



# CYANOTYPE

## *Traces*

LEVEL 2 PHOTOGRAPHY  
2025

NAME

KAITIAKI

# Project Brief

Photography is often about capturing what we see, but it can also reveal what is left behind—the traces of people, places, and moments that shape who we are. In this project, we will use the cyanotype process as both a literal and metaphorical way to explore personal identity, memory, and the marks we leave on the world.

Our theme for this assessment is *Traces*. A cyanotype leaves a physical trace of the objects placed on its surface, much like our lives are shaped by the traces of our experiences, relationships, and heritage. Consider the different ways “traces” can be interpreted:

**Personal Traces** – What are the objects, places, or symbols that represent who you are?

**Cultural & Ancestral Traces** – What influences from your family, ancestry, or cultural background have left an imprint on you?

**Emotional & Psychological Traces** – What memories, dreams, or feelings linger in your mind?

**Physical Traces** – Consider using body parts (hands, hair, footprints), clothing, jewellery, or personal artifacts to represent the idea of presence and absence.

You will create six prints throughout the project, with the last print being a final, resolved work.

Intention matters - be sure to clearly communicate your intentions in your planning and evaluate yourself in your reflections. At the end of the assessment, you will write an artist statement that will support your final print.

## Your Kaiako

This year, there are two kaiako running Level 2 Photography. We are both friendly, passionate educators who are here to help. If you are struggling for any reason, please communicate with us as soon as possible - it makes helping you much easier!

Miss Erin Sainsbury  
erin.sainsbury@manurewa.school.nz



Miss Rayna Widger  
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# Assessment Details

## EXPECTATIONS & TIME

This assessment activity requires you to explore the concept of traces in a one-off cyanotype print. Cyanotype photography is one of the oldest photographic techniques and does not require a camera. It involves laying an object on chemical-coated paper before exposing it to UV light and washing it with water to create white and Prussian blue images.

You will be assessed on your ability to demonstrate control of skills appropriate to the conventions of cyanotype photography and how well your cyanotype explores the theme of traces.

You will need to submit all of your research, planning, and development works alongside the final cyanotype.

The Formative Assessment is due in **Week Five**. The Summative Assessment is due in **Week Seven**. You will have **four and a half** weeks of class and home time to complete this activity.

Resubmission (resub) is only available to students who received a Not Achieved for their summative grade **and** completed at least 70% of the assessment **and** submitted on time. Students who resubmit are only eligible for an Achieved grade.

**Got questions? Ask your kaiako!**

## ACHIEVEMENT STANDARD 91325

Subject reference		Visual Arts 2.5			
Title		Produce a resolved work that demonstrates control of skills appropriate to cultural conventions			
Level	2	Credits	4	Assessment	Internal
Subfield		Visual Arts			
Domain		Practical Art			
Registration date	November 2011		Published date	November 2014	

This achievement standard involves producing a resolved work that demonstrates control of skills appropriate to cultural conventions.

## ACHIEVEMENT CRITERIA

Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Produce a resolved work that demonstrates <b>control</b> of skills appropriate to cultural conventions.	Produce a resolved work that demonstrates <b>sustained control</b> of skills appropriate to cultural conventions.	Produce a resolved work that demonstrates <b>facility with skills</b> appropriate to cultural conventions.





# Term One Plan

	LESSON ONE	LESSON TWO	SCHOOL
Week 2			Manurewatanga
Week 3		Intro to Photography	Vaa ta ako starts Wednesday
Week 4	HLG 1 Cyanotype history, processes, & conventions, artist models Demo & planning	HLG 1 Prints 1 & 2 Reflection & analysis	
Week 5	HLG 2 Elements & principles of art Artist models - compare & contrast Planning	HLG 2 Prints 3 & 4 Self-reflection <b>Formative hand-in</b>	
Week 6	HLG 3 Class critique Planning	HLG 3 Print 5 Self-reflection & planning	ID Photos
Week 7	HLG 3 Print 6 Writing Artist Statement	HLG 3 Catch up day <b>Summative hand-in</b>	
Week 8	Assessment 2 - see next booklet!		
Week 9			Tournament Week
Week 10			Polyfest
Week 11			Holiday Workshops

