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Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

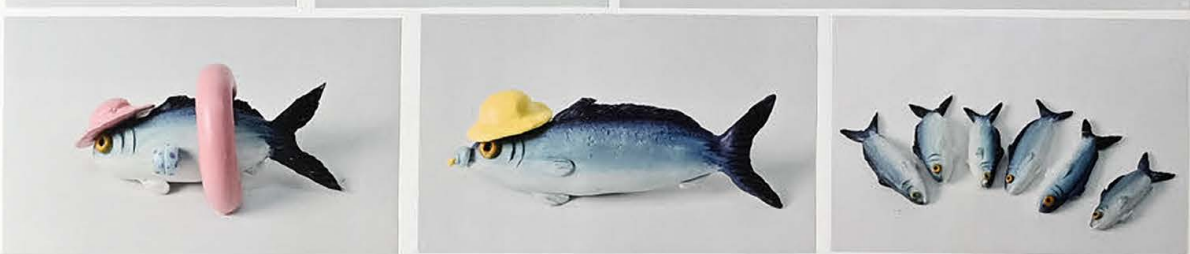
Level 3 Visual Arts 2024

**91459 Produce a systematic body of work
that integrates conventions and regenerates
ideas within sculpture practice**

EXEMPLAR

Excellence

TOTAL E



Excellence

Subject: Visual Arts – Sculpture

Standard: 91459

Marker commentary

This humorous and astutely crafted submission investigates the life of a fish as a character that has a life that the audience can follow through identifying tropes of a human life journey. Personification and humour are the main devices for driving the narrative in the body of work where key stages of a human's life are recreated with fish as the protagonists.

The submission starts as does the life cycle of a fish as eggs. These carefully crafted faux fish eggs use culinary techniques to mimic caviar in different colours and the perceptively recognised found objects start the journey of the representation of the fish as humans with a high level of verisimilitude.

The next sequence inventively imagines the human flotation devices for the early years of learning to swim with ceramic versions of juvenile fish instead of children. Fish are then reimagined as children at school where word play is used to create humour. These aquatic ākonga are seen in a diorama of a classroom that is fitted out with the stereotypical posters about the world of the sea. The whiteboard even has precautionary drawings of sharks and fishhooks as potential threats to the fish lifestyle. This work operates at an appropriate scale to real fish and shows the humorous absurdity of seeing fish trying to sit up in chairs as humans do.

Once graduated from school, we see fish in the scene of the open ocean where they try and find a place to call home. This return to the "real" environment of the sea allows the candidate to expand the narrative as we see a more elaborate and carefully constructed underwater scene that strategically employs appropriate materials to describe the richness and colour of the forms of the coral reef. The candidate then subverts this reality by placing a sold real estate sign surreptitiously next to an appropriately sized cave. In keeping with the human life cycle milestones, we next see two fish as bride and groom in an archway of shells engaging in a ceremony of matrimony.

The final panel of the submission, whilst following the life of a fish, shows a darker, more sinister human intervention to the blissful fish life. Strategically, the candidate then shifts the scale and method of construction to create a life size adult kahawai which is seen in context to a human hand to demonstrate scale. Finally, we are presented with two aligned dark humour resolutions to the end of each fish's life. One fish is caught and presented as glossy fish and chips in a classic newspaper wrapper that warns of the perils of overfishing and issues to do with the commercial fisheries sector. The other scene describes the aftermath of the missing fish in the fish community, a graveyard of sorts with fish bones and missing fish posters referencing characters like "Swim Shady". Both works exploit materials that add to the conceptual framework of the sculptural proposition, whilst insightfully integrating the established practice of artists like Diana Tonnison, Cosima von Bonin, and Mariko Kusumoto. This charming narrative submission demonstrates a command of materials and processes that allow for humorous metaphors to grow and make interesting commentary about the place of fish and fishing within the context of the candidate's cultural milieu.