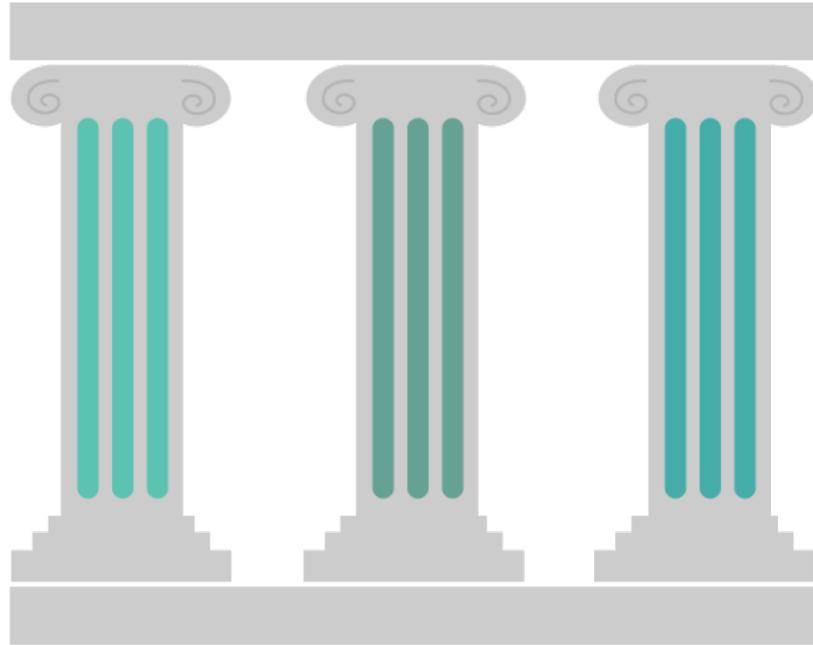


TYPES OF ART WRITING



- ARTIST BIO
- PROJECT STATEMENT
- ARTIST STATEMENT

ARTIST BIO

- “An artist’s bio is a short paragraph, written in prose, and in the third person. It tells more about the way your life has influenced your work than a CV, which is in point form.
- A bio is about you, the artist, as opposed to an “artist’s statement” which is more about the work and the themes behind it, and is written in first person.”



State your name and business

State basic, introductory, “profile” information

- ◆ Name and medium you work in; special techniques
- ◆ Where you are from; where you live and work
- ◆ Key themes; what you hope to accomplish with your art
- ◆ Showing history; any significant exhibitions
- ◆ Art-related education
- ◆ Awards; other professional achievements
- ◆ Other art-related work, such as being a curator or art technician

Remember to be...

1. Context specific

→ Your Bio changes depending on what it's for.
Grant, Exhibition, Online, Scholarship, Job...

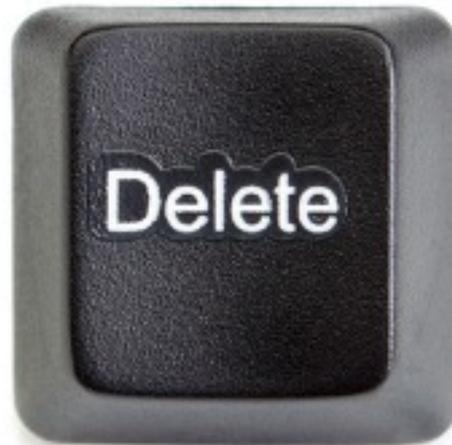
2. Confident, but not Grandiose

→ You do not need to over-do it. Plain, clear and understandable bios carry depth and weight because they communicate maturity and groundedness. Don't panic if you are not an Award Winner.



Less is more

- Most Bios are 100 words. Some can be 200 (your website maybe). If you have trouble deleting, ask a friend to help.



Include unique information or specific surprising info?!

- Do you do something different in your practice than what can be expected?
- Is your methodology following a unique conceptual framework that is specific to you?
- If there is anything particularly stand-out or only yours about your practice, it's good to communicate it efficiently in your Bio.



[LINK](#)

Example Bio (website)

Zinnia Naqvi is a visual artist based in Tkaronto/Toronto and Tiohtià:ke/Montreal. Her work uses a combination of photography, video, writings, archival footage and installation. Naqvi's practice questions the relationship between authenticity and narrative, while dealing with larger themes of colonialism, cultural translation, language, and gender. Her projects often invite the viewer to question her process and working methods.

Naqvi's works have been shown across Canada and internationally. She received an honorable mention at the 2017 Karachi Biennale in Pakistan and was an Artist in Residence at the Art Gallery of Ontario as part of [EMILIA-AMALIA Working Group](#). She is a recipient of the 2019 New Generation Photography Award organized by the Canadian Photography Institute of the National Gallery of Canada in partnership with Scotiabank. She has a BFA in Photography Studies from Ryerson University and is currently an MFA Candidate in Studio Arts at Concordia University.



PROJECT STATEMENT

- The project statement is a much more specific description of one body of work. A photographer should have a project statement for every body of work.
- Photographers will most likely need several versions of their project statements. A short, concise statement is appropriate for an artist's website and in most cases is also sufficient for submitting work to juried shows and competitions and for gallery exhibitions.
- A photographer may need a longer, more in-depth statement for academic uses, exhibition catalogs, museum exhibitions, or other printed or high profile uses. This guide offers advice and examples for how to write a succinct statement for your website and other general uses.
- On average, is $\frac{3}{4}$ page long or approximately 200-250 words.

