

# HOW TO Write an Artist Statement

The intent of your artist statement is to describe your work and what it means. There should be enough information in your artist statement that someone can begin to imagine your work without having it in front of them. The goal is to excite the reader about viewing the work and draw them into your world. An artist statement is written in the first person and can vary in length (as short as 100 words but no longer than one page).

## STEP 1 - Brainstorm.

List information that you could include in your artist statement about your work.

### WHAT IT IS ABOUT

- What are you trying to say in your work?
- What subject matter does your work explore (imagery, concepts, themes, symbols)?
- What repeats? What collides? What stands out? What are specific examples of these in your work?
- How is your work unique?

### WHY YOU MAKE IT

- Why do you make what you make?
- What or who influences the meaning of your work?
- What does your life say about your work and your work say about your life?
- Who is your audience?

### HOW YOU MAKE IT

- How do you create your work? What's your artistic process? What are your methods of working (techniques, style, formal decisions, etc.)
- Describe your works (discipline, genre medium, elements and principles of design, materials, tools used, etc.)
- How do the above points inform or support the subject matter of your work?

## STEP 2 - Write.

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

Remember to write in the first person and to write with confidence. Avoid statements starting with "I hope to..." , "I will..." or "I am trying to...".

into three general topics (what, why and how). Write brief sentences without worrying about proper syntax and grammar. Use clear vocabulary that is authentic to you.

Now, rewrite the information into a paragraph format. Balance your content in a way that reflects your practice. If your work is about the medium, focus more on materials and techniques. If it is more about the "why", focus on that. To obtain a more cohesive paragraph, find a way to have one topic lead to another.

Finally, edit your writing to be as clear and concise as possible. Cut what you have written down to the absolute essentials. Remove or combine repetitive sentences and use synonyms for words that repeat.

## STEP 3 - Proofread.

Make sure there are no misspelled words and that your verb tense is consistent throughout. Have someone proofread your statement and verify that it presents an engaging, accurate understanding of your work.

## STEP 4 - Save.

You will need various versions of your statement to reflect different aspects of your practice, a specific body of work or an individual piece. Parts from a previous statement can be reused in other versions. Save your Artist Statements by date and purpose in a designated folder (A) and/or different project folders (B). Either way, be consistent in the way you save documents for easy retrieval. For example :

(A) <u>Artist Statements</u>	(B) <u>2020 Bee Project</u>
2018 Solo Show	Bee project research
2020 Website	Bee project images
2020 Bee project	Bee project statement

First, summarize the information from step 1



Adapted from <https://www.format.com/magazine/resources/art/how-to-write-artist-statement>, <https://www.agora-gallery.com/advice/blog/2016/07/23/how-to-write-artist-statement/>, <https://www.gyst-ink.com/artist-statement-guidelines>, and notes from Shawna Dempsey and Yvette Cenerini.

Mentoring Artists for Women's Art Inc. 2022