# Hybrid Learning Guide One

Our first couple of lessons are all about getting familiar with each other, the course, and cyanotypes. By the end of Week Four, you will:

- ♦ Have a solid understanding of the history, processes, and conventions of cyanotypes
- ♦ Be familiar with a range of cyanotype artists
- ♦ Have planned and completed your first two cyanotype prints
- ♦ Completed a reflection and analysis of your first artworks

## THE PROCESS

On page five, you will find a walk-through of how the technical process of making cyanotypes. Due to the number of students in this course, it's not feasible everyone to prepare their own paper, so instead your kaiako will provide a demonstration of this part of the process.

You will get to do the rest of the process (i.e. the fun part!) yourself. If you have any questions or want to experiment with preparing the cyanotype in different ways, talk to your kaiako.

## HISTORY

On page five, there's a brief overview of the history of cyanotypes. Have a read and try to imagine what it was like before photography was common or accessible. Imagine having to work this hard for every single photo you wanted to take!

## CONVENTIONS

"Conventions" are simply "the way something is typically done". For example, a bike is conventionally ridden sitting down. Names are conventionally written a capital letter. There are exceptions - some people ride bikes standing up, and sometimes companies will write their names using only lowercase letters, but conventions are followed *most* of the time.

Check out page six for examples of conventions in relation to cyanotypes, and how you might apply these in relation to NCEA marking. It's not an exhaustive list - just a starting point.

## ARTIST MODELS

Artist models are an important source of inspiration and learning new skills and techniques. Check out pages seven and eight, and choose a couple of artist models to use as a starting point for your own work.

## PLANNING

Planning is an essential part of cyanotypes - thinking about what you're trying to say, what materials you're going to use, what conventions are important to your work, how your artist models will influence it. This first round is really about getting to understand the process, so focus on playing!

## MAKING & REFLECTING

Time to make your first two prints! Once they're made and washed, you'll need to take a little time to reflect on how it went. There are prompts on the reflection page for you if you're not used to doing this!

# Cyanotype History & Process

## THE PROCESS

Cyanotype is a camera-less photographic process. To create a cyanotype, a chemical mixture of potassium ferricyanide and ferric ammonium citrate is applied to a piece of paper in the dark, making the paper photosensitive. We then leave the paper to dry in a dark place.

Once dry, we arrange objects on top of the paper and bring it out into the sun where the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays will create an exposure. Wherever the sun touches will turn blue, and where it can't reach will stay white. Translucent objects, like glass, plastic, thin leaves, and fabric, will generally let *some* light through, but less light through than a solid object - these are really fun to play with! This is called a photogram.

The time needed in the sun depends on how strong the UV rays are that day. On a really sunny day in Aotearoa, we might only need a couple of minutes. On a cloudy winter day, we might need closer to half an hour. For more precise control over the exposure, you could use an ultraviolet lamp.

The prints are then developed by placing them under cold running water - this washes the chemicals away and stops the print from being sensitive to light. You can also use a dilute solution of hydrogen peroxide to accelerate the developing process, making them go that rich deep Prussian Blue that much quicker.

Another variation is known as the wet cyanotype. This can be done on dry sheets of pre-prepared paper or directly onto the wet coated paper. Additional element such as water, vinegar, salt, spices (think tumeric or paprika), coffee grounds, and soap can be introduced to the print during exposure to create interesting patterns and colours and create an abstract effect to the print. This type of cyanotype needs to be exposed for much longer - from an hour to several days. The process for washing and drying stays the same.

