

# Preparing Your Project Proposal

This course is designed for you to take full advantage of the opportunity to build a project that you are interested in and dedicated to. You will work on this project throughout the entire semester, periodically meeting with me to discuss your progress, and presenting progress to your peers for critique. You are expected to conduct all technical and conceptual research on your own. By the end of the semester, you should have a body of at least 20 professional quality photography-based works, or work of the equivalent amount.

On Wednesday (1/16/13) you will present your one page, single-spaced, proposal to me. I will give you suggestions and feedback. You will then have the weekend to make any needed revisions to your proposal. Final proposals are due on Monday (1/21/13) and no later. You will be expected to begin working on your project immediately.

## **WORKING QUESTIONS**

The following questions are offered to help you identify and articulate what you presently know, and don't know, about what you would like to do as your project. They in no way represent a complete list, but are simply meant to jump-start your own thinking.

## **FORMAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

### **Structure:**

- A. How might the pieces of the whole be strung together--what might be the sequence?
- B. How might time be used within the piece--how might the piece unfold in time?
- C. What is the central image or vehicle that carries the content?
- D. How does the form function?
- E. What is the shape or physicalness of the piece?

### **Technique:**

- A. What is its method of construction?
- B. What is the quality or style that gives distinctive character to the piece?
- C. Execution--quality/care.

## **CONCEPTUAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

- A. What is the mode of thought in which the artistic statement is presented: symbolic, rational, relativistic, etc.
- B. Define where your concerns are grounded: psychological, political, social, historical, fictional, autobiographical, etc.
- C. Examine the type of thinking predominant in both the forming and the experiencing of the piece: meditative, calculative, relativistic, linear, etc.

## **CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

- A. The piece is formed for what kind of audience, what number of people, what place, time, circumstance, context?
- B. What is the belief system in which the piece is founded?
- C. Out of what historical tradition does this work come--what are the resources you have at your disposal to find out all you want about that tradition?

(Taken From Peter Thompson's CCC Digital 2 Class)

## **Research Paper & Presentation**

For this assignment you will be required to give a 20-minute oral presentation on an established fine art photographer or a photographic process of your choice. If you research a photographer, you are required to write an accompanying 5-page paper (written in MLA format). Your presentation and research paper should explore the photographer's work in a critical manner, not just give a biographical overview of the artist.

If you choose to research a photographic process, you are expected give a thorough history of the process and a step-by-step walkthrough of how to complete the process. You will also go through the process yourself and turn in at least two resulting photographs. You should discuss your personal experiences in your writings as well. You are expected to write at least 3-pages in the MLA format.

Research should be conducted in the library and through credible Internet resources. Be sure to make documentation of all your sources and include a short bibliography with your paper. You must include at least 7 different sources, 4 of which should be professionally published sources (books/magazines). I would suggest organizing a PowerPoint to accompany your presentation that is comprised mainly of photographic images. Try not to include much text in your visual presentation; you should be speaking to us, not reading. When you show an image please include the title, date, and dimensions if possible. If you prefer not to create a PowerPoint, you have the option to bring in physical books and images to discuss.

I will bring in my laptop on the presentation days for you to use. If you prefer to bring your own, you are welcome to.

(Keep in mind, we may not have Internet access, so please do not rely on it.)

\*Topics are first come first serve, have a few choices in mind just incase someone picks a photographer or process before you.\*

### **Expectations:**

**Photographer:** 5-pages, double-spaced, MLA format, 20 min. visual presentation

**Process:** 3-pages, double-spaced, MLA format, 2 Prints, 20 min. demo/visual presentation

**Sign up for presentations will take place in class on Wednesday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>.**

**Presentations will be conducted on:**

**Monday, March 18<sup>th</sup> (Group B)  
&  
Wednesday, March 20<sup>th</sup> (Group A)**

# The Artist Statement

*"I'm not good at writing that's why I am a visual artist."*

Most people will view this as an excuse; especially those that don't get the opportunity to talk to you personally about your work. Most people communicate with words, and your artist statement introduces and communicates the language component of your art. People who come into contact with your art and want to know more will have questions. When you're there, they ask you and you answer. When you're not there, your artist statement answers for you.

