CAI Career Tools

Artist Statement

*Generation Tool*

**Step 1: Establishing the First Must-Have Key Sentences**

The first three sentences of your artist statement are key, as in the art world, you often only get three sentences to make an impression. For instance, when you are networking in the art world when an interviewer asks you to introduce yourself, or when another artist presents you to their gallery director, the first three sentences are a kind of elevator pitch, a concise and accurate description of who you are and what you create. In this step, we are going to establish these three sentences as a sort of elevator pitch.

1.1 Answer the following questions in a single text next to “🡪 Answer”

1. What is your name?
2. When and where were you born, where, and where are you currently based?   
   (Write down both your city and country)
3. What artistic discipline do you practice?   
   (Write down your artistic discipline as: “contemporary painter” / “contemporary sculptor” / “occupied with contemporary drawing” / “contemporary collage artist” / “digital artist” / “performance artist” / “installation artist” / “video artist.” Or when you combine more than two of these disciplines: “Multidisciplinary artist working in painting/sculpture/drawing/collage/performance/video”)
4. What type of work do you create, or what are you best known for?  
   (e.g., minimal abstracts, figurative oil painting, monumental steel sculptures, etc.)
5. What is the meaning of your work in a nutshell?   
   (e.g., exploring the human condition, raising awareness for environmental issues, dealing with personal narratives, etc.)

**🡪 Answer: …**

1.2 Open ChatGPT via <https://chat.openai.com/> login or sign up to use the free version of ChatGPT. Copy and paste the prompt into ChatGPT. Copy and paste your answer above in bold below the prompt. Press enter.

*“Dear ChatGPT, can you please summarize and rewrite the following text in just three sentences? Write in fluent English with a formal, neutral, and concise tone, avoiding pompous language:”*

If you are satisfied with the result, copy and paste the text into the final page of the spreadsheet next to “Short bio.” If you would like to see another version, ask ChatGPT to regenerate the answer. Avoid typical overly pompous language by ChatGPT such as “weaving a rich tapestry,” “reshaping conventional notions of” or “inviting to viewer on a transformative journey.” Double check if the questions who, where & what are answered. The final result should look and sound similar to these industry-approved examples:

E.g. 1, “Michaël Borremans is a contemporary painter born in 1963 in Geraardsbergen, residing and working in Ghent. In his unsettling figurative drawings and paintings, Borremans renders enigmatic figures and still lifes as he rejects narrative clarity in favor of wry commentary on painting itself. His canvases simultaneously evoke nostalgia, dark comedy, the surreal, and the grotesque; awkward poses, heightened situations, absurd costumes, a general sense of discomfort, and stark, muted backgrounds feature prominently throughout Borremans’s oeuvre.”

E.g. 2, “Marina Abramovic, born in 1946 in Belgrade, pioneered the use of performance as a visual art form in which the body has always been both her subject and medium. Exploring the physical and mental limits of her being, she has withstood pain, exhaustion, and danger in the quest for emotional and spiritual transformation. Abramovic’s concern is with creating works that ritualize the simple actions of everyday life like lying, sitting, dreaming, and thinking; in effect the manifestation of a unique mental state.”

E.g. 3, “Born in Colombia and based in various locations, Oscar Murillo (b. 1986) is known for an inventive and itinerant practice that encompasses paintings, works on paper, sculptures, installations, actions, live events, collaborative projects, and videos. Taken as a whole, his body of work demonstrates a sustained emphasis on the notion of cultural exchange and the multiple ways in which ideas, languages, and even everyday items are displaced, circulated, and increasingly intermingled.”

E.g. 4, “Belgian artist Luc Tuymans (b. 1958, Mortsel) is known for a distinctive style of painting that demonstrates images’ power to simultaneously communicate and withhold. Emerging in the 1980s, Tuymans pioneered a decidedly non-narrative approach to figurative painting, instead exploring how information can be layered and embedded within certain scenes and signifiers. Based on preexisting imagery culled from a variety of sources, his works are rendered in a muted palette that is suggestive of a blurry recollection or a fading memory.”

**Step 2: Describing Your Technique, Process & Style**

Up next, it is time to discuss and describe your technique, visual language, and style. Start with the basics first, your technique. In the previous chapter, you mentioned your artistic discipline(s). Now, it is time to expand on them by specifying your materials. This will be the first question. Up next, we want to expand on the so-called unique selling proposition of your technique. This is the second question where you will explain why your technique is unique, personal, or relevant.

