** Galletto's life and **write** a narrative to accompany this portrait utilising the words on your list.

HSIE: Locate Ameglia on a map of Italy. **Identify** the region and **research** its particular cultural traditions. How has Shead made reference to Galletto's cultural heritage?

Find out what *soffritto di Lucio* means. **Research** Italian regional cooking. **Investigate** how regional dishes evolved. **Prepare** a lunch inspired by recipes from your research or from one of Galletto's own cookbooks. **Design** an invitation to the lunch.

Issues for discussion

The composition of this portrait is compact. Describe the mood this work is projecting. Identify elements that make reference to other well-known artworks. Why might Shead have thought this approach appropriate for a portrait of Galletto?

Shead says of Galletto: 'He treats everyone like family and makes them feel special'. How has Shead created a portrait that communicates the life, passion and past of his subject? Compare this painting to others in the exhibition. What makes it unique?

Shead said that he found Galletto 'hard to capture. Adrienne started helping – and suddenly there he was.' Read the wall label. Debate whether this was a collaborative project or a rescue effort, and whether the painting styles of the two artists complement each other or clash in style.

Archibald Prize 09: finalists

1	Anthony Bennett	self-portrait in the bathroom discussing beauty, bukowski and brett whiteley with my ex, now a stripper, who likes to dress as wonder woman
2	Ann Cape	Lucy & friend
3	Adam Chang	Spirit of an ancient culture
4	Mike Chavez	Portrait of a bad muthaf***a
5	Jun Chen	Ray Hughes and five other moods
6	Zhansui Kordelya Chi	Good morning, this is Neil Mitchell
7	Yvette Coppersmith	John Safran
8	Sam Cranstoun	Gyton
9	Leeanne Crisp	Considering Persephone. Portrait of Gay Bilson
10	Ngaire Devenport	Ken Done
11	Vincent Fantauzzo	Brandon
12	Hong Fu	Dame Elisabeth Murdoch
13	David Griggs	Zoloft nation (self-portrait)
14	Peter Hanley	Remembering Titian
15	Robert Hannaford	Self-portrait
16	Nicholas Harding	Margaret Whitlam
17	Cherry Hood	David Helfgott
18	Paul Jackson	Flacco's chariot
19	Jasper Knight	Jasper Knight
20	Richard Larter	Portrait of Nell
21	Sam Leach	Marcia Langton
22	Mathew Lynn	Heiress
23	Abbey McCulloch	Nell
24	Angus McDonald	Beyond
25	Alexander McKenzie	Richard Clapton
26	Guy Maestri	Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingu
27	Nick Mourtzakis	A portrait of Alex Wodak
28	Richard Onn	Coupe SX010F
29	David Paulson & Michael Nelson Jagamara	Michael Nelson Jagamara & singing rain story
30	James Powditch	Peter Powditch is a dead man smoking
31	Ben Quilty	Jimmy Barnes – there but for the grace of God no 2
32	Megan Roodenrys	Waiting for the day
33	Paul Ryan	Mountain of Tom
34	Jenny Sages	Heidi & Sarah-Jane 'parallel lives'
35	Megan Seres	The rest is silence (Brendan Cowell as Hamlet)
36	Garry Shead & Adrienne Levenson	Soffritto di Lucio
37	Mark Thompson	Greta Scacchi as Queen Elizabeth in <i>Mary Stuart</i>
38	Jan Williamson	Nancy Kunoth Petyarr
39	Michael Zavros	Ars longa, vita brevis