

PERSONAL VISION STATEMENT

A personal vision statement is a definition of what you want to create for yourself and the world around you. Stephen Covey and others point out that a powerful vision can help you succeed beyond where you would be without one. And as a creative and coach I've learned that if you don't identify your vision, others will plan and direct your life for you.

Your artist's statement can be a moving testament to your creativity and integrity. The expression of this commitment will vary, but the effectiveness of your artist's statement stems from the authority with which you write it. A vision statement can be written for several bodies of work, for you personally, and for your business.

Let's begin with just general thoughts, and bullet points, we will work towards a cohesive statement over time.

EXERCISES

1. Take five minutes and think about why you do what you do. How did you get into this work? What drew you to photography? What was your first photograph? How do you feel when work is going well? What are your favorite things about your work? Jot down short phrases that capture your thoughts. Don't worry about making sense, sentences or connections.

2. Make a list of words and phrases that communicate your feelings about your work and your values. Include words you like, words that make you feel good, words that communicate your values or fascinations. Be loose. Be happy. Be real.

3. Write five sentences that tell the truth about your connection to your work. If you are stuck, start by filling in the blanks below, or answering the questions.

When I work with _____ I am reminded that _____.

I begin a photograph by _____.

I know a photograph is done when _____.

When my work is going well, I am filled with a sense of _____.

When people see my work, I'd like them to _____.

4. Why do you like to make art?

5. What subjects do you prefer? Why?

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6. What processes and techniques do you use? Why?

7. How is your work different from others?

8. What do you see in your artwork?

9. What do other people say they see?

10. What are your goals and aspirations as an artist?

11. Who or what inspires you?

Take your time in answering these questions and writing your statement, it's an ongoing, evolving process. Make specific times and dates with yourself to write your statement – commit to it, and respect those times. And do not tolerate interruptions.

Should you stumble, or your inner critic becomes loud, lead the critic out of the room, give him/her another task, instead of sitting upon your shoulder – send him/her on a walk! Tell your critic to not come back until you are ready.

Have fun. Writing a vision statement will provide the focus you need to achieve your goals, create art and realize your dreams.