## A LITTLE HISTORY

The cyanotype process has its roots in the discovery of Prussian blue in 1706, when a dye batch accident led to the first affordable, high-quality blue pigment. By the 1820s, the pigment spread globally, influencing artists like Hokusai. In 1842, cyanotypes were developed as an early photographic process, popularized by botanist Anna Atkins, who created the first photo book using the technique. Throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries, cyanotypes were widely used for artistic prints, blueprints, and postcards. Their popularity declined after World War I but resurged in the 1960s as artists explored alternative photographic methods. In 1994, chemist Mike Ware refined the process, and in 2016, the Worcester Art Museum held the first major cyanotype exhibition.



Feeling confused? Creating a cyanotype is a lot like getting a sunburn (but much prettier and less painful!). Let me explain.

The images in cyanotypes are created by blocking the sun's rays from the paper, much like clothing and sunblock prevents burns on your skin. If I sat too long in the sun next to my cyanotype, I would end up looking like a tomato wherever the sun touched my skin, my print would turn out a gorgeous deep blue where the sun touched its paper, and we'd both be super pale where the sun couldn't reach.

# Conventions

## MEDIA AND PROCESS

- ♦ **Light-Sensitive Coating:** Cyanotypes require a surface coated with a mixture of ferric ammonium citrate and potassium ferricyanide.
- ♦ **UV Exposure:** The image is developed through exposure to sunlight or UV light. Objects placed on the paper block light, leaving a 'trace' in white against the deep blue background.
- ♦ **Water Development:** Once exposed, the print is washed in water to remove unreacted chemicals and fix the image.
- ♦ **Control & Variation:** Different exposure times, material layering, and chemical adjustments can affect the final image.

Achieved	Merit	Excellence
You show understanding and apply the basic cyanotype process to create an image.	You experiment with exposure time, layering, or object placement to refine your control of the medium.	You demonstrate confident and deliberate control, using cyanotype techniques to fully realise your artistic intention.

## VISUAL

Cyanotypes have a recognisable aesthetic—the deep Prussian blue background with white, ghost-like traces of objects.

- ♦ **High Contrast & Silhouette Effect:** Objects block light, creating crisp white shapes. Transparent materials can create gradients or textures.
- ♦ **Blueprint Aesthetic:** The technique was historically used for architectural and scientific blueprints, influencing its perception as both artistic and technical.
- ♦ **Experimental Use of Negative Space:** The relationship between light and shadow is a defining characteristic.

Achieved	Merit	Excellence
You create an image with visible contrast and recognisable objects.	You carefully consider composition, balance, and layering to enhance the visual impact.	You push the creative potential of cyanotypes, possibly using mixed media, advanced layering, or conceptual depth.

## ARTISTIC

- ♦ **Historical Use:** Invented in 1842 by Sir John Herschel, cyanotypes were used for scientific documentation, such as Anna Atkins' botanical prints (one of the first female photographers).
- ♦ **Contemporary Adaptation:** Modern artists use cyanotypes conceptually, combining them with drawing, digital negatives, and fabric printing to explore themes of memory, identity, and traces of the past.
- ♦ **Material & Surface Choices:** Traditional cyanotypes are on paper, but artists also print on fabric, wood, and even ceramics. The material choice can influence the meaning of the work.

Achieved	Merit	Excellence
You follow the traditional process with a clear outcome.	You connect your work to artistic or cultural ideas (e.g., using personal objects or meaningful symbols).	You demonstrates fluency and confidence, making intentional artistic choices that reflect an understanding of cyanotypes in a wider cultural or artistic context.





