

Artist Biography

Assignment: near the end of the year after you have created several art pieces write a 150-200 word artist biography to accompany your collection of work.

What is an Artist Bio?

An artist's bio is a short paragraph, written in prose, and in the third person. It tells more about the way your life has influenced your work than a CV (aka resume), which is in point form. A bio is about you, the artist, as opposed to an "artist's statement" which is more about the work and the themes behind it, and is written in first person.

1) State the basics. The components of a bio are quite straight forward. Of course some of these may not apply to you, and you may want to change the order.

- Where you are from; where you live and work
- Name and medium you work in; special techniques
- Key themes; what you hope to accomplish with your art
- Art-related education; any well-known teachers, influences
- Awards; other professional achievements
- Other art-related work, such as being a curator or art writer
- Significant projects you are working on, upcoming exhibitions, collaborations

2) Find your nugget: There is something about you that makes your art unique. Make sure it's in your bio. Do you use unusual tools, materials, techniques? Are you tapping into an extraordinary childhood or event from your past? Are you inspired by a place, person, or issue that might resonate with clients or jurors?

3) Emphasize relevant experience: Who are you writing for and what is important to them? You may need a different bio for different events. If, for example, you are applying for an outdoor exhibition where you will be your own salesperson, such as Guelph's Art on the Street, be sure to emphasize any similar events so the organizers know you can deal with crowds, weather, etc.

4) Use the delete button: Editing yourself can be painful, but it's necessary. You want to paint a clear picture of who you are now as an artist. Unless you're just out of high school, your secondary school experience is probably not relevant. If you're applying to show your acrylics, the sculptures you created in the '90s may not do much for you. A website bio should be 200 words or fewer. Some applications will limit you to 100. Trim your bio and see if it reads better. You might be surprised.

5) Grab a proof reader: Make sure to get another set of eyes on your bio before you post/submit it. Typos make you look careless and unprofessional.

That's it! Still not sure you hit the sweet spot? Check out samples of artist's bios on in our Member Directory or your favourite artist's web site. www.guelpharts.ca/how-to-write-your-artist-s-bio-in-5-easy-steps