

Your Artist Statement

You should prepare a brief oral presentation based on your artist statement.

This opening verbal statement, which begins to demonstrate art vocabulary and knowledge, is an important component of the review procedure. This opening verbal statement provides an opportunity for faculty to pursue a deeper line of questioning without having to steer you through an introduction.

Please avoid software compatibility problems, by pasting your artist statement, (500 words or less) as text, into an e-mail and send before the announced deadline.

It has been said by some that artists have trouble writing. It has been suggested that writing about art is much less important than making it. Some artists have even stated that their art speaks for them and that further communication is redundant.

However, there are those artists who are willing to translate and share their vision and purpose with people who do not easily understand visual communication. **The artist statement is very often a requirement of exhibition, professional representation, promotion, and requests for funding support.**

ULM art students pursue a university degree program that requires a specific level of writing competency. You learn to write, one year of English composition, in order to formally expose and record clear thinking. The written artist statement of purpose and philosophy can clearly state and verify the critical thinking that artists must perform. Just as the athlete, musician, and artist practice their craft, writing becomes easier and better with practice.

Your artist statement form, and content, should be clear and understandable. Please spell check and grammar check, as well as reality check, to make certain that you are saying what you intend

to say. By the time you have completed 33 credits in art, Art 1001, 1002, 1003, 1004, 2001, 2002, and five or six 2000 level art courses including some experience in your major concentration. It is a reasonable assumption that some personal philosophical reflection would have taken place. What is your reason for making art? What are your immediate goals? What are your future goals?

Concentrate on articulating your vision.

Don't make excuses or apologize for your work. Avoid dwelling on personal situations or traumas. Include comments that clarify and support your work.

Possible topics for inclusion in the artist statement:

What is your intention as an artist?

What is your method of execution—does it differ on individual works or are you series-oriented?

What is the content (meaning) of your work?

Do you deal with multiple subjects or do you concentrate on particular images?

Are your works realistic, abstract, symbolic?

Comment on your composition or picture building process.

What are the formal elements and principles employed?

What remarkable formal techniques are employed in your work; relative to line, shape, texture, value, color?

Does your work employ any unusual qualities relative to format, techniques, etc?

Without being cloying, what does your art mean to you?

Has your experience in a support course improved your efforts in your major area of concentration (i.e., certain drawing assignments suggesting a direction in painting?

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To avoid software compatibility problems, paste your artist statement, as text, into an e-mail and send to fassett@ulm.edu before the announced deadline.

Artist statement format

Name

Artist Statement (YEAR) Review number (insert 1, 2 or 3)

This paragraph begins the artist statement.

Please proofread your statement. It is highly recommended that you perform a Spell and a Grammar Check on the document and that it be read by several different people.

See next page for a sample artist statement (426 words).

Brian Fassett

Artist Statement

I am an artist, teacher and designer, not necessarily in that order. For years I told people that I was a graphic designer and, "by the way, I teach at the university." It's how I saw myself. I don't exactly know when my viewpoint changed. I'm still an active designer, though sometimes less often. I still make art, but now I know that I'm a teacher. I find that my thinking, my reading, my experimentation, my exploration are all directed toward better teaching of art and design, and not exclusively toward better personal studio performance. I certainly maintain a broader view of art than I would if I was not teaching, and I delight in it.

My eclectic tastes in image, medium, and process must certainly be post-modern though I have great respect, admiration, and affinity for the modern mindset. My personal fine art style in drawing, painting and sculpture has generally been figurative and naturalistic, but there is a distinct and recurring passion for non-objective sculptural form, both static and kinetic.

As a graphic designer I am, as is the case with most designers, a generalist. However as a specialist, typography is my unique strength. My typographic experience, ability, and interest have encompassed calligraphy, handset foundry types, hot metal line casting, letterpress and offset lithographic printing, computer photo setting, digital laser and desktop publishing page makeup systems. I am fascinated by the printed word and passionate about letterforms. I have always been in awe of the intrinsic beauty of language, mankind's greatest achievement, but its true significance would be diminished without the visual invention of the alphabet, subsequent development of typography, and high volume publishing. Carl Sagan so eloquently spoke of the book when he said, "For the price of a modest meal, you can contemplate the rise and fall of the Roman empire." The visual beauty of our symbols of language astounds me. I find their versatility in size, weight, color, proportion, texture, and placement to be unrivaled as elements of design.

Design is not a cosmetic addition. It is essential to survival. There is a desperate need for good design — for excellence, for good communication skills, for things to be done with purpose and conviction. One of the reasons I entered the design profession is that I saw so much bad design being done. I wanted to make a difference. Teaching art/design is the way to make a big difference. I can affect thousands of people with what I design, but I can affect millions of people with what my students will design.