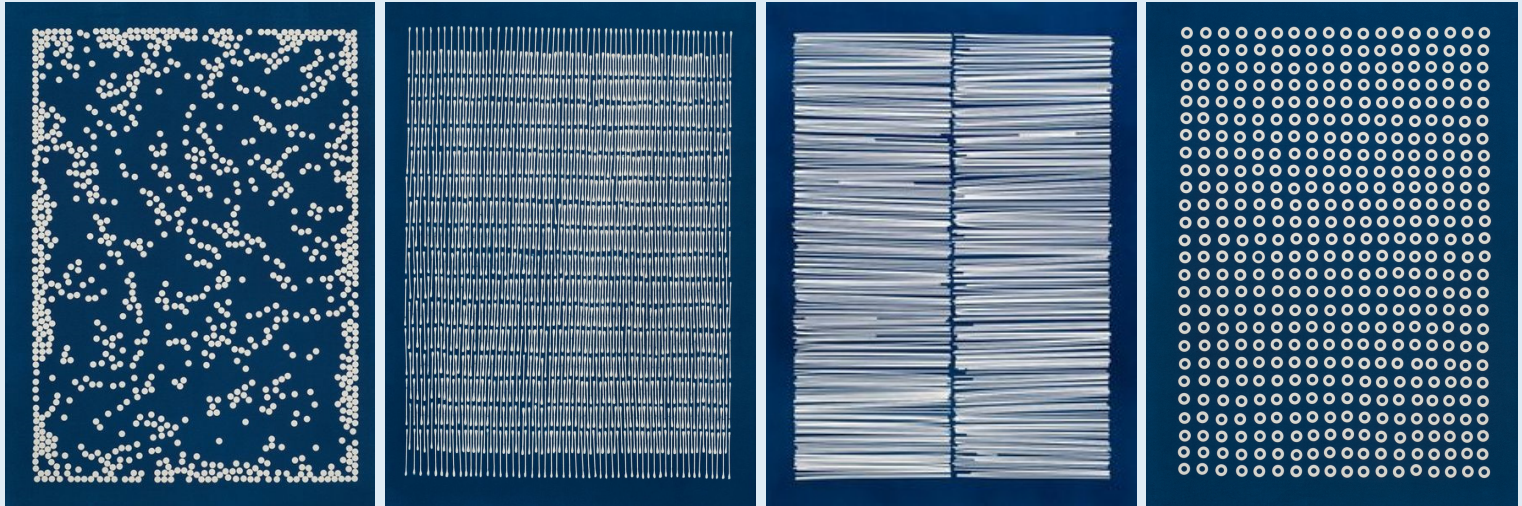
# Artist Models



Artist models are artists we look at to guide and inspire our own works of art. It's really important that we don't just copy an artist model's work - instead, we use them to learn about different techniques and ideas, and borrow *elements* of their work to push our own.

A great way to do this is to always have at least two artist models, so we figure out what parts of their art we're most drawn to, and combine them in our unique way. The next two pages have cyanotype artists for you to look at - choose two to begin with. We'll add a third a little later for more complexity!

