

ARTIST STATEMENTS

*What we write about
when we write about ourselves*

McKnight Artist Fellowships for Musicians 2021

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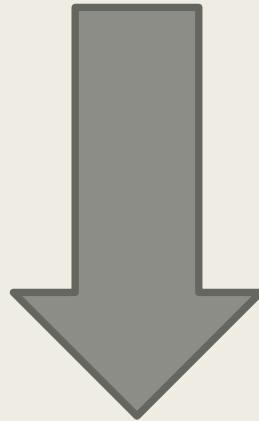
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What is your story and how can you best communicate that story to an audience?

GOALS

Creating a framework for understanding

- Context
- Guide
- Deepen



A succinct story that encapsulates your passion, vision, and what is most significant about you and your work.

STORY ELEMENTS

- Context – Political, technology, economic, philosophical
- Historical – Where do you fit into the timeline? Where did you come from?
- Physical – Medium, Style, Scale
- Subject Matter – Themes, Patterns, Topics
- Culture – How does your work connect to “now”
- Vision, Interests, Background, and Goals

EXPERIENCES

STRENGTHS

- Flexible, non-traditional format
- Offers variety
- Anecdotal/Story-driven
- Highlighting meaningful events
- Holds experiences that may not fit well in other formats

CHALLENGES

- Requires careful crafting
- Curatorial choices
- Capturing the scope of your work

RESUME

STRENGTHS

- Holds lots of information that doesn't read well in narrative form
 - *E.g. Awards, premiers, commissions*
- Formatted, easily read
- More neutral, traditional

CHALLENGES

- Less room for "voice"
- Formatting constraints
- More neutral, traditional
- Catagorizing, i.e. tidy little boxes
- Boring

ARTIST STATEMENT

STRENGTHS

- Open format, flexible
- Allows for a formalized voice/style
- Structured to carry a story/narrative
- Highlighting notable accomplishments and providing deeper context

CHALLENGES

- Long lists don't work well
 - *E.g. Awards, premiers, commissions*
- Traditional
- Requires careful crafting

ARTIST STATEMENT BASICS

- WHO you are...
- WHAT you do...
- WHY you do it...
- OR ... flip it and reverse it..
- WHY, WHAT, WHO

ARTIST STATEMENT EXERCISES

- **The Facts About Your Work:** (the basics, i.e. materials and process; use objective, not subjective language)
- **Influences/Inspirations** (where do you get your ideas?)
- **Using All Five Senses** (sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell)
- **Place/Space** (i.e. urban vs. rural; where can people find your work?)
- **Your Beliefs** (what are the driving forces behind what you believe?)

Where to say What

Find the best vehicle for your message.

Take any piece of information and ask yourself,

“Will this be best communicated in Audio, in Resume, or in a narrative artist statement?”

THE MIX



JUNK DRAWER

- Watch out for the Long Windup
- Language: clear, concrete, concise, active language.
- Look for patterns across your materials, themes and through lines.
- Identify “sticky” stuff; anecdotes, phrases, ideas, analogies, etc.
- More eyes and ears! Get feedback from people inside and outside your bubble. Look and listen*.
- The classic Inverted Pyramid of Journalism

Three Illustrations

Old Oxford
Inverted Pyramids
Work Samples

GOALS

Creating a framework for understanding

- Have you provided Context?
- Have you helped Guide your audience?
- Do your materials Deepen their understanding of you and your work?

How do *you* tell *your* best story?

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Career Consultations and Work of Art Toolkit

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