

The background is a light beige color with various abstract elements. In the top left, there are three overlapping circles in orange, pink, and light blue. In the top right, there are green wavy lines and some purple and orange brushstrokes. In the center, there are green and orange starburst-like shapes. In the bottom left, there are orange wavy lines and a dark blue brush. In the bottom right, there is a stylized illustration of a book with a large orange circle on its cover.

OUT OF SCHOOL, WHAT NOW?

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR EMERGING ARTISTS TO
TRANSITION FROM SCHOOL TO WORK

by Sarah Hin Ching U

✧ Introduction ✧

"Out of school, what now?" is created by Sarah Hin Ching U, Vancouver-based dance artist and choreographer in live and digital performances, in hopes to provide some tips and resources for freshly-graduated emerging artists, and emerging artists that are in the very early beginning stages of their career, with/without a degree or certification from an academic institution.

✧ From the author ✧

I was very fortunate to have worked with many senior artists inside and outside of dance which has provided me with valuable insights and tips to be a working artist. I want to use this opportunity to share some thoughts and ideas that have helped me find more opportunities.

This is by no means the "truth" on how to succeed as an artist, rather I want to share some thoughts and ideas that have helped me.

Part 1

Build Your Brand

- Biography
- Artist Statement



A **Biography** usually includes:

- Name
- Pronoun
- Location
- Self-identifiers, race, gender etc.
- Your medium and practice
- Education / Training background
- Past work examples

An **Artist Statement** usually includes:

- Your process, method, technique and why is that your important to you
- Your inspirations
- People that have influenced you
- Accomplishments and awards



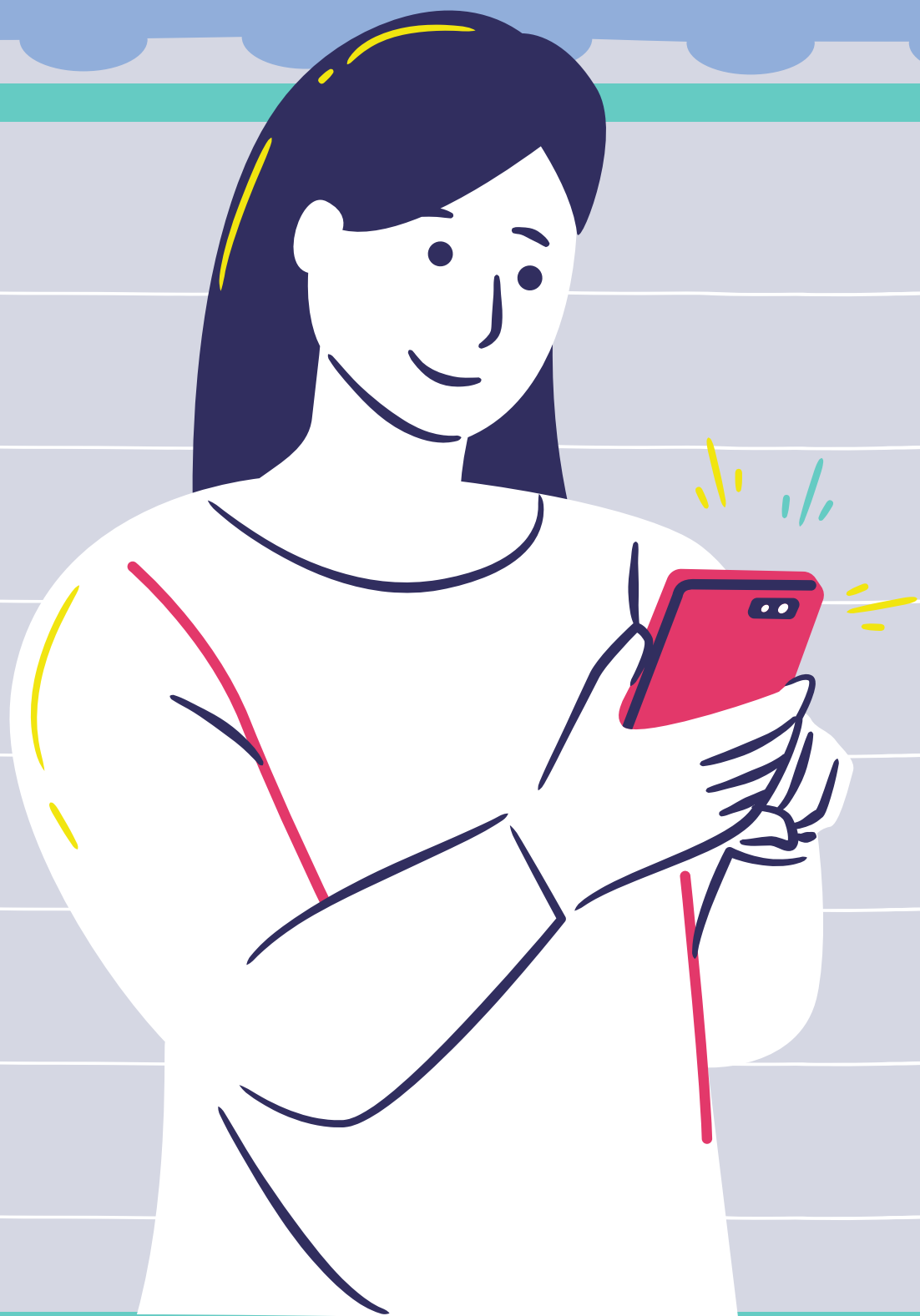
In short, a biography talks about **who you are** and **what you do**, and an artist statement focuses on **why you do what you do**.



