

## How To Write an Artist Résumé

An artist résumé is an absolute necessity for every professional artist. Just as an employment résumé outlines employment history, experience, and skills, an artist résumé details your accomplishments, endeavours, knowledge, and abilities as an artist. The artist résumé is used in conjunction with the search for exhibition, performance, screening, and publication opportunities, as well as with certain grant and funding applications.

### **Format:**

Unlike traditional employment résumés, artist résumés are often broken into columns and kept to a page a length. Traditionally, artist résumés can include sections on education/training, union membership, performing experience, related work experience, awards/distinctions, and special skills. Traditional employment résumés tend to have short paragraph sections. Artist résumés are usually divided into concise list form.

Like artists, artist résumés come in all shapes, forms, colors and sizes. However, there are many common conventions that all professional résumés should follow. Remember an artist résumé is not an artistic résumé. You want to present yourself and your accomplishments in a professional manner. The following are suggestions on what to include in an artist résumé. Not all suggestions will apply to all artists. Typically an artist résumé is one to four pages in length. Your résumé should be easy to read, typed, and printed on quality paper. Résumé paper should be either white, off white or ivory in color. Font size should be no smaller than 10 pt. and should be a font type that is easy to read such as: Arial, Times Roman, Helvetica, etc. Be sure to proofread your résumé carefully. You may find it beneficial to have a friend or colleague read over your résumé.

Some artists format a version of their résumé to drop into or attach to an email message. Since you may be emailing across platforms and to email programs/applications that are different from your own, you should design a résumé with very simple formatting and select a font that is universal in nature like Arial, Times Roman, Courier, or Helvetica. Save your file in PDF format so that all may be able to access it with ease.

Remember, choose representative highlights of your training and experience. You don't need to include everything. Be discerning. Choose your most impressive accomplishments, and in this case, choose a sample representative of your range.

Update your résumé regularly. It is so much easier to apply for grants or other opportunities when you have your résumé already prepared for that potential prospect. Remember too, that your résumé will forever be evolving along with your development as an artist. There will come a time when you will need to edit out old or irrelevant information. Generally artist résumés are organized by headings or categories that outline your particular art making activity. Under each heading –with the most recent event first -- is where you list and then summarize the necessary information. Headings should stand out and can be bulleted, bold, underlined, or italicized. The specific categories you include depends upon what artistic discipline you are involved with.

### **All artist résumés should contain:**

#### *Your Name and Contact Information:*

Your name should be somewhere at the top of the page and should be larger than the rest of the information presented in the résumé. Other information included here is your mailing address, home and cell phone numbers, email address, and website address if appropriate.

#### *Education:*

Education is usually the first heading listed. List all the academic degrees earned, noting honours. Also include periods of study at schools or universities attended without completing a degree. If you do not have an art related degree, you can list workshops or classes attended and notable artists /teachers you have studied with.

#### *Honors and Awards/Grants:*

This category is usually a list of honours and awards. Some artists make a separate category for grants. Under this category you want to list all recognitions of merit, prizes won in competitions, grants, fellowships, scholarships and other special recognitions. You may also want to include artist-in-residences or special workshops attended.

#### *Related Experience/Related Work Experience/Professional Experience:*

This category is worded differently on various résumés. Many artists include on their résumé experience they feel is relevant to their professional art making career such as: jobs held in their field; teaching art; technical experience related to their artistic discipline; or lectures, workshops and presentations given as an artist. Some artists also include information under this heading that does not neatly fall into other categories on their résumé.

#### *Professional Affiliations :*

List the professional organizations, national, regional, and local, to which you belong. If you held a position within the organization or served as a volunteer, note this as well.

### **Visual artist categories can include:**

Exhibitions -- List the title of the exhibition, the exhibition space, and the city and state where the exhibition was presented. If your exhibition experience is extensive you may want to divide your exhibitions into separate categories of exhibitions - solo shows, group shows, juried exhibitions, invitational exhibitions, touring exhibitions, museum shows, etc. As well, if notable, the curator or juror of the exhibition is often listed.

Collections -- This category can be divided into private collections, corporate collections, permanent public collections, etc. It is considered proper etiquette to ask permission to list a private purchaser/owner of your work if you intend to list them on your résumé.

Other categories -- Visual artists may also include categories such as: commissions, residencies, and installations on their résumés.