Contents of a Project Statement

- Work Title, Year
- Introductory statement clearly saying what the work is about.
- Explanation of the concept and how the work functions in its materials (photographs, Video, projection, etc..)
- Context of the work and what the work accomplishes or the questions it sets out to ask.

Example Project Statement

Zinnia Naqvi

I Just Have A Lot of Feelings (2018 - ongoing) is a series of text and multimedia pieces dealing with everyday interactions with racism, misogyny and experiences within the art world. Often they use humour, sarcasm or irony to point to these instances in a way that is both unique to the instance and yet relatable to a wider audience.

The structure or design of each piece has been framed around a particular web icon that pertains to the statement. This is done to draw reference to the internet as the way in which many people share uncomfortable experiences that occur in their everyday lives; through the use of social media. The texts themselves are personal accounts of “microaggressions” that often point to larger structural issues.



The Artist Statement



From Laurie Milner's "Artist Statement Guide"

- There are no rules for writing an artist statement.
- There are many types and purposes for artist statements.
- Write for the audience and context.

That being said, here are some suggestions:

1. Writing

- a. *Write in the first person. This is a statement of your understanding of what you are doing, the ideas you are working with, and the field in which you work.*
- b. *Avoid jargon and needlessly complex language.*
- c. *Be precise and specific. Avoid abstract concepts and unnecessary words.*
- d. *Start with a strong, clear, informative and engaging opening sentence.*
- e. *Edit and revise until each sentence and the statement as a whole communicate your understanding of the work in a vivid, clear and succinct way.*

2. Components

- a. *Right up front state WHAT ideas and issues concern you. Everything else in your statement follows from this, providing background and detail. (Hook the reader)*
- b. *The HOW of your method/process is the link between the ideas and issues that concern you and your work.*
- c. *Through your writing, DEMONSTRATE the kind of analysis that interests you. Never tell your readers how they will experience the work, but guide them toward your understanding of it. (Show, don't tell)*
- d. *WHY: Provide insight into the meaning of the work in such a way that it leaves room for interpretation.*

Reminders

Things To Avoid

- **Generalizations**

Be specific when you write. Avoid sweeping generalizations and vague language. Say exactly what you mean. Analyze every single word and make sure you are not adding “fluff” in an attempt to sound deep, artsy, or smart. You should sound like yourself, just more polished and succinct.

- **Reticence**

Admittedly, there is a fine line between presenting your work confidently and sounding arrogant (see “Self-importance” below), but sounding like you believe in yourself and your work is essential.

- **Artspeak**

Throwing in technical terms, art history or flowery language will only put the reader off and detract from your concept.

- **Self-importance**

Declaring your work to be exceptional or sure to change the way the world looks at art is unnecessary and off-putting. If it is brilliant, it will be obvious to the viewer.

- **Past tense**

You are writing about work that is being viewed in the present tense, and you should write about it that way, regardless of when it was made. Writing in the present tense is active and lends a feeling of relevance and vitality.

Things to consider

- Who is your audience? This is always fluctuates and changes the tone and demands of your artist statement.
- What is this statement being used for?
- What does your statement convey about you as an artist and/or as a professional?

TIPS (repeated)

- Be honest.
- Try to write the way you speak or think. Be yourself.
- Avoid repetition or sentence structure that is repetitious.
- Significant details or information should be highlighted in the sentence structure.

Artist Statement example

Jacinthe Loranger

PRATIQUE ARTISTIQUE

Je mets en scène sous forme de tableaux, sculptures et installations, divers objets, nourritures et animaux qui font référence à des natures mortes. Mes compositions sont parfois macabres, souvent lumineuses et contiennent plusieurs éléments que l'on pourrait retrouver dans un cabinet de curiosité contemporain. Mes œuvres, abordent les grands thèmes de l'amour, la mort et la sexualité sous forme de grandes tragédies comiques, à la fois banales et ridicules. Je crée des fictions fantastiques en intégrant des composantes de divers univers parallèles sous un même toit.





Marigold Santos

My interest lies in transformation, as I reflect on fleeting childhood memories and my family's immigration to Canada as an autobiographical point of departure. Experiences as history, fragmented into memory, and re-told to become personal myth are negotiated through the act of *drawing*, one that operates in narrative, and in fiction. This is the realm of play where I situate my work.

Notions of attachment/separation, being grounded or uprooted, ultimately relates back to investigations of 'self' and 'home' and are explored through an invented temporality (where I look forward, sideways, upside down, while simultaneously looking backward into a history never physically lived) manifesting in conceptual hybrids and multiple distribution of selves.

In these recent works, imagery arises from the otherworldly; figures mobilize and embrace growth, transience, and a self in process that provide loopholes as points of entry that makes aware the contradictions that dwell, and do not seek to resolve awkwardness and discomfort.

It is in ambiguity and lack of absolutes that I draw upon my imagery; one that supports a narrative that is disjointed, accumulative, and plural. It has become a language in my own story telling that continues to change and evolve, a language that is constantly being defined by the relationship of one image to the next.

We like precariousness.

Links and Sources

Artist Statement Websites

1) Getting Your Sh*t Together making life better for artists - Artist Statement Guidelines

<https://www.gyst-ink.com/artist-statement-guidelines>

2) The Creative Independent - How To Write An Artist Statement

<https://thecreativeindependent.com/guides/how-to-write-an-artist-statement/>

3) "Don't Quote Deleuze": How to Write a Good Artist Statement

https://www.artspace.com/magazine/interviews_features/art-bytes/dont-say-deleuze-how-to-write-a-good-artist-statement-54662