WRITING AN ARTIST STATEMENT

Writing Guides

This excellent, short essay attempts to answer the questions what are the purpose and elements of an “ideal” artist statement and is recommended by the CIA ceramics faculty. To read an online version of this article, search the article title in *Art Full Text.*

See the chapters “How to Write About Your Art,” “How to Revise and Peer Review,” and “Writing Art Manifestos: Expressing Your Philosophy.”

Peggy Hadden’s article from chapter 3, *Make a Statement,* is also available on-line.

Goodwin’s informal style differs significantly from the other books. She coaches and encourages you through a variety of exercises to help you identify the ideas in your art and to write about these ideas in a way that connects with an audience.

“Chapter 2: Creating Your Artist’s Packet” includes a section on the artist’s statement with several examples.

Sayre, Henry M. *Writing About Art.* N/7476/.S29/1999 [library has several editions]
The focus of this book is on writing about someone else’s art, but the appendix “A Short Guide to Usage and Style: The Rules and Principles Most Often Violated in Writing About Art,” can be helpful when writing about your art.

Websites

[Writing an Artist Statement](http://www.clevelandarts.org/artiststatement), from the Writing Centre at the Emily Carr University of Art + Design

[Writing An Artist's Statement](http://www.clevelandarts.org/artiststatement), by Nita Leland

[Writing Your Artist Statement](http://www.clevelandarts.org/artiststatement), by Molly Gordon

Finding examples of artists’ statements

Examples of artists’ statements can be found in books, exhibition catalogs, and periodicals, and can provide useful models when writing your own. Some ways of finding these are as follows:

- For statements of 20th century artists, try this index:
  N/6490/.W7/R59/1996
Look up an artist’s name in the main section. The citation will refer you to a publication listed in the bibliography (pages 1-45).

- For books and exhibition catalogs that include artists’ statements, check the library’s online catalog. Using the “Advanced Search” option, select the "Subject" tab at the top. Select the “Art/Other Subject” option and search ARTISTS’ STATEMENTS. The following books contain examples of artists’ statements:
  
  * **Negotiating Small Truths.** ND/212/.N336/1999
  * **Beyond the Obvious: Rethinking Jewelry.** NK/7312/.B49/1999
  * Moser, Mary Anne and Douglas MacLeod. **Immersed in Technology: Art and Virtual Environments.** N/72/.T4/I48/1996
  * Stiles, Kristine and Peter Selz. **Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art: A Sourcebook of Artists’ Writings.** N/6490/.W7/T492/1996

- Artists’ statements can also be found in the library’s on-line databases. Each database includes different publications, so you may want to try more than one. The following are some tips for searching:
  
  **design and applied arts index**
  - Using the “quick search” feature, search the phrase “artist statement” (in the singular form). Then search the phrase “artists statement” (in the possessive form, but without the apostrophe). Each of the variations will give you different results.
  
  **Art Full Text**
  - Search for the phrase “artists statements” as a subject using the “advanced search” feature. To find a statement by a specific artist, search for the artist’s name and the phrase “artists statements” as keywords.

**CAN’T FIND ANYTHING?**

*Ask the library staff for help.*

[cia.edu/library](http://cia.edu/library)