



This is Not a Solo Show

Michelle Cawthorn and Peter Sharp

Worksheet for High School Students

Student Name: _____

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Michelle Cawthorn and Peter Sharp
7 March - 31 May 2026

Marking the tenth anniversary of their ongoing artistic collaboration, Michelle Cawthorn and Peter Sharp revisit *This Is Not a Solo Show*, a project exploring how their distinct practices intersect and diverge. While Sharp's paintings capture the external rhythms of the natural world, Cawthorn's works chart the internal terrain of thought and emotion.

Presented together, their works become a meditation on dialogue – between partners, materials and perspectives. This third iteration includes reconfigured works from earlier exhibitions at Verge Gallery, Sydney, 2016 and ANCA, Canberra, 2024, alongside new pieces conceived during their 2025 residency at the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation in Connecticut, USA.

Question 1

Practice: Couples as Collaborators

Find this series of photographs



Image: Michelle Cawthorn and Peter Sharp , *Hospital Corners I, II & III*, 2016, pigment print on Premium photo paper, 80 x 53.4 cm

In this photo series, artist couple Michelle and Peter are folding sheets together. The title *Hospital Corners* refers to a very neat way of tucking in bedsheets, often used in hospitals and hotels.

How does the artist couple Michelle Cawthorn and Peter Sharp use the simple action of folding sheets in *Hospital Corners* to explore ideas about relationships and shared labour? Consider their interaction and the setting of the photographs in your response.

Question 2

Structural Viewpoint

Find this collage by Michelle Cawthorn



Image: Michelle Cawthorn, *Peter Portrait*, 2025, hand-cut collage on premium print paper, 30.5 x 22 cm

A collage is an artmaking technique where an artwork is created by combining different materials and attaching them to a surface.

Artists might use paper, photographs, fabric, magazine images, natural objects, or even their own drawings. By arranging and gluing these pieces together, they build a new, creative image.

In this artwork, Michelle Cawthorn has made a portrait of her husband, Peter Sharp, using collage.

In your own words, explain how the artist has created this portrait through collage. Describe the types of images or materials she used and how she arranged or layered them to represent Peter Sharp.

Question 3

Find the Original

Find this print by Michelle Cawthorn



Image: Michelle Cawthorn, *Anni's Birds #11*, 2025, pigment print on archival cotton rag, 138.5 x 100 cm

This artwork is a print of a collage created by artist Michelle Cawthorn. The print is a larger version of her original small collage of a hybrid bird.

Can you spot the original collage nearby?

A hybrid is something made by combining parts from two or more different things. In this case, the artist has created a hybrid bird by mixing features from several different bird species to invent a new, imaginary creature.

With your tour group, look closely at this artwork.

Which bird features can you identify?

Try to work out which parts have been combined to create this hybrid bird—such as the wings, beak, feathers, tail, or body shape.

Question 4

Interaction with Albers - Group Poem



Image: Peter Sharp, *Interaction with Albers* (installation), 2025, mixed media and collage on 90 sheets of paper, plus the original cover of the 'Interaction of Colour' book dimensions variable

During his 2025 residency at the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation, artist Peter Sharp developed a daily creative practice inspired by Josef Albers' influential book *Interaction of Colour*.

Each day, he tore out a single page from the book and used it as the basis for a new mixed-media artwork. Sharp referred to this

repeated process as his own "interaction with Albers," using Albers' ideas as a catalyst for contemporary experimentation.

As a group, we will extend Sharp's concept by creating a collaborative poem centred around colour. Instead of making visual artworks, we'll explore how language can express the mood, symbolism, and associations of a chosen colour.

Activity Instructions

As a group, we will select one colour to use as the theme for our poem.

Your Tour Leader will give each student a slip of paper.

Write down one word you associate with the chosen colour. This could relate to emotions, objects, environments, or symbolic meanings.

Five students will be invited to place their words at the front to form the first line of the poem.

Another five students will create the second line.

We will continue in groups of five until the poem is complete, creating a layered, collective response to colour—echoing the collaborative spirit of Albers' ideas.

Question 5

Forward Planning



Forward Planning uses a system of ropes and pulleys to explore how different parts of our lives connect and affect one another. The sculptures represent the push and pull of relationships and the balance we try to maintain between family responsibilities, daily routines, work, and creative practice. These ideas are shown through a series of abstract–yet still recognisable–sculptural forms that interact like a delicate balancing act.

Image: Michelle Cawthron and Peter Sharp, *Forward Planning*, 2016 - 2026 assemblage, found and made objects, ropes and pulleys, dimensions variable

When looking at this artwork, what emotions or ideas come to mind when you see the ropes and pulleys balancing different shapes? What might they represent about everyday life?

Question 6

Hybrid Artwork Drawing

In the space below, create a hybrid study drawing by choosing one artwork by *Michelle Cawthron* and one by *Peter Sharp*. Select key features from each, like shapes, lines, textures, or forms, and combine them to make a new artwork. Your drawing should show your interpretation of how their styles and ideas can blend together.