

Artistic Principles

- ❑ Stimulus and motivation
- ❑ Concept and intent
- ❑ Creative and contextual awareness
- ❑ Visual Language and Craftsmanship
- ❑ Manifestation of intent
- ❑ Curation and presentation

Introduction

Art can be many things: it is ephemeral and magical, almost impossible to pin down; it is the creative force that pulses through the artist, ultimately indefinable. The creation of artwork, therefore requires constant questioning, exploration, commitment and courage.

Stimulus and motivation

An artist's stimulus comes from a desire to respond to what resonates with them or has meaning to them as an individual, drawn from their experiences, passions and interests. That stimulus sparks an idea which motivates them to start the creative process. Being true to this core motivation can create a unique artistic vision, and is the starting point for developing the concept and intent for their art work.

Intention and concept

The artist's intention is what they want to express, create or communicate through their work. Developing the concept is the way in which they refine their response to the original stimulus through examination, exploration and enquiry. This will begin to determine the best means of expressing their intention and communicating with the viewer. In order fully to develop a concept, this process needs to include rigorous, imaginative, lateral thinking and ingenuity, considering the idea as widely as possible. An effective concept will result in an artwork that opens new perspectives, experiences and understanding for the viewer.

Creative and contextual awareness

The artist practices within a personal, artistic, social, cultural and environmental context. It is essential for them to be aware of the context in which they are working. It is beneficial for an artist to understand their personal creative process and the way in which they best create. The artist should be cognisant of the surrounding artistic discourses (both contemporary and historic). They need also to be mindful of the wider context in which they are working - cultural, social, political and

environmental. In developing their art, they need to determine how they wish to respond to or engage with the contexts within which they practice. They need to understand the relevant commercial markets for their work. They need to consider their responsibility to themselves, their peer group and artistic community, the art world and to wider society*.

Visual Language and Craftsmanship

For an artist to develop their own artistic language, they need to understand the application, impact and relevance of their aesthetic decisions. Harmony, discord, measure, balance, volume, contrast, line, colour, composition and craftsmanship form part of the artist's language, through which they develop their own vocabulary to express their meaning. Craftsmanship encompasses skill in whatever media, both traditional and contemporary. Through the continuous exploration and absorption of a wide range of skills, materials and techniques, the artist develops and constantly refines their artistic language.

Manifestation of intent

This is the point at which the work manifests itself. The artist manifests their intention for the artwork through the choices they make about their formal language, including media, material, technique and scale. The evaluation of these choices and their relationship to the artist's initial intent, even when these elements have been used intuitively, is essential for the effective expression of the creative idea. The viewer may also better understand and connect with the artist's concept when there is a considered relationship between form and intention.

Curation / Presentation

The presentation of an artwork in an exhibition, public or other context is integral to the effectiveness of the piece. The presentation includes the space, the lighting, the structural support system, the layout of the work and the movement of people through the space, the statement and the label system. It also refers to any verbal presentation by the artist about the work; how concise, considered and knowledgeable they are about the context in which they are working and their intentions for the work. All these aspects need to be carefully considered if the artwork is to fulfil its potential. If an artist wishes for their artwork to be seen, it is necessary for them to gain the relevant professional skills to enable this to happen. The presentation of the work should reflect and support the artist's purpose as well as underpinning the intended experience of the artwork by the viewer.

Summary

Every artist should be free to develop and express their vision in whatever language, style or medium best expresses their intentions. But whatever the chosen medium, it requires the same amount of skill and consideration in its formal and conceptual aspects; so a portrait should be as conceptually considered as an installation and an installation as carefully crafted as a portrait. The actual process of creating is a continual balance between thought and intuition, between the editorial, decision making process and the spontaneous flow of creativity. Considered marks, observed unintended accidents and the subconscious knowledge that flows into the work, all enrich the final manifestation.

Every artist, their motivations and experiences of life, is different. If the artist's creative process is enabled to flow both naturally and skillfully from this individual source, it will result in a unique artistic vision and original artwork.

An artwork born of all its essential components - a combination of its original stimulus, the application of the artist's motivation and skill, and thoughtful presentation - will transcend these elements. Successfully realised, the work can have an intangible effect on the viewer and open up the potential for new considerations, sublime experiences or unasked questions for its audience.

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**At the Academy, part of the context for the students' artistic creation is the wider community of the Academy. The student has a responsibility to this wider community and their fulfilment of this responsibility will impact on the quality of the work they produce. This will include their attendance, their response to other students and their contribution to the life of the Academy.*
