

AMPLIFY ARTS

Elevator Pitches

What is an elevator pitch?

1. Clear and concise 2-3 sentence response to the question “What do you do?”
 - a. An elevator pitch is a concise and quick way to get others interested in your work or a particular project. Some researchers say that the average transient attention span for an adult could be as little as 8 seconds. That doesn’t leave much time within that short term response to stimuli to attract and then sustain someone’s attention. For that reason, your pitch should clearly communicate points of interest linked to your work in about the time it takes to ride an elevator from one floor to another.
 - b. A good elevator pitch should not be a broad overview of your practice but rather a quick and engaging way to start a conversation with another person about your work.
 - c. Avoid vague descriptions and platitudes like “I make work unlike anyone else,” or “I’m an artist inspired by nature.”
 - d. It often helps to talk about a specific project you’re working on or have recently completed to avoid platitudes and vagaries.

What should a good elevator pitch accomplish?

1. Get people interested in your work
2. Share your work (have photo / video documentation ready to show)
3. Generate studio visits
 - a. The easiest way to arrange a studio visit or meeting post pitch is usually just to ask. If your pitch happens to lead to a longer conversation about your work, you can say something along the lines of "It's been so much fun talking with you. I'd love to have you to my studio or show you some images over coffee and talk more." Don't hesitate to make that jump. For collectors, dealers, and curators, it's a natural part of the conversation. Exchange cards (always good to have some on hand) or contact information and be diligent about following up as soon as you can. Your time is valuable and so is the time of the people you're talking with.

What does a good elevator pitch look like?

A good elevator pitch should give just enough information about your work to make the listener want to hear more. There are as many approaches to formulating elevator pitches as there are artists, but a few suggestions that might come in handy when thinking about how you structure your pitch follow:

1. Be concise. You've got 8 seconds--make them count.
2. Be specific. Talk about specific projects, individual works, or bodies of work that are representative of overarching themes in your practice.
3. Don't be afraid to inject a little humor into your pitch. Personal or anecdotal additions can go a long way in making a lasting impression

You just want to open the door to a more substantial conversation.

1. If you share your elevator pitch often, sounding genuine and authentic can sometimes become a challenge. The last thing you want to do is give off the impression that the person you're talking to is just one in a long line of many who have heard the same spiel.

2. To make sure your pitch stays topical and fresh, it can be a good idea to retool it from time to time. If you're making new work that excites you, have recently hit a turning point in your practice, or started to work with materials you've never worked with before, those all provide great opportunities to refresh your pitch.
3. Also, try to gauge your audience, if possible. For example, are you talking to a curator you know has a particular aesthetic or material interest, a collector with very specific tastes, or a critic who focuses on a specialized area of study? Prepare your arsenal of talking points in a way that will allow you to tailor your pitch on the fly to the person listening whenever possible.