## MAX KELLENBERGER



## KATARZYNA KALUA KRYNSKA

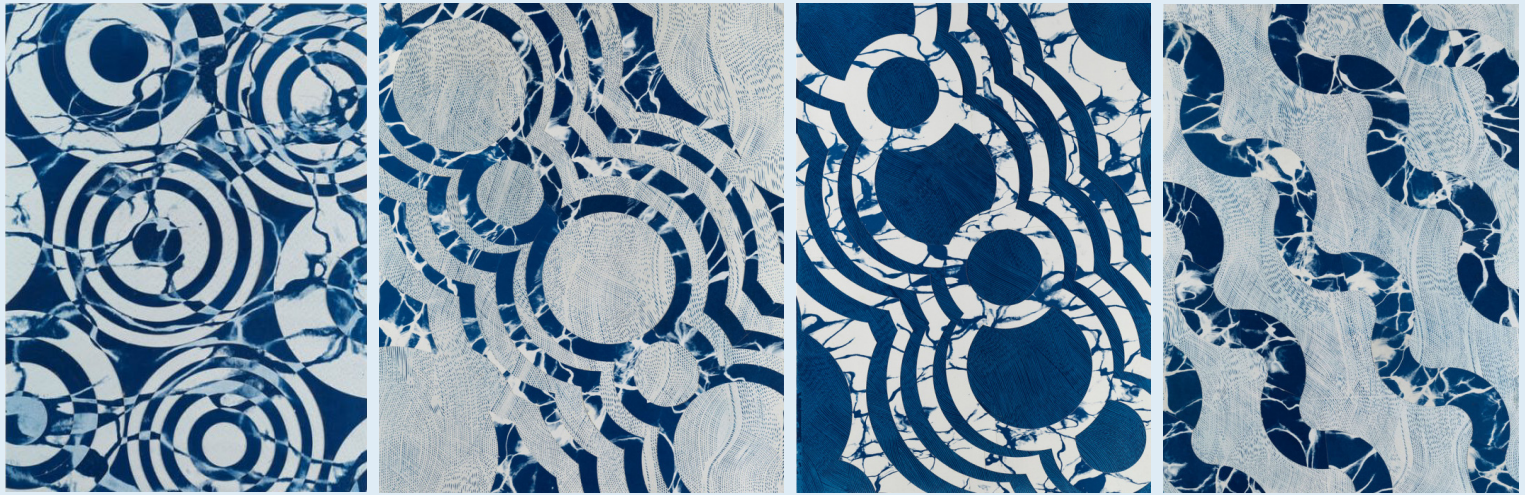


## ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG

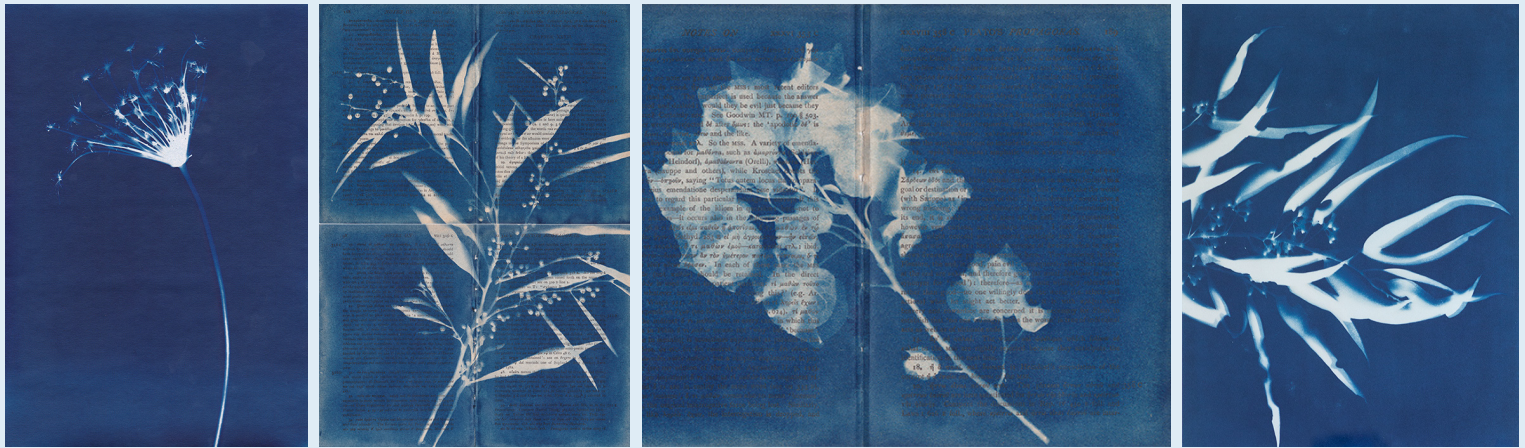




## ELS WIERING



## SONJA SCHAEFFELER



## MEGAN BONANTO



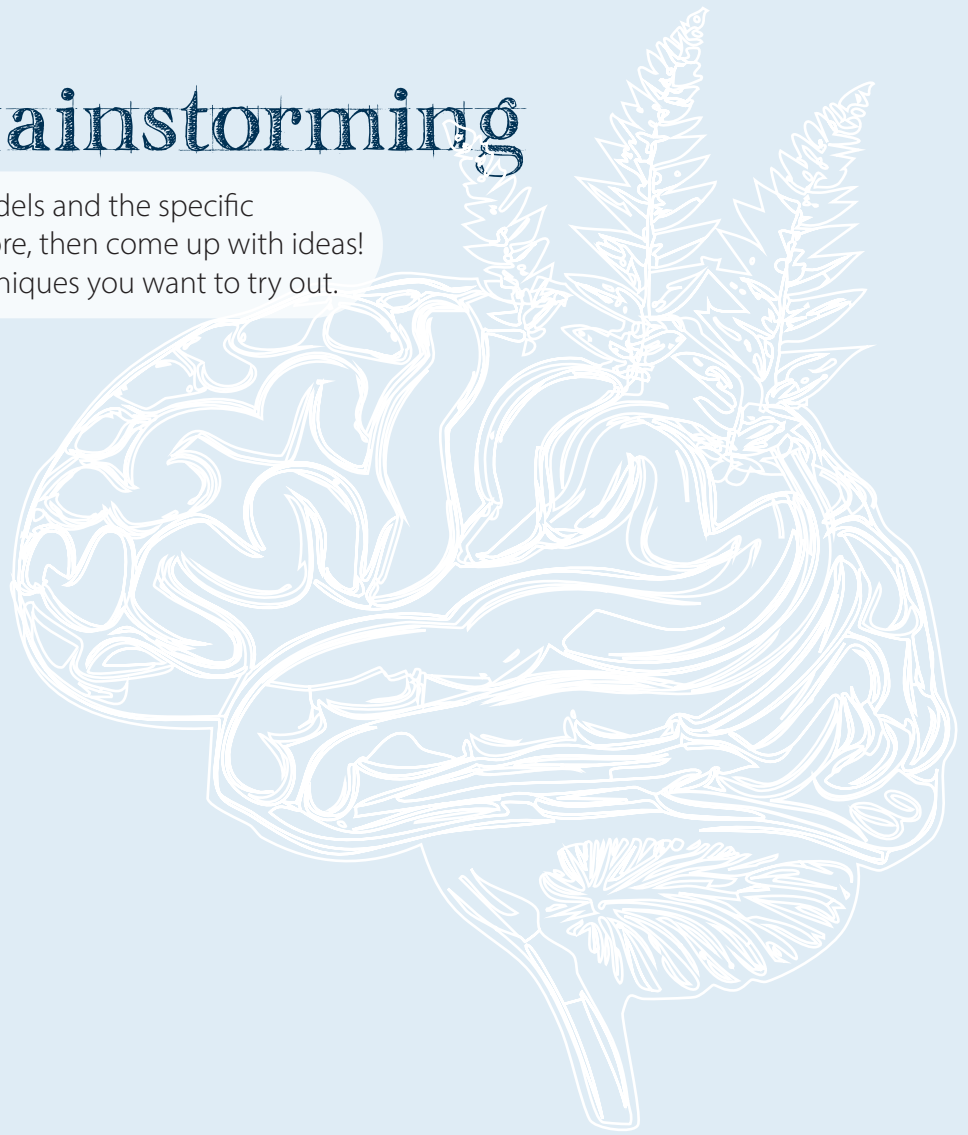
Want to see more of an artist's work, or learn more about how they've created these images? Look them up online! We will talk about each of them a little bit in class, but you should investigate your chosen artist models more deeply.

For example, how does Megan Bonanto create her incredible repeating patterns? She places glass objects on the paper, and their refractions create the original images. She then photographs the print using a special lens called a 'kaleidoscope lens' - we don't have one of those, but how else might you create this effect?



# Brainstorming

Now it's time to select your artist models and the specific conventions you're planning to explore, then come up with ideas! Think about what materials and techniques you want to try out.



## REMEMBER

There are NO bad ideas at the brainstorming stage, even if it might seem silly or you don't know how to do it, write it down - it might come in handy later!

Artist model one:

Conventions they use:

Conventions of theirs I am planning to use:

Artist model two:

Conventions they use:

Conventions of theirs I am planning to use:

**INSERT PRINT 1 HERE**

**INSERT PRINT 2 HERE**



# Reflection

Write a brief reflection on your first test prints. What conventions did you use? What worked, what didn't? What did you learn? What might you like to try out next?

