

The Napier Waller Art Prize 2018 Resources Page

How do I measure my work?

The standard system to measure artwork is metric, and the Australian War Memorial preferences measurements be made in centimetres (cm). If the entered work is over 5kg, the correct measurement is expressed in kilograms (kg).

The height of an object is always measured first, followed by the length of the object, and then the width/depth, depending on the object. Each measurement is prefixed with a letter, reflecting the measurement:

Height (H) – top to bottom of an object

Length (L) – the greatest distance (other than height) along the object's front, back or side.

Width (W) – this is the greatest distance between the object's front and back, or its side.

For example, a painting on stretched canvas might be expressed as H 180 x L 140 x W 4 cm, or a sculpture as H 66 x L 106.4 x W 43.2 cm.

Works on paper require two (2) different types of measurements – the sheet measurements of the piece of paper, and the image measurements of the drawing, print, watercolour etc.

If your work is framed, include this as a separate measurement from the object itself. For example, a painting measurement would read as unframed: H 135 x L 191 cm, framed: H 183.5 x L 239.5 cm.

How do I photograph my work?

Please note that your entry will be judged from the photograph/s you submit, so you will want to submit the best possible photograph of your artwork. If you are shortlisted, your photograph will be used for the online exhibition of the shortlisted works, and will also be the image viewers will see when voting for the People's Choice Award. So, if you know a photographer, ask for their assistance!

If you don't have professional help available to you, the best way to photograph your work is to hang your artwork on a wall, or rest it perfectly flush against a wall. Try to position your work against a neutral background. You'll want to have a good quality camera, digital or tradition that can be set on a tripod to take the image. Saatchi Online's guide to photographing your artwork is a great introductory video that uses a digital camera, but advice about lighting and other set up aspects applies no matter what camera you're using. See more here: <https://youtu.be/Vpj28da03JQ>.

What is an artist's statement?

An artist statement is your opportunity to set your work in a context, mention its origins, what you were thinking about, what you were trying to achieve (any or all of these). It attaches your ideas to the artwork you made. An artist statement will be read by competition judges, gallery directors, curators, members of the public, so this is your chance to let them know what you might have told them if you were standing there beside them. You should consider your statement just as important as your artwork.



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What is in an artist statement?

Typically, an artist statement of about 150-200 words (usually two paragraphs) answers the questions How? What? and Why? Explain how you made your artwork, the media you used, the method you used, and the tools you rely on. Tell the viewer what you are hoping to convey in your artwork. Explain what the artwork says about you or the things you're concerned about. This is your chance to explain the symbols or images or ideas that move you.

Some 'rules' for artist statements

Your artist statement should be:

Clear: Audiences won't spend much time reading it, so make sure that the sentences are short and the words likely to be understood by the majority of people. Remember that it won't just be art historians or scholars reading about your work, so don't make your statement too complex.

Concise: Audiences won't spend much time reading it, so make sure to include only the really important things that will keep viewers interested!

Consistent: Make sure what you say in your statement matches your artwork – don't write about things that do not relate.

Personal: it is about your art, and hence about what you did, thought, hoped to achieve, so use the pronoun 'I'.

Keep it to the conditions of entry: if the gallery asks for 100 words, give them 100 words.

Some resources

Check the Flying Arts website for a lesson on artist statements:

<https://flyingarts.org.au/resources/resources-for-artists-artworkers/how-to-write-an-artist-statement/>

Check the Art League website for some examples of artist statements that they suggest are excellent work: <https://www.theartleague.org/blog/2015/08/24/artist-statements-we-love/>