Your artist statement is about facts, a basic introduction to your art; it's not instructions on what to experience, what to think, how to feel, how to act, or where to stand.

Most likely you will have multiple artist statements for different bodies of work. Or you can allow your statement to evolve with your work over time.

- Provide basic information: why you make your art, what inspires you to make it, what it signifies or represents, how you make it, what it's made out of, and perhaps briefly what it means to you
- Keep it simple and write in language that anyone can understand. Whenever possible use active rather than passive tense. (i.e. "I am" rather than "I'm trying")
- Make "I" Statements rather than "you" statements, people don't like to be told what to do. Give readers the option to agree or disagree.
- The language you use should match your work (i.e. whimsical, violent, scientific, etc.)
- Connect what your art expresses with the medium that you're expressing it in (Why are you using photography/video to complete this project?)
- Be specific, not vague. Avoid obscure references that require detailed explanations of a good amount of previous knowledge.
- Only include the story of what led to your art only if it's short, compelling, and extremely relevant.
- Re-read, read aloud, and have others proof read for you. Revise, revise, revise.

**Art/Work Pg 68-70**

**The Practical Handbook... Pg 75 - 80**

Revised text from:

<http://www.artbusiness.com/artstate.html>

<http://theabundantartist.com/how-to-write-an-artists-statement-that-doesnt-suck/>

## Submission Assignment

This assignment is designed to help you complete the next step in achieving your goals by building your résumé. Throughout the semester you are expected to be submitting to one of the following options:

- At least three juried exhibitions or magazines
- At least two artist residencies
- At least two grants or fellowships
- At least one graduate school
- At least two summer internships

Depending what you plan to submit to, please read the according chapters in the texts, along with:

Art/Work – Chapter 3, Chapter 8,  
Practical Handbook – pgs 15-16, pgs 75-81

The materials you will need are determined by what you submit to. Please discuss your plans with me and I can help you along the way.

As you submit to an opportunity, please turn in the same materials to me for grading purposes along with some form of confirmation of your submission (i.e. email, screen shot, copy of letter). The final deadline to have everything submitted to me is Wednesday, April 24<sup>th</sup>.

**\*Please check Blackboard for helpful links that I have posted.\***

# Writing a Cover Letter

## **Know your audience, and take them into account:**

What got you interested/excited about that company/school/residency? Do a little research and find something you like and respect about your prospective employer.

## **Know yourself:**

Your cover letter needs to sell you as a person, and give the company a reason to want you. Share your personality in a way that's relevant to the job you want.

## **Show, don't tell:**

If you're going to provide reasons why you're great, provide an undeniable example instead. You can tell anyone anything, but you have to provide an example to demonstrate why they should believe your claims.

## **What most employers care about:**

- . You're smart.
- . You'll get things done.
- . You'll fit in well with their corporate culture.

Before you sign and send your cover letter, do your best to ensure those three things are implied. Again, you don't ever want to actually say them, but you want your reader to think them when they've finished reading your letter

## **Never write the same letter twice:**

Every time you apply for a job your audience changes. The job changes. Chances are you've changed a bit, too. While you can certainly re-use elements from previous cover letters *when they are applicable*, it's very important to remember that the exact same cover letter is going to have a different impact on different people.

\*tip – use your personal letterhead for all of your submission materials.

# Writing a Curriculum Vitae and Résumé

“if it’s not related to your art it doesn’t belong on your résumé”  
-Bhandari / Melber

Art/Work pgs 55 – 66

Practical Handbook pgs 71 – 75

I find it helpful to keep a master personal CV that include EVERYTHING as way to keep track of my own record. Keep a separate CV that includes narrowed down, more professional experiences. Use your CV as a reference to create a catered résumé for applications.

