**Appropriation** is the borrowing of art from other artists, from an earlier tradition or culture and tampering with it in some way. This type of artmaking seemed to flourish in the 1980's, when pluralism of styles and ideas became common, in both Australian and International art.

Australian Artists Anne Zahalka and Fiona Hall are both excellent examples of this technique, showing both similarities and differences in their approach.

"Anne Zahalka is a contemporary Australian Artist who examines and questions the notions of gender established in European art through the device of appropriation."

Senior Artwise book

A similarity of both Zahalka and Hall is that they use the medium of photography, in Hall’s case, being interested in the possible effects of photography. Both have appropriated the work of 20th century Japanese printmaker Katsushika Hokusai "The marriage of the Arnolfini, after van Eyck" (1980). Both mocking or challenging religious and past conventions in society, for Zahalka this is the influence of European culture on our value system, which is expressed in her "Resemblance" series, which confronts the line between true or false.

Zahalka uses computer generated images and alterations of old masters, religious painting and portraiture, using the technology to eliminate from the original things which are irrelevant to her cause. Hall on the other hand does not particularly digitally enhance or deduct from the originals, but creates from the originals a new picture replacing objects in the artwork to express her opinions and ideas, for example the appropriation of one of Hokusai’s wave photographs she replaces a pair of baby sneakers for Mount Fuji. Hall's works have often been labelled 'reproductions' because of the original artworks not being accessible any longer.

Curator Gael Newton wrote:

"This Process of 'reproduction' is then carried out literally in the photograph. Objects are assembled to explore the spatial and formal structure of the original"

Similar to Hall in this sense, wanting to copy the composition of originals, which is part of their approach, with Zahalka reflecting elements of 17th century Dutch painting, particularly formal aspects of their compositions.

In Zahalka's artwork "the cleaner" the mood of the picture is nostalgic, due to the still life appearance of the picture, created by the black and white tiled floors and fruit assembled in such a way that it appears ready to be captured on canvas, but along with this mood of nostalgia and reminiscing is the underlying feeling that things have been unassembled and re-assembled quite quickly, this work is supposed to challenge the honesty and accuracy of images and history, part of why Anna Zahalka appropriates.

Both Australian artists, Anne Zahalka and Fiona Hall relate or differ in their approach to this technique of appropriation, but are similar in allot of areas too, which leaves the question in minds today, inevitable with the technique of appropriation. Is there really such thing as 'the Original'?