

MFA THESIS STATEMENT GUIDE

Some Guidelines to help you construct a statement that will be presented to all Thesis II critique faculty and will be useful for many applications upon your graduation. Thesis critiques with advisors and guest critics on Wednesdays may be used for discussion and evaluation of their Thesis II statements in addition to the studio work.

WRITING A THESIS ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Your written "thesis statement" is an artist's statement intended to provide clear insight into your MFA studio work while addressing its conceptual, biographical, historical and philosophical underpinnings.

SUGGESTED STRUCTURE

1. *Memoir*: life experience that's relevant to your art; how I got here.
 - What are the key ideas, issues, struggles, goals within your work or studio practice?
2. *Art conversation*: the artists or traditions your work draws from, reacts to, argues with.
 - What are your Influences (cultural, historical, theoretical, art historical, personal, biographical)?
3. *Process & imagery*: how you make the work; materials and techniques; iconography; description of individual works.
 - Describe the form of your work (materials, processes, tradition of work).
 - Describe your process and what the work looks like, etc.

ARTIST STATEMENTS: A QUICK GUIDE

Your artist statement is a written description of your work that gives your audience deeper insight into it. It may include your personal history, the symbolism you give your materials, or the issues you address; Your statement should include whatever is most important to you and your work. Your artist statement supplements the visual information in your portfolio. Other uses include the following: helping dealers and other arts professionals talk about and sell your work; providing background information for writers of articles, reviews, and catalogues; functioning as the basis for cover letters and grant proposals.

DO

- Keep it short, coherent and clear - No more than 1 page, double spaced.
- Write in simple sentences using simple words.
- Focus on topics not apparent from viewing your slides, such as symbols or metaphors, themes and issues underlying your work, materials, scale, etc.
- Proofread your statement for misspelled words, bad grammar, or confusing content.
- Rewrite your statement every time you complete a new body of work.

DON'T

- Imitate the theoretical or intellectualized style of writing used in critical art magazines.
- Never use weak phrases that reflect insecurities like "I am hoping to," "I am trying to," or "I would like to."