2.1 Answer the following questions in a single text next to “🡪 Answer”

1. What materials do you use in your artistic practice, and how do you use them?

(Don’t refer to them as mixed media or mixed technique, but specify all used materials individually and also how you use them)

1. What makes your technique unique?   
   (Do you use or manipulate your medium in a unique way? Do you use it on a unique or unconventional surface? Do you have a unique combination of materials? Do you have a unique way or process of using conventional materials?)

**🡪 Answer: …**

2.2 Copy and paste the following prompt into ChatGPT. Copy and paste your answer above in bold below the prompt. Press enter.

*“Dear ChatGPT, I am writing a chapter for my artist statement, discussing my technique and process. In this artist statement, I aim to mention all individual materials and how I use them and what makes my technique unique. Can you please assist me by summarizing and rewriting the following text? Write in fluent English with a formal, neutral, and concise tone, avoiding pompous language:”*

If you are satisfied with the result, copy and paste the text into the final page of the spreadsheet next to “Technique & process.” If you would like to see another version, ask ChatGPT to regenerate the answer. Once more, avoid the typical overly pompous language by ChatGPT.

**Step 3: Describing Your Style**

The aforementioned technical aspects result in a certain visual outcome, a personal visual language known as your art style. Once more, you can start broad before discussing the characteristic aspects in detail. As a result, we must answer the question defining our overall style (tip: an efficient way to find the term for your style or niche is by finding established artists whose works are in a similar aesthetic or style and having a look at how their overall style or niche is described in biographies and press releases). Afterward, we need to answer the question of what our unique selling proposition is of our style. What makes it stand out?

3.1 Answer the following questions in a single text next to “🡪 Answer”

1. What is your overall visual style or niche?   
   (e.g., hyperrealism, reminiscent of Old Master painting, naturalistic figuration, expressive figuration, text art, minimal abstraction, gestural abstraction, conceptual abstraction, etc.)
2. What makes your work stand out, and what are your visual trademarks?  
   (Do you have a typical color palette, recognizable brushwork, a typical texture, mark-making, unique compositional elements, recurring visual motifs, the use of gradients, the use of flat planes of color, etc.)

**🡪 Answer: …**

3.2 Copy and paste the following prompt into ChatGPT. Copy and paste your answer above in bold below the prompt. Press enter.

*“Dear ChatGPT, I am writing a chapter for my artist statement, discussing my style. In this artist statement, I aim to describe my overall style and niche and also what makes my style stand out visually. Can you please assist me by summarizing and rewriting the following text? Write in fluent English with a formal, neutral, and concise tone, avoiding pompous language:”*

If you are satisfied with the result, copy and paste the text into the final page of the spreadsheet next to “Style.” If you would like to see another version, ask ChatGPT to regenerate the answer. Once more, avoid the typical overly pompous language by ChatGPT.

**Step 4: Discussing Your Subject Matter & Communicating Your Vision**

To become a successful artist, you need to have a clear vision and subject matter. However, you don’t have to look too far or make something up just to be able to say something. Instead, ask yourself the following questions and try to answer them as honestly as possible. If you cannot answer them, simply skip the question and move to the next. If you are struggling to answer the questions, make sure to find inspiration in the examples written down below each question. But first, try to answer them as spontaneously and directly as possible.

4.1 Answer the following questions in a single text next to “🡪 Answer”

1. Why do you create art?

(e.g., contemplation, a creative urge, a meditative act, a therapeutic act, you want to tell a story, you want to make an impact, etc.)

1. What do you wish to find or achieve by creating art?

(e.g., catharsis or expressing your emotions, communicating or expressing emotions, raising awareness, pursuing innovation, finding beauty, escapism, etc.)

1. Does your art have a message?

(e.g., a social message, a political message, an environmental message, a message of self-care or self-love, identity politics, etc.)

1. Are there recurring themes in your art?

(e.g., the human condition, technological progress, identity, migration, nature, spirituality, etc.)

1. Does your art explore philosophical issues?

(e.g., metaphysics, ethics, the sublime, illusions, etc.)

