

Artist Statement and Biography

A fictional worked example

Mara Venn is a fictional artist created solely to demonstrate the writing process. Her places, exhibitions, training and achievements are invented.

VOICE AT A GLANCE

First person means writing as the artist using “I”, “me” and “my”.

I make sculptures from salvaged materials.

Third person means writing about the artist using their name and “he”, “she” or “they”.

Mara Venn makes sculptures from salvaged materials. Her work considers...

Follow the source notes through a weak first draft, an editorial review and four finished versions.

1. Raw notes

Practice

- Small sculptures and wall-based assemblages
- Salvaged rope, worn cloth, weathered timber and cast plaster
- Materials sourced near former industrial shoreline sites
- Based in North-East England

Ideas

- Repair that remains visible
- Erosion and repeated handling
- Manual work that has disappeared but left physical traces
- Objects that have already had one useful life

Process

- Begins with one found object or material relationship
- Cleans and dries materials without disguising wear
- Wraps, binds, casts and partially covers elements
- Plaster records impressions from rope and cloth
- Damage and repair remain visible

Development and evidence

- Grew up near a former shipbuilding town
- Returned to art through evening sculpture classes
- Community-foundry and mould-making workshops
- Fictional North Coast Makers Residency, 2025
- Fictional exhibition: After the Working Tide, Harbour Rooms, 2026
- Now developing larger wall works and recording oral histories

2. Weak first draft

My work explores the relationship between past and present and invites the viewer to consider memory, place and identity. I have always been inspired by the coast and use a wide variety of mixed media in innovative ways. My artistic journey began when I was young, and I have continued to develop my unique practice through many different experiences. The materials have stories to tell and create a dialogue between industry and nature. I hope my work makes people think.

3. What needs changing?

- The opening could describe thousands of artists; it does not identify the actual work.
- Memory, place and identity are broad themes without specific evidence.
- Wide variety of mixed media is less useful than naming the materials.
- Innovative and unique are promotional claims rather than demonstrated qualities.
- Artistic journey gives no meaningful account of development.
- The draft omits binding, casting, covering and visible repair.
- The final sentence does not identify the kind of attention the work asks for.
- Biographical development belongs in the biography, not the statement.

4. Final artist statement

I make small sculptures and wall-based assemblages from salvaged rope, worn cloth, weathered timber and cast plaster. The materials are collected or sourced around former industrial shoreline sites, where evidence of manual work remains embedded in buildings, paths and discarded objects.

I am interested in repair, erosion and the marks left by repeated handling. Many of the materials have already completed one practical life before entering the studio. I retain frayed edges, indentations and areas of wear rather than restoring them to an imagined original condition.

Each work begins with a found object or a particular material relationship. I wrap, bind, cast and partially conceal elements, often rearranging them several times. Plaster takes impressions from rope and cloth, turning flexible surfaces into fixed records. Joins and repairs remain visible.

The finished works sit between object, fragment and record. They do not reconstruct the industries associated with the shoreline, but hold physical traces of labour, damage and continued use.

Why it works

The statement identifies the work immediately, names a small set of connected concerns, explains only the meaningful parts of the process, and closes without prescribing a generic response for the viewer.

5. Final short biography

Mara Venn is a fictional North-East England artist making small sculptures and wall-based assemblages from salvaged rope, weathered timber, cloth and cast plaster. Her work considers repair, erosion and the physical traces left by manual work around former industrial shorelines.

Venn developed her practice through evening sculpture study, community-foundry workshops and the fictional North Coast Makers Residency. Her recent fictional exhibition, *After the Working Tide*, brought together works concerned with materials that have already completed one practical life.

Use this version for

Exhibition listings, press notes, speaker introductions and compact About sections.

6. Final longer biography

Mara Venn is a fictional artist based in North-East England. She makes small sculptures and wall-based assemblages using salvaged rope, worn cloth, weathered timber and cast plaster. Her work is shaped by former industrial shorelines and by the physical evidence that manual work leaves on materials, buildings and routes through a place.

Growing up near a former shipbuilding town made the changing relationship between industry and the coast a familiar part of Venn's surroundings. She returned to sustained artmaking through evening sculpture classes and later undertook community-foundry, casting and mould-making workshops. These experiences developed her interest in impressions, repeated forms and the point at which a damaged material becomes a record rather than waste.

During the fictional North Coast Makers Residency in 2025, Venn began bringing found shoreline materials together with cast plaster. Rope, timber and cloth are cleaned and stabilised but retain their wear. She binds, wraps and partially conceals them, leaving joins and repairs visible.

Her fictional 2026 exhibition, *After the Working Tide* at Harbour Rooms, presented sculptures concerned with labour, erosion and continued use. Venn is now developing larger wall-based works alongside an oral-history project recording memories of work around the river.

7. Optional About introduction

Mara Venn is a fictional North-East England artist making sculptures and wall-based assemblages from salvaged rope, cloth, timber and cast plaster. Drawing on former industrial shoreline sites, her work considers repair, erosion and the marks left by manual use. She developed the practice through sculpture, casting and community-foundry study and is currently combining larger wall-based works with recorded memories of working life around the river.

This compact introduction is one component of a website About page. A complete page may also include a portrait, separate statement and biography sections, selected recognition, links to the work and a contact route.

8. Related exhibition formats

An **exhibition wall text** is normally a 100-200-word adaptation of the artist statement focused on the exhibition or body of work being shown.

An **individual artwork label** is different. It normally gives the artist, title, year, medium and dimensions, with an optional short interpretive text. A complete artwork-label template sits outside this statement and biography example.

9. Which version should Mara use?

Version	Best used for
Artist statement	Beside the work, in a portfolio, on a statement page or in an application asking about the practice.
Short biography	Exhibition listings, press notes, speaker introductions and compact About sections.
Longer biography	Gallery submissions, catalogues, grant material and a professional biography page.
About introduction	A homepage, social profile or another setting that permits only one short introductory paragraph.
Exhibition wall text	A short adaptation focused on the exhibition or body of work being shown.
CV	A separate structured document containing the complete professional history.

The format changes, but the underlying material should remain current, specific and verifiable.