

Edexcel A2 Art and Design Theme 2013 Resource Pack

'Inside, Outside, In-between'

The Saatchi Gallery's current exhibition *Gaiety is the Most Outstanding Feature of the Soviet Union*, addresses the themes of 'Inside, Outside and In-between' in much of its work. Being **inside, outside or in-between** can portray itself in many different ways, including some of the following:

A place, idea, interiors, exteriors, indoors, outdoors, recesses, containment, exclusive, beyond, the middle, amongst, separation, interval, confinement, freedom, limbo, confusion, space.

When collecting research and contextual influences:

- Consider **how** the artist has made the work.
- Look at **what materials** have they used.
- **Why** do you think they used these materials?
- Do you think the medium effectively portrays the **concept/ theme** of the work?
- Do you think there is **more than one** theme in the work?
- Do you see **inspiration/ influences** from other artists, art movements or events in the work?

It is usually the case that Artists and Designers use materials specific to the theme of their work, so they can illustrate a specific **meaning, mood** or **story**. They may also consider **composition, scale, colour, text** and **style**. They will develop their ideas through research (both contextual and practice based), refine them through testing and experimentation, reflect and record their work in writing and practical outcomes and present their work to appropriately illustrate the theme running through it.

The following artists particularly illustrate the themes of **'Inside, Outside, In-between'** within their work:

Sergei Vasiliev Gallery 1 (Inside and Outside)

A place, idea, amongst, separation, confinement, freedom.



Vasiliev worked for several years as a prison warden in Russia. During this time, Vasiliev took a number of photographs of the prisoners who were confined. Together with around 3000 illustrations drawn by fellow warden Danzig Baldaev, Vasiliev's photographs act as a narrative documentation of coded messages against the 'regime' and crimes committed by the prisoners in the pictures. Vasiliev's use of photography, in comparison with Baldaev's solitary illustrations of the tattoos, enhances and underpins the story behind the inscriptions, as the viewer is forced to engage with the subjects pictured. Photography as a medium offers a stronger sense of reality, making the aesthetics and concept of the work more meaningful and indeed forceful. The use of black and white also heightens the sense of tension in the work, as the lighter and darker contrasting shades become exaggerated. It also emphasizes a sense of the traditional and the past and allows the image to remain pure. This specific piece for example is extremely busy. Black and white heightens the various body illustrations, where colour would saturate and brighten the image, causing a conflict with the nature and mood of the piece- especially when considering this prisoner's bold and forceful stance.

As each tattoo, which were applied to the prisoners by themselves or other inmates whilst inside, have a specific meaning, it is important that the medium shows them clearly. This is important both for the visual impact of work and the narrative, which runs throughout it. In a sense, the tattoos on the outside of the body, show the thoughts inside the prisoners minds. Seeing the prisoners also encourages the narrative to flow, as the viewer can relate the meanings behind the tattoos to the person, making the tattoos gritty and real. This can range from seeing a tattoo of a tiger, which means the prisoner is aggressive, or a sailing ship on the forearm,

meaning they are longing for freedom, to a rose on the shoulder, meaning the prisoner turned 18 whilst in prison. These opposite meanings evoke opposite emotions of fear and sorrow in the viewer, again supporting the forceful mood of the work.

Vikenti Nilin Gallery 4 (Inside, Outside)

A place, interiors, exteriors, indoors, outdoors, recesses, containment, space, freedom.



Vikenti Nilin's 'Neighbours' series (1993-present), represents different people, who are all in the same situation. The uniformity of the scale, format and use of photography, together with the commonplace Soviet tower block, allows the work to be viewed as a series. Viewing the work as a series is important, as it binds the people in the pictures together, making the work more than a set of snap shots. Indeed the work becomes a commentary upon a section of society, their life and their situation.

The use of black and white helps heighten the feeling of depression in the work, with its plain tonal range. Black and white also offers a sense of the 'real', as it is reminiscent of journalistic photography in newspapers. Colour would have brightened the images, making them seem less dramatic.

However look a little closer and you will notice that while the people are perched on the edge of high ledges, staring into the abyss, they do not seem in the least bit worried. In fact they look rather bored. This provides an interesting contradiction to the dangerous appearance built up in the images, which has been achieved through the use of sharp angles and an extreme perspective. One begins to question whether the people in the photographs are inside or outside, as the images capture elements of space, interiors, exteriors, recesses, inside and outside.

Anna Parkina Gallery 2 (In-Between)



Recesses, the middle, amongst, idea, space.

Anna Parkina's work includes a variety of media, ranging from collage to sculpture to performance. Her collages and sculptures, which are reminiscent of Constructivist and Soviet Propaganda Art (look up Rodchenko), are portholes from which to consider contemporary Russian culture and society.

Born and raised in the Soviet Union, Parkina moved to Paris and California to study before returning to post-Soviet Moscow. Like her own physical journey from East to West and back again, her collages illustrate the journey she has undertaken. They combine elements of the East (Constructivism) and West (images of popular characters and English text), to create a body of work, which show the journey and evolution of her as an artist, as well as her home country.

The layering of the collage and cut-outs makes the viewer feel like they are moving through a passage or a puzzle, travelling through positive and negative spaces. The similar tonal range of colour used

throughout the series, allow the materials to fuse and become a collection of pieces, rather than separate individual pieces.