1. Is your art part of an artist persona as *Gesamtkunstwerk*

(e.g., Banksy, Jonathan Meese, etc.)

1. Does your art have a dominant narrative or multiple narratives?

(e.g., sharing or dealing with more personal and intimate narratives, mythological narratives, everyday events, illustrating socio-political issues, etc.)

1. Does your art engage with the (recent) art-historical canon?

(e.g., art-historical references, dealing with contemporary art issues, reflecting on the state of art, redefining artistic disciplines, etc.)

1. Does your art explore art for the sake of art?

(e.g., stylistic innovation, exploring the possibilities and limitations of a certain technique, exploring a specific methodology or process, etc.)

**🡪 Answer: …**

4.2 Copy and paste the following prompt into ChatGPT. Copy and paste your answer above in bold below the prompt. Press enter.

*“Dear ChatGPT, I am writing a chapter for my artist statement, discussing my subject matter and vision. Can you please assist me by summarizing and rewriting the following text? Write in fluent English with a formal, neutral, and concise tone, avoiding pompous language:”*

If you are satisfied with the result, copy and paste the text into the final page of the spreadsheet below the first key sentences of your artist statement. If you would like to see another version, ask ChatGPT to regenerate the answer. Once more, avoid the typical overly pompous language by ChatGPT, but also the following common mistakes:

* Don’t invent new terms or -isms. Inventing a new art movement for your own art is a common but ridiculed mistake. A movement consists of multiple artists. Don’t confuse a movement with a personal style; otherwise, we would have as many movements as artists.
* Avoid clichés that are overused and, in essence, say nothing. Think of “expressing feelings and emotions,” “inspired by the world around us,” or “a unique combination of abstraction and figuration.”
* Don’t make your art sound overly complex, intellectual, or pompous. Remain formal, and do not try to oversell yourself. If your art does not consist of a clear message, narrative, or socio-political statement, that is fine. The medium can be the message. The process can be the message. And so on.

**Step 5: Discussing Your Development & Different Periods**

When revisiting and discussing your oeuvre, we can identify different periods, works, series, and milestone exhibitions that have defined your art and career. In order to communicate about your art adequately, you must first understand it. Therefore, it is very important to survey and overview your work from this retrospective perspective. Identify these series, moments, and exhibitions, capture their significance, and put them down into writing. Let’s start with the development and different periods. Describe these periods using the same questions and things to look for, as we have discussed in the previous three steps (technique, style & subject matter). Dedicate a separate paragraph to each period in your answer.

5.1 Answer the following question in a single text next to “🡪 Answer”

Are there different periods throughout your career? What distinguished them, and what evolution do you see?

(e.g., periods of using a specific technique or color, an overall tendency towards abstraction, an ongoing development of reducing your visual language to make things more minimal and purer, etc.)

**🡪 Answer: …**

5.2 Copy and paste the following prompt into ChatGPT. Copy and paste your answer above in bold below the prompt. Press enter.

*“Dear ChatGPT, I am writing a chapter for my artist statement, discussing my development and different periods of work. Can you please assist me by summarizing and rewriting the following text? Write in fluent English with a formal, neutral, and concise tone, avoiding pompous language:”*

If you are satisfied with the result, copy and paste the text into the final page of the spreadsheet next to “Different periods & development.” If you would like to see another version, ask ChatGPT to regenerate the answer.

E.g., Excerpt of the artist biography of Marina Abramovic by Lisson Gallery: “(…) She created some of the most important early works in this practice, including Rhythm 0 (1974), in which she offered herself as an object of experimentation for the audience, as well as Rhythm 5 (1974), where she lay in the centre of a burning five-point star to the point of losing consciousness. These performances married concept with physicality, endurance with empathy, complicity with loss of control, passivity with danger. They pushed the boundaries of self-discovery, both of herself and her audience. They also marked her first engagements with time, stillness, energy, pain, and the resulting heightened consciousness generated by long durational performance.”

**Step 6: Discussing Different Series**

Now it is time to expand on different series that have defined your oeuvre. What series were breakthrough moments, stylistically, conceptually, or even career-wise? Make sure to also mention the date or period of the series (e.g., 2020-2022). Dedicate a separate paragraph to each series in your answer.

6.1 Answer the following question in a single text next to “🡪 Answer”

Are there any series throughout your oeuvre?

