

### **An Artist's Statement:**

An artist statement is a brief (two-page double spaced for us) document that describes and contextualizes the artist's work, ideas, and intentions. Ideally your statement will be informative, engaging, and will help the viewer understand what you believe to be the most important aspects of your artwork. Your goal is to lure the viewer to consider the work more deeply, to prompt their curiosity. For our purposes, the artist's statement will be used as a basis for your oral presentation and your wall statement, and as such is scored as part of the professional presentation of your work.

#### *Getting Started:*

Do some brainstorming / journaling / blogging on these questions, as though you were interviewing yourself.

- Why do you make art?
- What subjects do you prefer? Why?
- Describe the physical aspects of the work.
- What processes and techniques do you use? Why?
- What do you see in your artwork?
- What are your goals and aspirations as an artist?
- Who or what inspires you?
- How does your work fit into contemporary art practice?
- What criteria do you use to judge your own work?

#### *Writing Your Statement:*

These statements are about *your* work, not someone else's, so they must be authentically yours. In this way using first person present tense makes sense, however too much "I" in a statement can seem egocentric, and feel repetitive to the reader. You should be able to talk about your work somewhat objectively as well as subjectively.

Stylistically you should use your own voice and style, while being honest and clear. Avoid repetition of words and phrases and look for synonyms. Choose language that isn't exclusive to artist's publications but is available to the general public. Don't use run on sentences and cut out extraneous text.

- Optional: You might start with a quote that reflects your concepts. It can come from literature, other classes, interests or artists. It could act as a lure to draw readers in. Alternatively, you can start with an evocative sentence of your own.
- Opening Paragraph: Like an essay, the first sentences should give the gist of your concepts in what might be called a *thesis statement*. You will then go on to explore this in detail in the rest of the statement. When you write this sentence think of why you made this work, describe your aspirations, and what ideas are you exploring? For Example: "In this project I am exploring the tension between desire and temptation" or "this project examines the confusion presented by conflicting cultural influences."
- If the statement is *not with* the physical work, you should also describe the physical aspects of the work. If it is in a catalog with pictures, you may still need to describe movement or aspects that are not apparent. For our purposes, the faculty will be receiving the text before seeing your work in some cases. Therefore, you should briefly describe the work.

- What are the roots and tangents of your concepts? Unpack them, decode them, explore them.
- How have you developed these concepts in this work?  
(Juxtaposing images, appropriating cultural memes and changing them, etc.)
- How do these concepts relate to the wider world?  
(You can see that the topics are not just your personal story but how your personal interests are broader than yourself.)
- What are your expectations for the experience of your audience?
- How does the form / media/ technique support the content of your work?  
(Using particular media relates to this topic because of the history of this media...)
- Closing sentences summarize your thoughts, reach a conclusion, and/or leave your audience with something to contemplate.

*Sometimes, artists choose not to explain too much because they feel this keeps the viewer from experiencing the work fully for themselves. Because we are in an educational situation, we want you to be able to explain, but you may still choose how much to explain. You might consider asking leading questions. If you choose to divulge personal information for the faculty reading of this statement, you may choose to exclude it for the wall statement. It is alright to have the statements differ in this way.*