

ARTIST STATEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Answer these 10 questions to get a jumpstart on your artist's statement. Jot your responses down on a fresh sheet of paper or open a new document on your computer. The first time through, just write—don't censor yourself. If you have vastly different bodies of work, you may want to go through this process for each one.

1. Describe your materials and working process in detail, including the scale and size of your work.

2. Why have you chosen the medium/media that you use?

3. What formal aspects of art are of primary interest to you?

4. Describe any themes, motifs, symbols, references, or images that recur in your work. What is their significance to you?



5. Are there particular aspects of your biography or your life experience that would help a viewer appreciate your work?

6. How do you hope a viewer will respond to your work?

7. List 3 to 5 adjectives that you feel are relevant to your work; then, list 3 to 5 adjectives, descriptions, or terms that are inaccurate, overused, or that you just don't like.



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8. What might surprise someone about your work?

9. What are some of the most common questions people ask about your work?

10. How has your work changed over time? How do you anticipate growing as an artist in the next five years or so?

Now, craft your statement using the following process:



Once you've answered all the questions, let the document sit for a day or two, and then take another look. Make adjustments if you'd like to. Then, go back through the document with a highlighter and flag any words or statements that you particularly like.



Look at the question groupings, and think of them as paragraphs.



Questions 1-3 address the formal aspects of your work--what viewers see and how it is made, as well as what particular qualities of the object itself interest you most (color, line, texture, etc.).



Questions 4 - 6 address themes and motifs that appear in your work that viewers might be curious about, and/or that you want to explain.



Questions 7 - 9 address the viewer's interpretation of your work. This is your chance to guide the reader and to correct any misconceptions.



By grouping the answers to these questions together, you can create a three-paragraph (roughly one page) statement that covers all the bases with a logical flow. Use the highlighted words and statements verbatim; feel free to continue to play with the wording of the other concepts. In addition to these three paragraphs, you can end with information from Question 10 to give readers a preview of where your work is headed. Remember, use unexpected adjectives, and avoid clichés! Make sure that the most common questions are addressed.



If you need guidance through this process, I'd love to help. By using your own words from this questionnaire, I can create a statement that is authentic to your voice. Also, as a collaborator, I can provide some of the distance and perspective that can make it challenging for artists to articulate the key ideas about their work. Contact me for a quote.

