

WRITING AN ARTIST'S STATEMENT: ONE APPROACH

COLLECT INFORMATION:

Learn as much as you can about who will be reading your statement.

For example:

- What type of art does the gallery usually display?
- What do viewers who frequent this gallery expect in display material?
- What are the criteria for awarding the grant you are applying for?

GENERATE IDEAS:

Take time to explore different ideas from different perspectives. This is often the best way to discover something that will make your statement stand out from those of other competing artists so that you and your work will be selected for the show or for the grant.

1. Brainstorm ideas about the **person(s) who will read** your statement:
What do they already know? What do they need to know? What is their bias or attitude to you and your work?
2. Freewrite about the **appearance** of your work. Describe it through the eyes of a viewer to the gallery.
3. Freewrite on the **impression** your work may have on a viewer. Describe their positive and negative thoughts and reactions.
4. Freewrite what you, the artist, would say in response to these thoughts, especially the negative ones.
5. Freewrite on how you came to produce these pieces and why they are important to you. Include personal stories or theory if you wish.

MAKE A PLAN:

First, clarify your purpose in writing this statement: What do you want to happen or have the reader think as a result? For example, "I want to convince the gallery to show my paintings because they fit with the context of other shows in this gallery."

Next, organize your ideas in chunks of information that will answer your reader's main questions and help you achieve your purpose. (For the purpose above, you would need to show how your paintings fit with others in the gallery.) Sketch out a possible plan for your statement.

WRITE A QUICK DRAFT:

Now that you have some ideas and a plan, you are ready to write a draft of your Statement. Write quickly as if you were talking to your reader(s). Imagine yourself answering their questions. If there are parts of your freewriting that you particularly like, incorporate them into your Statement.

REVISE AND EDIT:

Leave your statement for a few days and then have another look at it. Read it out loud to see how it sounds. Pretend you are the intended reader(s). Revise if necessary to make your ideas clear and to avoid repetition. Check the organization of your ideas to make sure similar ones are chunked together in different paragraphs. Check for appropriate use of language: simple but correct. This is a good time to ask friends in your field to read your Statement and comment on it. Revise again in light of their feedback.

PROOFREAD:

Print your statement and proofread it carefully. Correct errors and print on high quality paper.