## Hybrid Learning Guide Two

These lessons are focused on deepening your knowledge and explorations. You will:

- ◆ Refresh your knowledge on the elements and principles of art
- ◆ Compare and contrast a selection of artist models, thinking more deeply about how and why they do what they do
- ◆ Plan your third and fourth cyanotype prints
- ◆ Complete your third and fourth cyanotype prints
- ◆ Reflect on and analyse your prints so far
- ◆ Hand in all your mahi so far for formative assessment

The formative assessment is a check-point, which will give you feedback and an idea of where you're tracking for your grade. Remember, this is a short unit - it is due at the end of Week Seven!

If you're worried about your progress, remember to talk with your kaiako as soon as possible.

# Elements of Art



## TEXTURE

Either real (actually feels) or implied (looks as if it would feel) - think fluffy, rough, sharp, bumpy, etc.



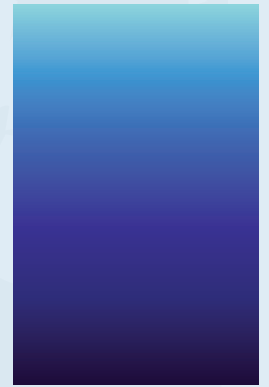
## LINE

Marks may be thin, thick, straight, curved, solid, dotted, etc.



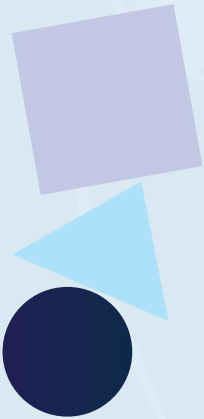
## COLOUR

Has three properties: hue (distinguishable colour, e.g. blue); value (lightness or darkness); and intensity (strength or saturation).



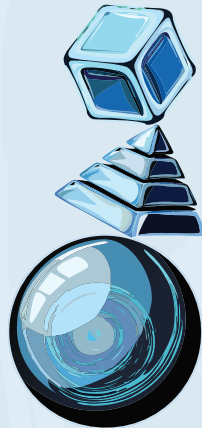
## VALUE

The lightness or darkness of tones or colors. Also talked about as gradient, luminosity, and contrast.



## SHAPE

Two-dimensional or flat. They may be geometric or organic.



## FORM

Three-dimensional object or illusion of an object - includes height, width AND depth.



## SPACE

The arrangement of elements in relation to one another. Think perspective (distance between and around), and proportion (size), and relationship between foreground and background. Used to create positive and negative areas (left) or the illusion of depth and 3D relationships (right).



# Principles of Art



**Balance** - formal, symmetrical/informal; asymmetrical can be radial/approximate

**Harmony** - using similar lines, shapes, colour/texture

**Unity** - the feeling of wholeness; using one colour creates unity

**Variety** - using different lines, shapes, colours/texture

**Emphasis** - one specific area/object that directs/draws the views attention

**Repetition** - using the same shape colour more than one time

**Pattern** - repeating sequence of shapes/colours, the same/different sizes

**Rhythm** - regular/harmonious pattern of shapes/colours 'working together



Artist name: Katarzyna Kalua Krynska  
Artwork title: Untitled  
Year: Undated  
Medium: Cyanotype print  
Subject Matter

# ARTIST MODEL COMPARE & CONTRAST



Artist name: Robert Rauschenberg  
Artwork title: Untitled  
Year: 1951  
Medium: Cyanotype  
Subject Matter

What similarities have you identified?

What differences have you identified?

Elements

Principles

Why do you think the artists have used these different approaches?

Materials & Techniques

Artist Intentions & Ideas

Iconographic Motifs & Elements

Iconographic Motifs & Elements



# Planning - Prints 3 & 4

Now you've had a go, made your first cyanotypes, and really understand the process - where do you want to go from here? Remember the theme of 'traces' - how are you exploring traces of yourself? How are you using your artist models? What conventions are you using? How can you push your mahittoi to the next level?