Keep in mind when writing a résumé that you can rearrange the order of your sections, combine information and rename sections. Think about what you are submitting to, and what presentation makes the most sense for your submission.

Be sure to keep your format consistent throughout the entire document. Try to be clean, organized, and concise. There are many different ways to write a CV/résumé, decide what is best for you and stick with it. (When organizing, also put the most recent activities first.)

What to include:

## Contact Info

Name, address, phone #, email, website

## Education

Year, degree, school

## Related/Professional Experience

Year, position, description, location, city, state

**Exhibitions** (if you don’t have many, keep the general exhibitions title. As you get more shows, break it down into separate groupings that seem to fit)

Solo Exhibitions

Year, title, venue, city, state

Group Exhibitions

Year, title, venue, city, state, curator

Juried Exhibitions

Year, title, venue, city, state, juror

## Awards, Grants, Fellowships

Year, name, description

## Press

Author, title, publication name, city, state, date, pages

## Residencies

Year, name, location

## Collections

Name, city, state

## Self Promotion

### Set Up a Mailing List: (Include professional titles and specific names)

1. Press List (Focus on local.)
  - a. National art magazines
  - b. Regional and local art magazines
  - c. Metropolitan daily newspapers
  - d. Alternative press and free weekly papers
  - e. Neighborhood newspapers
  - f. College Newspapers
  - g. Radio Stations
  - h. Television stations
  - i. Online lists of art events (calendars)
  - j. Online publications that review art exhibitions
2. Art Professionals (Focus on local. If sending to “strangers” first determine if their taste fits your work. Use your own discretion.)
  - a. Museum directors
  - b. Curators, both independent and institutional
  - c. Commercial gallery dealers
  - d. Academics
  - e. Other artists
  - f. Art collectors
3. Personal Supporters (If they’ve showed interest in your work or supported your passion, keep them updated with your progress)
  - a. Collectors
  - b. Supporters
  - c. Family
  - d. Friends
  - e. Interested acquaintances

### Creating Announcement Cards:

1. Artist(s)’ name(s)
2. Name of exhibit
3. Dates (Opening/Closing receptions, and duration it will be on display)
4. Regular gallery hours for the exhibition
5. Name of gallery, location, or website
6. Address
7. Phone number or email address (of gallery and/or yours if it’s a solo show)

### Writing a Press Release:

1. Start with:
  - a. Date of the press release
  - b. Name of the exhibition
  - c. Name(s) of the artist(s)
  - d. Exhibition curator (if any)
  - e. Name of the gallery

- f. Dates of the exhibit
- g. Reception time and date (if any)
- 2. Include in the body:
  - a. Summarize the event
  - b. Names of participating artists and curator
  - c. Theme of the exhibition / curators view
  - d. Briefly cover the work of each artist
- 3. Conclude with :
  - a. The address or location
  - b. Regular gallery hours
  - c. Name and email/phone # of a person to contact for info

### **Publicizing Your Website:**

- 1. Swap links with other artists
- 2. Send out email updates to your mailing lists announcing your new website and updates when important material is added.
- 3. Put your website on all correspondence (email footer, business card, letterhead...)
- 4. When you update your site, post a link through your social media sites (some web page builders have an option to link to your Facebook and Twitter accounts to do this automatically.)
- 5. Post your url to artists' resources sites

### **Using Social Media (Professionally):**

- 1. Determine if you'll combine or separate your personal and professional persona.
- 2. Limit and cater the visibility of your posts/photos/comments.
- 3. Keep your public political/religious/ethical beliefs to a minimum.
- 4. We don't need to know what you're doing ALL THE TIME (unless it's related to your work.)
- 5. Read the fine print – Keep track of your photo rights

### **Word of Mouth and Showing Your Face:**

- 1. Go to Artist talks
- 2. Go to exhibitions and openings
- 3. Go to workshops
- 4. Go to conferences
- 5. Meet people and stay in touch with them.
  - a. Add those people to your mailing list or if you feel you connected really well, possibly to your social media friends lists.
  - b. Leave a good impression on the people you meet, show them your work (or at the very least give them a card) and perhaps they'll tell others about you.
  - c. If you do commercial work, leave happy clients with a few extra cards to pass onto others that may be interested in your business.
- 6. When you do commercial work, be sure your name gets included somewhere with the work. This allows your name to be passed on to others who might be interested.

