

Storytelling for Artists

A practical guide for artists who sell on their own websites and social platforms.

Why Story Sells

People rarely buy a painting because of the paint alone. They buy because a piece reminds them of a memory, expresses a feeling, reflects their values, or tells a story they want to live with every day. Story creates emotional connection, and emotional connection builds trust.

Soft Sell vs. Hard Sell

Hard Sell: Focuses on price, urgency, and repeated requests to buy.

Soft Sell: Invites people into the creative journey. Explain what inspired the artwork, what challenged you, what you hoped viewers would feel, or the meaning behind a symbol. Let the story lead naturally to the artwork.

A Simple Story Formula

1. What inspired this piece?
2. What emotion or question were you exploring?
3. What details should viewers notice?
4. What do you hope someone experiences when they live with this artwork?
5. End with a gentle invitation, such as: 'If this piece speaks to you, I'd be honored for it to become part of your home.'

Before You Publish

Ask yourself: Does this sound genuine? Does it help someone connect with the artwork? Am I inviting instead of pressuring?

Story Building Worksheet

- 1 Title of the artwork
- 2 What inspired it?
- 3 What happened in your life while creating it?
- 4 What emotions does it represent?
- 5 What symbols or details have meaning?
- 6 What do you hope the viewer feels?
- 7 What room or lifestyle would this piece fit?
- 8 Write a 3–6 sentence story using the answers above.
- 9 Finish with one gentle invitation instead of a sales pitch.

Final Thought

The goal is not to convince people to buy. The goal is to help the right person see themselves in your work. When people connect with the story, purchasing often becomes a natural next step.