



# BEST PRACTICES

## ARTIST STATEMENT GUIDE

# introduction

The customer isn't just buying your work,  
**they're buying YOU.**

Help them get to know you, what inspires  
you and how you make your work by writing  
a compelling Artist Statement.

Here are some tips to help you out, because  
for many of us, writing about ourselves can be  
**one of the hardest things to do!**

# START WITH THE BASICS

## LOCATION

Are you a native northwesterner?

If not...

Where are you from?

What brought you to the area?

How long have you lived here?

## EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

Where did you go to school?

What did you study?

Was it art related?

If not...

How did you discover art?

How did you learn your craft?

How long have you been practicing?

## FOR EXAMPLE:

Tea Thanhbinh Duong came to the US from Vietnam as a child, and grew up in Des Moines, Iowa. After many years working as a traveling potter in Europe, Australia and New Zealand, he married another potter, Nina Fernstrom Duong and settled down in the coastal mountains in Oregon.

I first discovered pottery in high school at George School in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. I was immediately drawn to it. I went on to study pottery at the University of Oregon. Upon graduating in 1973, I began my career as a studio potter.

Rebecca Arthur is a ceramics artist in Corvallis, Oregon. She has degrees in art and engineering. While pursuing her art degree, she had the opportunity to explore many media including ceramics and painting.

Rhoda is a Pacific Rim Artist out on the edge. Born in Portland, OR in 1954, she has a true feel for life in the Northwest. A graduate of Evergreen State College in 1976, she has pursued a career blending art with science.

# INSPIRATION ORIGIN

## WHAT INSPIRES YOU

Be specific...

An artistic period in time?

A particular artist/musician, etc?

Are you inspired by nature?

Are you inspired by cultural events?

## A SHIFT

Is this a second career or new craft?

If so...

What caused it?

Why did you turn to art?

How did you discover your craft?

Have you recently changed your style of work?

## FOR EXAMPLE:

Our work is inspired by the British Arts and Crafts movement of the late 1800s. They believed in bringing beauty to everyday items. They used motifs from antiquity and many cultures.

I always loved nature and all kinds of animals and plants. Influenced by Greco-Roman and Egyptian mythologies, I find the Native American interpretation of life thru totem plants and animals to be the most comfortable.

In 2010, I was feeling completely burned out so I took a 2 month sabbatical and enrolled in a local pottery class. I decided when the class ended that I would "retire"; I quit my job and turned my garage into a fully functioning studio.

A couple of decades and a lifetime ago a friend suggested that we sign up for pottery classes. There was a wait list for the evening that fit with my schedule and I started a couple of months later learning to throw two pound bowls. My skills improved and I discovered porcelain which became the clay of choice.

# DESCRIBE YOUR WORK

## BE SPECIFIC

What materials do you use?

How is it formed?

What techniques do you use  
for surface decoration?

How is it finished/fired?

What types of forms do you make?

How does your work function?

Examples: everyday use, special occasion use,  
sculptural, home decor, architectural, etc.

What style describes your work?

Examples: contemporary, traditional, simple,  
complex, colorful, earthy, organic, architectural,  
multimedia, figurative, whimsical, etc.

## FOR EXAMPLE:

Most of the work now involves layers of slip followed by revealing the layers in a mostly gestural fashion. Some of the designs are botanical, but I am drawn to the abstract and am working on the abstract process.

Richard throws, hand builds and molds all of our work with a deep red clay. When it dries, Robin hand paints the work with up to 14 coats of underglaze paints. The work is then bisque fired, coated with a clear glaze and then glaze fired. The work is oven and dishwasher safe and microwave reheat able.

"Nerikomi" and "millefiore" are two terms used to describe the work I do. All of my work is stoneware and most of it is fired in a gas kiln. I love making pots and my wish is that people will use and enjoy my pottery in their daily lives.

During the last 6 or 7 years my work has evolved into sculptural forms. I start with a process called "lifecasting" which involves making a mold of the human form and eventually producing a plaster mold that I can press clay into. I enjoy exploring the endless variations of altering the original form.

# SALES PREFERENCE

## WHAT'S COMFORTABLE IN 2021

Do you prefer selling in person?

Outdoor markets?

Studio visits?

Sidewalk/Yard events?

Galleries?

Do you prefer selling online?

Via your website?

Via Etsy or other online shop?

Via Instagram or Facebook?

Via email?

Via Zoom or FaceTime?

A combination of the above?

## FOR EXAMPLE:

Shop our web stores and use the code **Eugene** for free local pick up. Call or email for pickup time.

I sell on Etsy or you can visit my studio by appointment – please phone or email to schedule. I also hold a sidewalk sale that is socially distanced with masks. It has worked quite well during this covid time. I can also ship; I have a lot more pots than are on my website. I can also email more photos to narrow down what you are interested in.

Visit our Corvallis area studio. Please email me to set up an appointment and receive instructions for a safe visit.

Please see my Instagram page or my website for more information.

Her work can be seen in galleries throughout the Pacific Northwest.

You can find my work at the Eugene Saturday Market.

My work is sold exclusively at Mossy Creek Pottery in Lincoln City.

Excerpts are from potters participating in [www.clayfestonline.com](http://www.clayfestonline.com).  
Go there for more inspiration!



This guide was created by the Oregon Potters Association,  
a 501 c3 non-profit organization.