

# Visual Diaries or Workbooks

## Visual Diary or Workbook

This checklist was prepared by Max Darby in February 2009

This file relates directly to the file on Examples of Student Artworks which can be found in the Main Side Menu. Many examples can be found there.

The following list of ideas contains some of the things that could be addressed or included in a Visual Diary, Workbook or Journal. It is not an exhaustive list. In fact, what you put onto your diary, workbook, or journal (your school will determine which title you use) and how you present it can be varied enormously. Not all of the things listed below will need to be addressed each time you undertake an art task and you will need to decide which to use and which to adapt or change. If all were addressed you would have little time to actually make anything. Your teacher will guide the extent to which each might be addressed.

For convenience, the term **Workbook** will be used to cover each of the titles above. Some of the ideas seem to be of obvious value to your work and others might be included if you or your teacher consider them relevant to your course. Of course there are other things of personal value that you might also include.

The name that you decide on is important in that it should reflect what can be found inside its pages and the things that need to be included by the course you are taking. For example, the expectations of a 'diary approach' might be different to those of a 'workbook approach'. It would be interesting to write a short description of what your book will contain on the opening page.

It is important to understand that many artists kept or keep their own 'workbooks' and it would be valuable and interesting to try to find some examples. Leonardo Da Vinci is, perhaps, the best known of these artists and his journals are amazing in their quality and diversity.

Some senior school art courses actually require such working documents to be kept and presented when final assessments are made. Almost all creditable tertiary art institutions wish to view these documents when interviewing students.

## List of things to address in your Workbook.

### 1. Ideas

- Brainstorming of initial ideas (a quick listing of any idea that comes into your head – usually unrelated)
- Concept mapping of related ideas (usually on a theme or topic)
- Interesting one-off ideas about potential artworks
- Explorations and descriptions of what ideas are about and how they were formed
- Influences on ideas (e.g. things seen or experienced, artists, artworks, current events of impact etc)
- Relationships to your own earlier works or planned

future works

- Explanations of how ideas relate to you personally or to other people
- Explanations of values, beliefs, opinions that are to be addressed in the ideas
- Explanations of ideas that have been completed in your artworks and how they related to what you set out to achieve
- Photographs of your own and from magazines etc. that provide ideas you might like to explore sometime
- Notes about ideas you have
- Dates when work must be completed
- Other.

## **2. Materials Used**

- List and explanation of materials used or to be used in an artwork
- Explanation of particular art qualities or effects achieved using the materials
- Experiments or trials using materials – these should be annotated or explained
- Explanations of art qualities or effects achieved using different materials
- Comparison of differences in the art qualities or effects achieved using different materials should that be appropriate
- Other.

## **3. Equipment or Tools Used**

- List of tools and equipment used or to be used in an artwork
- Experiments and trials using tools and equipment to be used – these should be explained
- Explanation of art qualities or effects achieved using the tools and equipment
- Comparison of the art qualities or effects achieved using the tools and equipment

-Other.

## **4. Skills Used**

- List of skills and techniques you already have that will be used – or that were used
- List of new skills and techniques to be learned that will be used – or that were used
- Explanation of the skills and techniques used or learned and the qualities or effects able to be achieved
- Experiments or trials using the skills and techniques if they were new
- Explanations of the experience of learning new skills and techniques, especially any difficulties faced
- Other.

## **5. Additional Experiments and Trials**

These might, for example, include annotated experiments and trials using different design principles and elements such as

- Color combinations
- Textural effects
- Uses of lines and tones
- Shapes, proportions and sizes
- Composition and Design options
- Space, depth and overlapping
- Working models of how some of these variations might look in your own work
- Other.

## **6. Design and composition alternatives**

- Variations in placement of figures, objects, colours etc within an artwork you are planning
- Comparisons of the different design and compositions alternatives
- Explanations of the advantages and disadvantages of the various design and composition alternatives
- Working sketches, drawings, experiments to show the

- differences in approach
- Other.

## **7. Relationships between Studio and Research**

- Explanations of the influences that resulted from research or learning into artists and artworks, movements, styles, cultures and periods of time
- Exploration of ideas, the use of techniques and working processes of artists studied in class
- Research into art and culture that was inspired, directed or influenced by things that happened in the studio
- Similarities and differences between Research and Studio tasks and their outcomes
- Other.

## **8. Description of working processes**

- Description of the preferred way of working and addressing the idea, for example the etching process, or the use of Adobe Photoshop
- Explanation of the expected, or already obtained, art qualities or effects achieved by using the preferred way of working
- Examples of the use of the preferred working process, for example, trials and experiments, working models, drafts etc
- Explanation of the perceived advantages of using the preferred way of working
- An outline of the special requirements of working, for example, the need for a chemical extraction system for etching metals using acids, etc
- Step by step explanation of procedures to be used when working with a new and complex way of working
- Working drawings or plans
- Other.

## **9. Safety and Health issues**

- Special arrangements that need to be made to work in some studio forms
- Risks and dangers of materials, tools and equipment to be used
- Safety and first aid support available
- Explanation of supervision responsibility of the teacher and/or others
- Possible impact on other students
- Special cleaning requirements
- Other.

## **10. Layout and Design of Workbook**

- Special attention to the need to layout and design the pages to ensure ease of access to information
- Provision of an appealing and attractive documents that reflects the approach of a serious art student
- Balance between visual and written documentation
- Other.

## **11. Research into Art and Artists**

- Written records of investigations into artists, artworks, art movements, cultures etc.
- Comparisons between artist, artworks, movements, culture etc.
- Analyses of the use of skills and techniques by artists, past and present
- Analyses of artists' expression of ideas
- Analyses of artists' meanings, messages, opinions etc.
- Analyses of the artists' use of design and composition
- Drafts and completed essays
- Written tasks
- Judgments about the value and/or quality of selected artworks
- Opinions of Art Historians, Critics, Curators and others
- Illustrations and examples of artworks

-Other.

## **12. Documentation of Personal Art Experiences**

- Descriptions of Art Exhibitions attended
- Location, dates and times of Art Exhibitions attended
- Analyses of the value of the Art Exhibitions artistically
- Copies of Art Exhibition brochures or handouts
- Advertising for Art Exhibitions or events
- Copies of reviews of Art Exhibitions attended by Art Critics
- Personal points of interest from the Art Exhibition
- Visits to artists' studios
- Other.

## **13. Interviews with People in the art Industry**

- Personal interviews with artists
- Records of Interviews with artist made by other people
- Personal interviews with Art Historians
- Personal interviews with Art Critics
- Other.

## **14. Newspaper and Magazine Articles**

- About Artists
- Artworks
- Cultures
- Art Movements
- Exhibitions
- Other.

## **15. Lists of books, DVD's Videos about Art and Artists**

- Full documentation and acknowledgment is required for academic honesty

## **16. A Record of Development of Artworks**

- Photographic or sketched record of your own artworks being made**
- Photographs of you at work**
- Development stages shown progressively and explained or annotated**
- Photographs of complete artworks**
- A personal review and evaluation of each completed artwork or task**
- Written comments by your teacher**
- Suggestions, if appropriate for future action or future artworks**
- Other.**