

ARTIST'S STATEMENT GUIDELINES



What is an Artist's Statement?

An artist's statement is piece of writing by you, that helps to explain your artistic work.

When is an Artist's Statement used?

Exhibition purposes, grant applications, teaching position applications, fellowships, and more.

It directs your audience to the concerns you consider to be important in the work, and helps publicists, curators, and critics write about the work.

Writing about your work may also be integral to your creative process.

You may be writing about as specific work, group of works or your body of work developed over a considerable period of time.

WRITING AN ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Begin by considering the following in relation to your work

- What are the key ideas, issues, struggles, goals within your work or studio practice?
- Thematic focus of work (goal, purpose, intention, exploration).
- Content of work (themes, ideas, subject matter).
- Influences (cultural, historical, theoretical, art historical, personal, biographical).
- Form of work (materials, processes, tradition of work –e.g. abstract, figurative, etc.) Describe your process and what the work looks/sounds like, etc..
- Who is your audience? It helps to have someone in mind when you are writing.
- How can you clarify what your work is about, how can you make your work easier to understand?
- Remember. If you are unsure of what your work is about, your readers will be as well.
- If you are, exploring, uncertain, struggling to find the meaning of your work, suitable media, a focus, etc. then SAY IT!

You may want to create lists!

One approach is to list the nouns, verbs and adjectives that relate to your work. Then create sentences. This will refresh the way to talk about your work and open up your vocabulary.

After creating these lists or notes, formalize and organize your material.

Begin with a thesis statement and continue to build statement. Most statements are no longer than one page, 1-3 paragraphs long.

HELPFUL HINTS

- Have a friend interview you and ask questions about your work. Answer the questions, record the conversation or take notes.
- Have someone who doesn't know your work ask you questions.
- Read the statements or writings of artists with whom you have an affinity. It's easy to find these on line.
- Read what has been written about artists with whom you have an affinity.
- Write in the first person and avoid "art speak" and jargon.
- Avoid editorializing or over-explaining.
- Keep your statement concise, succinct, straightforward and to the point; one page is more than enough.
- Speak as honestly and straightforward as you can. Be authentic!
- Edit out phrases that are not specific to your work. There are experiences that are common to almost every artist that, although they may be powerful and profound for each individual come across as ordinary or common to the viewer.
- Make the reader want to look at, and know more about your work.
- Your statement should be more than just a description of your process.
- Use quotes ONLY when they are absolutely relevant to your work.
- Have a faculty member read your statement while looking at the work.
- Write! Not just statements about your work. Keep a journal. Keep notes. Observations. Thoughts. Reflections. Critiques. Take notes at lectures. Take notes of what you see at exhibitions or presentations of work. Keep the writing going and integrate it into your life and practice. This will make all of this so much easier!

Enjoy the process!

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