

Creating Your Artist Bio & Artist Statement

What is the difference?

Your Artist Bio and Artist Statement
can be difficult to write,
but they help others gain a deeper
understanding of
you and your photography.

Bio vs. Statement

Main differences

Artist Bio

- Is about **YOU**. ←—————→
- Written in the 3rd person. ←—————→
- Mentions your formal education or training, or maybe that you are self-taught.
- Mentions your top achievements.
- May summarize your photographic style.
- Mentions organizations to which you belong.

Artist Statement

- Is about your **WORK**.
- Written in the 1st person.
- Is usually specific about the current work exhibited.

Artist Bio

- The Artist Bio is first and foremost about **YOU**.
- Write in the 3rd person: “He...” or “she...”
- May include where you are from and currently living.
- Did you have formal training or are you self-taught?
- How did you get started? Who or what influenced you to develop your skills as a photographer?
- You may *summarize* your photographic work in your bio – common themes, techniques, style – but do not go into detail. For example, mention your love of B/W photography, or do you photograph only nature?
- Mention your top achievements: Major exhibitions, awards, sales.
- Mention any photography or art organizations to which you belong.
- Length should be between 80 – 140 words. Keep it short and concise. Write just enough to give the viewer a sense of you and your work. (Writing too much with too many details will bore the reader.)
- A bio is needed for competitions, gallery submissions, exhibition catalogues, press releases, websites, etc.
- Keep your bio up-to-date with new awards and accomplishments or if your artistic style changes.

Artist Statement

- The Artist Statement is about your **WORK**, not about you.
- Write in the 1st person: “I created this series of photographs after spending three months living in Venezuela...”
- ***The Artist Statement is usually specific about the current work exhibited.*** What have you photographed here and why?
- Or, it can be general about all your work when your subject matter and artistic style remain the same, and what you write here supports your current exhibited work as well.
- Explain any special techniques used in producing the photos in the show.
 - Do you use special software to enhance or manipulate your photographs?
 - Do you use special printing techniques such as giclee or gelatin silver?
 - Do you print on metallic paper or glass?
- The statement will change from show to show if the work being exhibited changes.

Common Mistakes

- Hyperbolic praise
 - Most people do not respond positively to trumped up language or jargon.
 - Most people respond most positively to simple and authentic messages.
- Laundry list of accomplishments
 - Keep exhibition highlights and accolades to a minimum.
 - Definitely include any outstanding prizes or inclusions in a particular event, but mention the distinction in the flow of your bio.
- Spelling and punctuation
 - Nothing undermines your credibility more quickly than spelling and grammar mistakes.

Your Artist Bio and Statement can be difficult to write, but remember, these two documents help others gain a deeper understanding of you and your photography.

→ The Artist Bio is about **YOU**.

→ The Artist Statement is about **YOUR WORK**.