Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission

LEAVING CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION, 2017

ART

Imaginative Composition and Still Life

Ordinary Level

100 marks are assigned to this paper, i.e. 25% of the overall marks for Art

Tuesday, 2 May – Friday, 12 May **Morning, 9.30 – 12.00**

This paper should be handed to candidates on **Monday, 3 April**

Instructions

You may work in colour, monochrome, mixed media, collage or any other suitable medium. However, the use of oil paints or perishable organic material is not allowed. You are not allowed to bring aids such as stencils, templates, traced images, preparatory artwork or photographic images into the examination.

Write your Examination Number clearly in the space provided on your A2 sheet.
Write the title 'Imaginative Composition' or 'Still Life' immediately below your Examination Number.

If you wish to work on a coloured sheet, **the superintendent must sign this sheet before the examination commences** confirming that it is blank. Maximum size of sheet: A2

Choose one of the following:

1. Make an **Imaginative Composition** inspired by **one** of the descriptive passages: A, B, C, D or E. Your starting point and the rationale for your Imaginative Composition should be stated on the reverse side of the sheet indicating their relevance to the descriptive passage you have chosen.

2. Make a **Still Life** work based on a group of objects suggested by, or described in **one** of the descriptive passages: A, B, C, D or E. You are required to bring relevant objects to the examination centre for the purpose of setting up **your own individual** Still Life composition. **This must be done in time for the commencement of the examination**. Your starting point and the rationale for your Still Life should be stated on the reverse side of the sheet indicating their relevance to the descriptive passage you have chosen.

3. Make an **Abstract Composition** inspired by and developed from **one** of the descriptive passages: A, B, C, D or E. Your starting point and the rationale for your Abstract Composition should be stated on the reverse side of the sheet, indicating their relevance to the descriptive passage you have chosen. State clearly whether your Abstract Composition is following **1** above – Imaginative Composition, or **2** above – Still Life.

Descriptive Passages

Passage A

Several miles from the sea in the west of Ireland, outside a market town, a path cuts into the overgrowth and up the hillside. I almost miss it. There is no street sign, no marking of any kind. High hedges bound the single lane – brambles brush both sides of the car as I drive past. Occasionally there's a break in the wild growth, and green fields speckled with brown and white cows come into view.

We hike past mountain lakes and beneath recently sheared sheep clinging to ledges above us. We pass outcrops with names like Hag's Tooth Ridge and avoid the Devil's Ladder in favour of the scramble up Brother O'Shea's Gully (named after the monk who lost his life sliding down its steep pitch). The bright sky grows suddenly dark. Rain begins to pelt down, then stops just as quickly, and the sky is clear again.

Near the peak, jagged slabs of sandstone shoot up out of the ground like primitive grave markers. A single raven circles above, then rides a thermal west, over the Black Valley, the last place in Ireland to get electricity and phone service, due to its remoteness, in 1978.

The sign outside Dick Mack's pub reads "Pub and Haberdashery". Inside, the wall to the left holds shelves of scattered rubber boots and shoes; a few tweed caps hang from hooks. To the right, an old wooden bar lines the wall. Bartenders grab and pour bottles with lightning speed to service the throng. Two semiprivate drinking areas known as snugs, one beside the door, another at the far end of the bar, resemble nothing so much as confessionals. A few Tiffany-style lamps hang from above. Conversation, pitched over the din, is easy, considering the closest human is a few inches away.

The vista is surprisingly vast and looks out toward the Atlantic Ocean – America beyond. The road tracks the hills for so long without a house in sight that I become convinced I've come the wrong way. But with no way to turn the car, I drive on.

Then ahead, on my left, a small yellow cottage, with two square windows set deep in thick walls. Standing on the three-step concrete stoop, and spilling down into the drive, are two dozen people – old women, strapping men, young kids. I've never seen any of them before. This is my family.

Adapted from *Journeys Home* by Andrew McCarthy, National Geographic Books, 2015.

Passage B

The hens cluck contentedly and peck at the ground in their enclosure. Nothing unusual there, apart from one thing. Their hen house is on the roof of a four-storey building in the city centre. They live on the Urban Farm, set up to encourage people to consider growing their own food in small spaces.

Courgettes, runner beans, spring onions and turnips are growing in raised beds made from scaffold boards while berries and cherries are flourishing in recycled containers. Paddy O'Kearney is collecting organic waste from local restaurants for composting and this will take off in earnest when a cafe planned for downstairs opens.

Inside the building, Mr Douglas is experimenting with aquaponics, a system whereby fish waste is used as fertiliser for the plants and vegetables above the tank and offcuts of plants are fed to the fish. Vegetables being grown include lemon cucumber, black cherry tomatoes and pineapple sage. He is also hoping to start growing oyster mushrooms from coffee waste and is seeking funds from Arthur Guinness Projects to support this.

More controversially, he has plans for an insect farm. "Insects are high in protein but the big problem is people's attitudes. There are parts of the world where insects are a major factor in the diet of indigenous people," he says. He plans to start with crickets and hopes to collaborate with a burger bar which would be willing to serve cricket burgers. "We want people to start thinking about these things. Spain has a big insect farm and France is starting up a huge insect farm."

The Urban Farm is not working alone in encouraging people to grow their own food. The Grow it Yourself (GIY) movement now has some 50,000 members. Today there are more than 800 community food groups and projects involved in the GIY movement. Mr Kelly is launching the group in Britain this weekend and aims to create a network of more than one million "GIYers" in 20 countries in the next five years.

