

# anatomy of an artist statement

Building an artist statement? Use this tool to tease open key ideas. What's important to your work? What drives you as an artist?

## what

- Media/Materials/Tools
- Form
- Subject

## who

- Audience
- Community
- Participants

## where

- Location
- Context

## why

- Motivations
- Narratives
- Influences

## when

- Time
- Duration
- History
- Trajectory

## how

- Process
- Inspiration
- Meta-processing
- Identity
- Steps

  
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# anatomy of an artist statement

## what

**Media/Materials/Tools** - With what media do you work? What materials and implements do you use?

**Form** - What are the formal concerns of the work? Consider shape, size, volume, color, brushwork, line, composition, balance, framing, gesture, perspective, proportions, light, space, smell, taste, texture, sound, etc.

**Subject** - What does your work depict? What imagery do you use? What is its significance? Is there any symbolism?

## where

**Location** - Where do you make your art? Is it site specific? Where is it located? What is the ideal location?

**Context** - Where do you situate yourself and your art in an art historical context? In a social context?

## when

**Time** - When was the artwork made?

**Duration** - How long does your work take? How much labor does it require? Is there hidden labor in your work?

**History / Context** - Would the work mean something different if it had been made at a different time? Are you referring to a historical event? Are you in conversation with a historical event?

**Trajectory** - How has your work changed over time? Why or in what ways? What is your current work doing that your prior work isn't doing? What did past work aim for or accomplish that your current work is not focused on?

## how

**Process** - How do you make your work? What tools and materials do you use? Where do you source materials? What is your way of making? Do you collaborate?

**Inspiration** - How do you find inspiration? What is that experience like? What's your ideal work environment?

**Meta-processing** - How do you develop your ideas? Is documentation important to your work? Do you take notes as you're making work? How do you know a piece is done?

**Identity** - How does your identity inform your art practice? Who are you besides an artist? How do these other parts of yourself affect your practice?

**Steps** - What do the early, middle, and late stages look like? Are there defined steps? Who is invited to give feedback on unfinished work? How do you revise, refine, or reuse your work? Do you create series?

## who

**Audience** - Who is the audience for your work? Is this the ideal audience for your work? How does your audience change the work's meaning? What might the work mean to an imagined future audience?

**Community** - What is your interest in or connection to community? Is your work engaging a particular group? How and why?

**Participants** - Who participates in your work? What does that look like? Are you successful in getting people to engage with your work in the way you intend?

## why

**Motivations** - Why do you make work? What does art allow you to do or say that other modes don't? What space does art fill in your life?

**Narratives** - Was there an event or experience in your life that directed you towards artmaking? When can you first remember feeling like an artist? How do you figure out what a work is about? How do you see your work growing?

**Influences** - What influences your work and practice? What social, political, and environmental concerns influence your work? Has anything unexpected or surprising influenced your work? How did your work change in response?

## additional questions

What issues, problems, or obstacles are you facing in your practice?

Do you want your work to be doing something different than it is right now? Why?

Have you ever abandoned a project? Why?

Do you understand what you're doing as you're doing it?

How do you think about longevity?

How is your artwork changing right now?

Where do you see yourself going as an artist?

