

Artist Statement

What is an artist statement?

An artist statement is a general introduction of your work as an artist. It is the what, how, and why of your work, from your own perspective. It helps you convey the deeper meaning or purpose of your work to the audience.

Why you need an artist statement

An artist statement lets you convey the reasoning behind your work - why you chose a particular subject matter, why you work in a certain medium, etc. And further, a well-written statement shows the relationship of you to your artwork, and helps create a connection with the viewer that will make your work more memorable.

Artist statement content

The artist statement should be about you, not about the viewer. It should explain what YOU think about your work, not about how the viewer should interpret it.

1. Ask yourself questions about your work:
Why you have created the work and what is its history?
Your overall vision-- what are you trying to say in the work?
How does your current work relate to your previous work?
What influences your work?
What is your inspiration for your images?
How does this work fit into a series or larger body of work?
2. Create a list of words and phrases that describe your chosen themes, your artistic values, creation process, and influences (i.e. experiences, dreams). Draw from your answers from the previous step.
3. Edit down your list of words and begin creating sentences using those words.
4. Combine the sentences into logical, flowing paragraphs.

Start writing:

1. Begin with an overview paragraph that makes a clear and concise statement about your work, and support that statement with your reasoning. This paragraph should be broad in scope. Specifics will come next.
2. Next, go into detail about how the issues or ideas mentioned in your opening paragraph are presented in your work (offer a specific example) and why you use the materials and tools that you do.
3. Point out themes in your work or discuss experiences that have influenced your work.
4. Finally, sum up the most important points made throughout previous paragraphs.

Content Tips:

- Be concise-- Keep your writing simple, clear, and to-the-point. Describe each portion in as few words as possible.
- Proofread your artists statement for grammar, spelling, clarity, and interest.

Technical Tips:

- Write in the first person perspective ("I created...", "My experience with...").
- No longer than one page, single-spaced, using 10 – 12 point type.
- No fancy fonts or design layouts

Things to avoid in an artist statement

Your artist statement is like a personal creed and shouldn't read like a press release or marketing material. Strive for authenticity.

Avoid:

- Arrogance and pomposity (how great or relevant you are)
- Grandiose expressions and clichés about your work and views
- Overuse of technical terms and jargon
- Long explanations on techniques and materials you use
- Poems or prosy writing