He said there were several reasons why more people were now growing their own food. "We have almost a perfect storm where you have people worried about where their food comes from, the general healthy eating trend, and worries about the security and sustainability of the food chain," he said. GIY runs its "Sow and Grow" programme in schools and he believes he will have 100,000 children growing their own vegetables in schools.

"On the face of it, it's a small thing to get a child sowing a seed in a little planting cup. But to help them get an understanding of how food is produced, it's the whole ball game," he said.

Adapted from *Dublin rooftop Urban Farm* by Alison Healy, The Irish Times, July, 2013.

Passage C

Abigail stepped inside and closed the heavy front door behind her. She turned the upper lock and slid the thick brass chain across. Making her way slowly down the hall, she switched on the lamp on the long oak table. A pale blue bowl held some bunches of keys, pens, a comb, lipstick and a few lines of raffle tickets.

Beside it, framed photographs of the three girls at various stages in school uniform stood alongside a larger silver frame that held the black and white image of Rosemary and Robert on their wedding day. Beside them Florence in her first communion dress and veil. God she looked so like her mother.

In the bathroom she picked out some toiletries then headed across the landing into her sister's room. It felt strange being in here alone. The bed was neatly made and a half-drunk glass of water sat on the bedside table next to a brightly coloured seed catalogue. She took the dressing gown off the back door and then went over to the chest of drawers. On one side were plain grey blankets and on the other a stack of photo albums.

Without picking it up she opened the album on top of the pile. There was a black and white photograph she never remembered seeing before. It was her mother and father standing on a bridge, their arms linked against the breeze that was whipping her mother's coat out to one side. She turned the page.

Her father as a young man on a tractor. Another page. Her parents and another couple sitting on a blanket in some sand dunes. Her father had taken off his shoes and socks and all four of them seemed to be finding it hilarious. It was their life before the three girls came along. After one final long stare, she shut the album and thought that she'd go downstairs.

Bríd had made some cheese and pickle sandwiches and put them on a plate in the middle of the table. Two empty mugs sat opposite each other. The kettle was boiled but she was waiting for Anthony before she made the tea. She darted around the kitchen like a goldfish in a bowl, wiping a mark on the counter top, tearing up an old envelope, folding a tea towel. Finally she heard a car drive into the yard. She took deep breaths.

Adapted from *Holding* by Graham Norton, Hodder and Stoughton, 2016.

Passage D

Beyond the fertile land, though I could hardly have noticed it even from my vantage point high against my father's shoulder, lay the wetlands known as the Callows. The Callows consisted of a number of large, loosely fenced fields crisscrossed by small rivers and divided among a handful of farms, including that of my parents.

The rivers, haphazardly linking into each other and some of them meandering as if lost, would overspill their banks usually in autumn and winter, flooding the Callows and propagating an environment where wading birds and rare water-loving plants thrived.

The Callows formed a little wilderness which, within a short few years, would become my own personal outback, the place where I could lose myself and run free of the inhibitions I often felt while around other people. There I would learn about nature at first hand and feel consoled in the learning. And there, of course, I would shirk the jobs set for me by my parents, especially those that waited in my father's carpentry shop, the very place he was carrying me toward now.

The workshop, which he called "the shed," had a pale red or purple barn-door entrance and was full of timber. First we got the smells – of must and sawdust – that would still cause my nose to crinkle even after I became used to them.

Opposite the workshop door the band saw stood, tall almost as the workshop itself. Its blade ran between two spoked wheels, one mounted above the other on a thick black arm that I would eventually come to imagine as the twisting body of a python. When I reached to trace my finger along the dust of the stout metal table, my father pulled me away. "Don't attempt to go near that, ever," he warned.

I held my hands into my stomach but bit by bit, over several visits, he acquainted me with stakes and sheep troughs, as well as handles for spades and forks and rakes and scythes that jutted from slatted grids stacked toward the rafters. If I craned my neck back, I could follow the electric cables that snaked past the mud nests made by the swallows before coiling up…

Adapted from *The Hurley-Maker's Son* by Patrick Deeley, Doubleday Ireland, 2016.

Passage E

If you are thinking about getting a tattoo, or adding another one to the half-dozen or so you already have, the options of what are available may have multiplied since the last time you visited your tattoo parlour.

The Swiss artist H.R. Giger is known mostly for his creation of the nightmare-inducing character in “Alien”, but he is also the godfather of three-dimensional tattoos. His work spawned a style called biomechanical tattoos, which have an allure that has recently extended beyond sci-fi fans.

Clients are bringing in photos from “Bodies: The Exhibition”, a museum show dedicated to showcasing the human body. “I just did a cutaway of real muscular imagery on somebody’s shoulder,” Mr. Mahoney said. Other versions include the illusion of ripped skin and more-approachable styles, such as lifelike animals or objects that appear to be in motion.

Tattooing has long been regarded by many as an art form, but rarely do ink lovers get to make as literal a parallel as with watercolour tattooing. The style is derived from a free-form method of tattooing, more about expression, movement and color choice rather than just the power of imagery. Joey Hamilton recently painted a watercolor butterfly on a client’s ribs.

“You are trying to make them look like there are little paint runs or splotches of colour,” he said. Watercolour tattoos have very little detailing to emulate the imprecise, flowing aesthetic of a painting. But a drawback is their inability to age as well as traditional tattoos. The colour is kind of applied as a wash, so less pigment means less saturation on the skin.

Designed to look like bracelets, necklaces and beach bling, Flash Tattoos are the summer’s noncommittal style upgrade. Flash Tattoos are a hit among the surfer set and those with a bohemian flair. With summer music festival season, the jewellery-inspired tattoos are already a crowd favourite.

Adapted from *Fresh Ink for the Human Canvas* by Ana J. Calderone, New York Times, July, 2014.

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