Part 2

Build Your Brand

■ Curriculum vitae



When you list your project, consider the following:

Title (month, year). Medium.
Your role. Presenters, Co-presenters, Significant Collaborators. Venue.

CV is a summary of your artistic activities that may include:

performances, exhibitions, screenings, commissions, residencies, grants/awards, projects, current agent/gallery representation, training/education, skills, and other relevant work experience etc.

Example #1:

Anchor (August, 2021). Performance.
Choreographer, Dancer. ABC Arts Festival, Vancouver BC.

Part 3

Build Your Brand

■ Suggestions on writing Biography, Artist Statement and CV.

🌿 A biography and artist statement has ONE primary goal: to let people know who you are and what you do as an artist. Make it feels like you and add your own spice to it!

🌿 Your biogeography, artist statement and CV are usually the on front lines of communication, think about what is important for you and what do you want your audiences to notice right away!

🌿 Consider your audiences and have versions of your biography, artist statement, and CV highlighting different skills and achievements.

🌿 There is no wrong way to write a biography, artist statement and CV, but sometimes the wording may be unclear and thus confusing for your readers, have a trusted friend proofread for you!

🌿 Your biography, artist statement and CV WILL evolve over your artistic career, and that is totally alright! So don't get banged up about not getting the perfect statement and start writing!

Part 1

Professional Development

- How does training and practicing in your artform looks like, now that you are out of school?

I would like to invite you to start with with these three questions...

1. What kind of training are you interested in?
and that usually relates back to the kind of work you want to make

2, What do you want to improve in?

3. What do you want to get out of your training?
to build your portfolio, to create a particular project that require a particular a set of skills, to be accepted by some type of program or institution etc.

Part 2

Professional Development

- Now you know "what" kind of training you want, let's figure out the "how"!

Be practical and specific!

- 🌸 How many hours per week/month/year can you train?
- 🌸 Do you prefer training at a more self-directed pace or a more structured program?

Think about the COST \$\$

- 🌸 How much can you devote per week/month/year for your training?
- 🌸 If money is a barrier, who can help?
- 🌸 What Granting bodies, scholarship opportunities are there?

Reaching Out

- 🌸 Who can you talk to to get that kind of training?
- Where can you train?
- 🌸 Is there a senior artist in your city that you can mentor under?

Part 3

Professional Development

- Self-care is a form of professional development every emerging artist should practice in....

We all know it is important to keep training and practicing in your art form after you have graduated, but practicing varies dramatically from artform to artform, and person to person...

Professional development can look like:

taking classes,
experimenting with new
forms and material
, researching, creating,
studio time, going to
museum, library etc;

it can also look like:
taking a break, letting
an injury or sickness
heal, taking care of
yourself, taking care of
your community, doing
something nice for
yourself etc

For me, professional development is what I need to do to have a sustainable, productive and enjoyable art career, and some days it means to do nothing and take care of myself!

Part 3

Networking

you know more people than you think you do!

Start by reaching out to the people you know,
that may include:

your past
teachers,
professors and
mentors

your past
collaborators

people who have
shown interest
in your work

your colleagues,
people you train
/went to school
together

people you have
met in shows,
exhibitions,
classes etc.

your not-related to
arts connection:
(maybe the restaurant
you work in need a
painting to hang in the
restaurant!)



Part 3

Networking

■ reaching out to the artist/organization you want to work with

Sometimes opportunities will be presented at us, but for the majority of time as emerging artists, we need to proactive and reach out to people...

This are some thoughts I have for reaching out to the artist/organization that you admire and want to work with:

- 😊 Do your **RESEARCH!** What are their values and mission? How does that align with you?
- 😊 Tell them how their work has inspired you and **Why** you would like to work with them
- 😊 Find a common ground, do you share a common value? Do you see a project that they are working on that you can offer help?
- 😊 Be very **CLEAR** what you would need help with, whether it is with a grant or project, looking for resources or opportunity to work with them.
- 😊 Always offer to provide an **EXCHANGE OF SERVICE/FEE!** (even you do not know what they need or if they need anything at the moment, it is a great gesture to show your gratitude and can help you grow you connection more!)