### **Performing artist categories can include:**

Performances/Recordings/Productions -- No matter what type of performing artist you are, you need to devise a way to categorize your experience. Many musicians categorize experience based on recordings, compositions, and performances. Choreographers and dancers use choreography, performances, and productions as categories. Actors use title of film/play, character, direction and production company/theatre. Always list the title of the piece, your role in the work, where performed, other collaborators or performers if appropriate, and any other relevant information. If the piece was commissioned you want to indicate this as well, although many performing artists list commissions in a separate category.

Collaborations -- If you have extensive work with others, you may want to list your collaborative work in this category. Clearly indicate your role in the collaboration and list other collaborators and their roles.

Commissions -- Again, if a substantial amount of your work is done via commission you could include your commissioned work in its own category.

#### **Literary artists can include:**

Publications -- Listings should contain the title of the piece, and where published or the publishing press. Some literary artists separate out publications into fiction and nonfiction, fiction and poetry, or separate out book length works from magazine/newspaper publications, etc.

Readings -- In this category you can list any public readings or presentations of your work. List the title of the work presented, and the venue.

#### **Media artists can include:**

Films/ Videos/Shorts /Digital Media /TV -- Media Artists should include information about completed and in-production works. If you have a significant amount of work you can divide this category into separate categories that are tailored to your experience. Some media artists divide their experience according to their artistic role in the work -- as an director, writer, cinematographer, etc. Other media artists categorize their experience by the different types of work they do -- video, TV, feature film, short, etc. In all cases, list the title of the piece, your role in the work, other collaborators if appropriate, screening location and any other relevant information.

Screenings/Festivals -- If your work has appeared at several screening locations or has been included in numerous festivals you can list the various screening locations and/or festivals in which your work has appeared. You may also want to note any awards or special recognition your work received at a particular festival, if you have not already included these achievements in the honors and awards category.

#### **Resume Guidelines for Multitalented People:**

If you have focused on more than one discipline, get specific! Don't try to cram all of your theatre, dance, and singing experience into the same document. You will not be able to do justice to your experience *or* your résumé. If you have enough experience in more than one discipline to warrant more than one résumé, then **write more than one résumé**, and only submit the résumé pertinent to the job title or the grant for which you are applying.

If you are an actor and a singer, a choreographer and a dancer, a composer and a director, have a separate résumé for each title. Keep each one very focused. If you decide to include a section like Other or Special Skills, you can mention your other talent in a single phrase; for example, *Extensive theatre background* or *Proficient in Alexander Technique*. It may feel as though you are minimizing your other areas of expertise, but what you're really doing is focusing. Do not underestimate your special skills when submitting a résumé. A director or organization may be looking for something rare and atypical during an audition scenario, and those special skills may give you an edge.

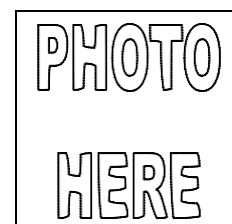
## SAMPLE ARTIST RÉSUMÉ

Height: 5'8"

Weight: 130 lbs. Eyes: Brown Hair: Brown

### TRISH MILLER

123 James Drive  
Brooklyn, NY 11201  
Cell: 917- 123-5678  
[tmiller@slc.edu](mailto:tmiller@slc.edu)



### PERFORMING EXPERIENCE

Show	Role	Theatre
Dancing at Lughnasa	Rose	Sarah Lawrence College
As You Like It	Rosalind	The British American Drama
Academy Our Town	Stage Manger	The Lovett School
My Fair Lady	Chorus	The Lovett School

### DIRECTING EXPERIENCE

Insert title	Director	Sarah Lawrence College
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### TRAINING/EDUCATION

**Sarah Lawrence College**, Bronxville, NY, Bachelor of Arts, anticipated May 2006;  
Theatre concentration

**The British American Drama Academy**, London, England, Study Abroad Program,  
Spring 2005. Norman Ayrton, Mick Barnfather, Christopher Cook, Daniel Evans, Lynn  
Farleigh, Nick Hutchinson, Mike Loades, Jackie Matthews, Fiona Shaw, Michael Thomas,  
Ian Wooldridge.

### AWARDS

Insert name of award, date received

### SPECIAL SKILLS

Proficient in Alexander Technique, Stage Fighting, Theatre History, Dramaturgy,  
Dramatic Criticism, Improvisation, Guitar, Voice, British (London) Dialect