

## Artist's Statement

### How to Write an Artist's Statement - *Art and Artists Magazine*

Adapted from: [http://www.ebsqart.com/ArtMagazine/za\\_400.htm](http://www.ebsqart.com/ArtMagazine/za_400.htm)

#### What is an Artist's Statement?

An artist's statement is a short document written by the artist which provides a window into the artist's world. It offers insight into a single piece or an entire body of work and by describing the artist's creative process, philosophy, vision, and passion. It enlightens and engages while at the same time giving the audience - potential buyers, exhibition curators, critics, fellow artists, or casual browsers - the freedom to draw their own conclusions. An artist's statement reads easily, is informative, and adds to the understanding of the artist.

#### Why should I write an Artist's Statement?

People who love an artist's work generally want to know more about the artist. Your statement will help your viewers answer questions they may have about your art. When viewers have answers, their delight in what you do increases, and they have more reasons to take your work home with them. The artist's statement is therefore an effective marketing tool, building a bridge between artist and audience. But the artist's statement isn't just for them. In putting your art into words, you might find that ideas and thoughts you once had become more concrete. Your writing may open new channels in your mind and take you in new artistic directions. You might discover more about yourself.

#### What information should be included?

Well, this is really a matter of personal choice, but there are a few questions you might choose to answer:

Why do you create art and what does it mean to you?

How does the creation of art make you feel? What emotions do you wish to convey?

If the statement refers to a specific piece, why did you choose to represent this piece in this way? What do you call the piece and why? What materials did you use? What are the dimensions of the piece?

What inspires you? How are your inspirations expressed in your work?

What message are you trying to convey to the viewer?

How much time is spent creating your pieces?

How is your work a reflection of you?

What artists (living or dead) have influenced you?

What is your vision/philosophy?

What are your goals for the future?

What are your techniques and style and how do these relate to the medium?

How do your techniques and style relate to your vision/philosophy?

### **How long should it be?**

The answer to this question depends on what kind of person you are. Are you the kind of person that gets right to the point, or do you like to tell stories and paint images for people in words? The key here is to express how you feel and create a statement that stands on its own and makes you happy. Remember that people usually don't have the patience to spend a lot of time reading, so it's better to err on the shorter side. Several sources recommend an artist's statement be around three paragraphs (total of 100 words), and others say that a statement of up to one page is acceptable.

### **What kind of language should I use?**

Keep your statement clear and concise. Avoid flowery language and "artspeak". This only lengthens and weakens your statement. From a business perspective, the more you can relate to your viewer, the better your chances are of selling your work. Some specific terms you may wish to mention in your statement are the elements of art (line, colour, shape, value, space, form, and texture), and the principles of design (balance, emphasis, movement, harmony/unity, pattern, rhythm, proportion, and variety). These terms have the advantage of being art-related without being esoteric and pretentious. Use language that is comfortable to you, and let your words flow.

### **Can an artist's statement change?**

Yes! An artist's statement is a living document that should change because you change. Your statement could be updated at about the same rate that you might update a résumé, in the least. At the most, review your statement each time you create a new piece, to see if your thoughts still have meaning for you. Review your statement when you experience profound events that alter your creative vision.