(e.g., Was there a specific series of works dedicated to an overarching concept? Was there a specific series dedicated to a specific technical inquiry? Was there a series of works tackling a specific topic over and over again? Etc.)

**🡪 Answer: …**

6.2 Copy and paste the following prompt into ChatGPT. Copy and paste your answer above in bold below the prompt. Press enter.

*“Dear ChatGPT, I am writing a chapter for my artist statement, discussing different periods series throughout my oeuvre. Can you please assist me by summarizing and rewriting the following text? Write in fluent English with a formal, neutral, and concise tone, avoiding pompous language:”*

If you are satisfied with the result, copy and paste the text into the final page of the spreadsheet next to “Different series.” If you would like to see another version, ask ChatGPT to regenerate the answer.

E.g.,: Excerpt of the artist biography of Cao Fei by Sprüth Magers: “(…) Cao’s earlier works observe with great accuracy and empathy the longings, ambitions and desires that people often live out online today, and the consequences this has for their self-image. Video and photographs in her Cosplayers (2004) series, for instance, show teenagers dressed in the colorful costumes of Japanese manga warriors. They roam urban and suburban landscapes during the day, only to spend their evenings in the cramped confines of their families’ small apartments. They are the protagonists of China’s first youth subculture mediated by the Internet, and their daydream-like role-playing seems an understandable reaction to the unforeseeable upheavals of the society in which they live.”

**Step 7: Individual Works**

To conclude, in preparation for an exhibition or simply to document your specific intentions with specific works, we can expand on the individual artworks as well. Dedicate a separate paragraph to each series in your answer. Make sure to also mention the title, year, technique, and dimensions of the artwork.

7.1 Answer the following question in a single text next to “🡪 Answer”

Can you discuss some individual artworks?

(e.g., mention all the metadata, what do we see in these works, what does it mean, what was the technique, what is the overall feeling of the artwork, which place does the artwork have within your oeuvre, etc.)

**🡪 Answer: …**

7.2 Copy and paste the following prompt into ChatGPT. Copy and paste your answer above in bold below the prompt. Press enter.

*“Dear ChatGPT, I am writing a chapter for my artist statement, discussing individual artworks. Can you please assist me by summarizing and rewriting the following text? Write in fluent English with a formal, neutral, and concise tone, avoiding pompous language:”*

If you are satisfied with the result, copy and paste the text into the final page of the spreadsheet next to “Individual works.” If you would like to see another version, ask ChatGPT to regenerate the answer.

E.g., Excerpt on Adel Abdessmed by Galleria Continua: “(…) In Jam Proximus Ardet, the Last Video (2021), the artist uses fire. The burning of a ship in the middle of the sea becomes the mausoleum for all the tragedies that have marked the Mediterranean Sea, which both connects and separates the artist’s country of origin from his country of adoption. The title of the work comes from Virgil’s poem the Aeneid, in which the main protagonist realises that the city of Troy is doomed to destruction. The brief video loop breaks with the narrative, opting for a single shot, a flickering image that seems to be coming closer to us. A ship in flames looms on the horizon, we hear the deafening sound of flames devouring the boat… Gradually, we make out the figure of the captain, who is none other than the artist himself. Stoic, standing on the deck, seemingly oblivious to the drama unfolding behind him, he remains at the helm.”

**Step 8: Writing & Using Your Artist Statement**

8.1 Writing Your Artist Statement

**Short bio:**

…

**Technique & process:**

…

**Style:**

…

**Subject matter & vision:**

…

**Different periods & development:**

…

**Important series:**

…

**Individual works:**

…

8.2 Using your artist statement

Congratulations! You have written a professional and extensive artist statement that can be used as a personal tool and foundation for future texts, interviews, discussions, and more. If you want to have one fluent text, feel free to remove the subheadings “Short bio,” “Technique & process,” and so on. However, for personal use, it is very useful to have these subheadings in place to be able to swiftly find the right information. It is also advised to revisit your artist statement at least once per year to add new individual artworks or series, but also to revisit all other questions to make sure that your text is up to date with your ongoing development when it comes to your technique, style, and subject matter.

If you have any further questions about the use of this document, please write us at [info@contemporaryartissue.com](mailto:info@contemporaryartissue.com)