**INSERT PRINT 3 HERE**

**INSERT PRINT 4 HERE**

# Reflection

Write a brief reflection on test prints three & four. What conventions did you use? What worked, what didn't? What did you learn? What might you like to try out next?

# Formative

Your work is due for Formative Assessment in Week 5 of Term 1. This is a check-point to get valuable feedback and an idea of the level you are currently working at. A reminder of the Achievement Criteria:

ACHIEVEMENT CRITERIA		
Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Produce a resolved work that demonstrates <b>control</b> of skills appropriate to cultural conventions.	Produce a resolved work that demonstrates <b>sustained control</b> of skills appropriate to cultural conventions.	Produce a resolved work that demonstrates <b>facility with skills</b> appropriate to cultural conventions.

Feedback:



# Hybrid Learning Guide Three

We are entering the final stretch of this very short unit! In this section, we will:

- ♦ Have a class critique. This is where we show our work to the rest of the class and get feedback. It's a supportive, constructive exercise, so don't be scared! The more you give, the more you get.
- ♦ Planning your fifth (second to last) print - we should be refining towards our final now, so really consider the feedback from your peers, revisit your artist models, and think about how you can push your mahitoi to the next level.
- ♦ Completing and reflecting on print five.
- ♦ Planning and completing your sixth print - the last one!
- ♦ Writing your artist statement
- ♦ Summative hand-in - this is the final hand-in, which will provide you with your final grade.

Remember, if you have any concerns, talk with your kaiako as soon as possible.

## Critique Feedback

Use this space to record feedback from your critique. Remember - you don't have to agree with everything you hear or follow every piece of advice you receive, but you *should* consider everything.

# Planning - Print 5

Your penultimate (second to last) print - what changes would you like to make? What conventions and artist models are most important? How can you push your mahitoi to the next level?

INSERT PRINT 5 HERE

## Reflection

Write a brief reflection on print five. What conventions did you use? What worked, what didn't? What did you learn?



# Final Planning - Print 6

It's time for your final print - what final refinements would you like to make? What conventions and artist models are most important to your final work? How can you push your mahitoi to the next level?

# Final Print

INSERT PRINT 6 HERE

# Artist Statement

Summarise your final work. Discuss the themes and intentions of your work and how you have represented them; the processes, procedures, materials, and techniques you have used; the conventions of cyanotype that are most important to your work; and how you have been influenced by your artist models.

# Summative Marking

Your work is due for Summative (final) Assessment in Week 7 of Term 1. A reminder of the Achievement Criteria:

ACHIEVEMENT CRITERIA		
Achievement	Achievement with Merit	Achievement with Excellence
Produce a resolved work that demonstrates <b>control</b> of skills appropriate to cultural conventions.	Produce a resolved work that demonstrates <b>sustained control</b> of skills appropriate to cultural conventions.	Produce a resolved work that demonstrates <b>facility with skills</b> appropriate to cultural conventions.
FOR EXAMPLE		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have produced a successful cyanotype print</li> <li>The work has a clear connection with the theme of 'traces'</li> <li>The final work is adequately exposed and properly developed</li> <li>The final work meets your intentions as stated in your reflections, analyses, and artist statement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The final work demonstrates the ability to consistently manage the processes, procedures, materials, and techniques of working with cyanotypes</li> <li>The work has a clear connection with the theme of 'traces' and connects with the student as an individual</li> <li>Technical issues, including over- or under- exposing, are resolved to the point where the cyanotype is clearly readable and the audience is able to focus on the subject matter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The work demonstrates the easy and ready control of the skills applied in cyanotype media</li> <li>The work successfully realises your intentions, as stated in your reflections, analyses, and artist statement</li> <li>The work successfully explores 'traces' on a personal level</li> <li>The work is aesthetically appealing and conveys a sense of who you are to the audience</li> <li>Established cyanotype techniques are adapted and personalised to create a unique and creative artwork</li> </ul>
YOUR GRADE		
KAIAKO NOTES		