

HOW TO Write an Artist Biography

The intent of your artist biography is to let people know who you are, what you do and your most important accomplishments. It can also include how your life has influenced your artwork. A biography is written in the third person and can vary in length (from one sentence to a half-page).

STEP 1 - Brainstorm.

List information that you could include in your biography, about you, your work and your accomplishments.

ABOUT YOU

- Your origins
- Where you live and work
- Your inspiration or motivation (a place, material or issue)

ABOUT YOUR WORK

- Discipline, genre and medium you work in
- Other art-related work (curator, art writer, workshop facilitator, board member, etc.)
- Key themes in your work
- What makes your work unique
- What you hope to accomplish with your work
- Significant projects that you are working on or that are upcoming

ABOUT YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Important art-related education (programs, mentorships, residencies, classes, influences, mentors, certificates, degrees, self-taught, workshops, etc.)
- Notable collections, events, exhibitions, performances, projects, etc.
- Awards (prizes, grants) and professional achievements
- Media coverage, publications, etc.

STEP 2 - Write.

Before you start writing, research the biographies of artists you admire or whose practices align with your own. This will give you ideas on how to structure your biography.

Summarize the information from step 1 into the following four general topics. Write brief sentences without worrying about proper syntax and grammar.

1) You (who you are, your identity, where you

- live and work) and how your experiences have influenced your work
- 2) Training, education, discipline(s), preferred medium(s), area of expertise
- 3) Past projects (bodies of work, exhibitions, awards, reviews, collections, contracts, etc.)
- 4) Current projects (Are you learning a new medium? Researching a specific subject? Participating in a program or a residency? Making new work? Preparing for an upcoming exhibition? Employed in an art-related field?)

Now, assess what you have written. What are the most important points? What information is most interesting? Are there any sentences that could be removed or combined? Is there a sentence or topic that could nicely lead to another? Rewrite the information in paragraph format in the third person.

Finally, edit your writing to be as clear as possible. Remove repetitive sentences and use synonyms to replace words that repeat.

STEP 3 - Proofread.

Have a friend or colleague read your biography, and be open to suggestions. Make sure that you do not have any misspelled words and that your verb tense is consistent throughout.

STEP 4 - Save.

You will need various versions and lengths of your biography for specific audiences or purposes. Parts from a previous biography can be reused in different versions.

Save your biography in a *Biography* folder by date and purpose for future reference, for example:

2018 Solo Show Bio

2020 Website Bio

2022 Beading Workshop Bio