## Building an Online Portfolio Website

### Tips for building your site:

1. **Emphasize your work** – your site should compliment your work and not distract from it. Think about how you would present your final work at an exhibition, and think of the web as an exhibition that can be accessed by the world.
2. **Make it easy to navigate** – your site sells you and your abilities to potential clients. If someone visits your site, it should be simple to get around otherwise their attention can quickly be lost.
3. **Think about your prospective audience or clientele** - Take into account how conservative they're likely to be or how laid-back their businesses are before deciding how to approach your own site's design.
4. **Make sure it's easy for you to update** – You want to be able to easily add and update information on your website.
5. **Categorize and tag your work** – This gives additional information about your work and helps keep it organized. If you work in a few different styles, maybe separate them into different categories.
6. **Showcase your best work** – You don't need to put everything you've ever made on your site. Instead, narrow down to the best work you've done. Quality is better than quantity.
7. **Include contact information** – Be sure to include at least your email address or have a contact form. If you're willing, including a phone number can be helpful, especially if you plan to take commissions.
8. **Include a downloadable resume** – This opens up possible opportunities for your career but also allows others to learn more about your history and background to back up your work.
9. **Include your social networking profiles, only if they're professional** – With social networking growing more every day, it's a great way to get your work out there. With that in mind, you're allowing strangers (and possible clients/employers) to access more of your information.
10. **Include a short Bio or "About Me"** – This allows viewers to learn a little more about you. Since your site is essentially created to sell you, it's not bad to give a little background on who you actually are to set yourself apart from others.
11. **Keep it up to date** – You can include a News or Blog section on your website. This allows new viewers to learn more about your past, but it's also a way to keep viewers coming back to see what you're up to. Some artists post upcoming exhibitions and opportunities they have going on, or just in-progress sneak peak shots. Others post inspiration and musings relating to their concepts/work.
12. **Keep your Fine Art and Commercial Work Separate** – The work you do for yourself and the work you do for others should be kept separate. If you decide to put them on the same site, at least make separate links/galleries for them.

It is up to you to decide how complicated you want your website to be. At the very least, I expect you to include: your project from this semester (including images of your installed work) along with your artist statement, your resume, a bio, and contact information. Any other additional information and content is up to you. You also are not required to purchase a domain name, but the possibility is available to you and can make your site look more professional.

**Free Website Builders:**

Weebly - <http://www.weebly.com/>

Webs - <http://www.webs.com/>

Wix - <http://www.wix.com/>

Wordpress – <http://wordpress.org/>

Yola - <https://www.yola.com/>

SnapPages - <http://www.snappages.com/>

**Sample Websites: (check out some of your personal favorites as well!)**

<http://www.kimberlyturnerart.com/>

<http://jessicarobles.com/home.html>

<http://www.zadprojects.com/>

<http://www.lylestudios.com/>

<http://www.patrickjstefano.com/>

**Business Cards/Show Cards:**

PSPrint - <http://www.pspaint.com/>

Vista Print - <http://www.vistaprint.com/>

Got Print - <http://gotprint.net/g/welcome.do>

Moo - <http://us.moo.com/>

Overnight Prints - <http://www.overnightprints.com/>

123 Print - <http://www.123print.com/>

**Social Media:**

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/>

LinkedIn - <http://www.linkedin.com/>

Flickr - <http://www.flickr.com/>

Instagram - <http://instagram.com/>

Pinterest - <http://pinterest.com/>

Twitter - <https://twitter.com/>