



**Melissa McCracken**  
*Brooklyn, NY*

**MELISSA McCracken: SOUND + VISION**

Synesthesia is a genetic neurological condition that affects sensory perception in a small percentage of the population. For artist Melissa McCracken, this unusual condition impacts her comprehension of music and color, soon to be featured in *SOUND + VISION*, an exhibition of new paintings at Blue Gallery.

**EXHIBITION STATEMENT**

*Sound and Vision is an invitation to rethink how we perceive the sensations of our everyday lives. Through a balance of layered tones and striking textures, my goal is to depict the movement and shapes that subtly accompany our lives. From the sounds we hear passing summer block parties to the songs shared by loved ones on playlists from afar, each has specific elements waiting to be expressed as splashes of colors. As the textures play against one another, I encourage the audience to pause with the undemanding aspects of life and remain present in the experience itself.*

*I believe that we too often view the world through a singular and narrow lens, only allowing our habitual and empirical experiences to inform our perspective. Through my work, I hope to widen that lens, even if it is at the smallest degree.*

*By incorporating elements of synesthesia, I create a visualization of music. My hope is to transcend traditional interpretations of experience and to reimagine the familiar. Intended to feel elusive, I invite the viewer to envision the potential of each piece in their own regard, thereby making the final product one of collective consciousness.*

**Blue Gallery**  
118 Southwest Blvd, Kansas City, MO 64108  
816.527.0823    [BlueGalleryOnline.com](http://BlueGalleryOnline.com)

# Melissa McCracken

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## *Bio*

Melissa McCracken was born in Kansas City, Missouri in 1990. She graduated with a B.A. in Psychology from William Jewell College in 2013, but ultimately pursued a career in the arts post-graduation. In 2019, she relocated to Brooklyn, New York to expand her work in synesthesia, a unique neurological condition allowing her to see colors in the sounds she hears. Many of her paintings incorporate vibrant colors and lively textures to depict the movement of music.

Implementing the effects of both palette knives and brushwork, Melissa seeks to convey the swirl of colors embedded deep in her mind's eye. Layered blossoms of color and streaks of white create cosmic-like scenes, evoking new perceptions of melody and rhythm in her audience. Through her work, Melissa strives to unmask the elusive areas of the world we encounter, allowing a refreshing experience of the familiar.

I feel like the natural route was to take my art down a synesthetic path, McCracken recounts. Melissa's work has been featured in numerous publications including; MTV news, DIY magazine, NPR Fresh Air, VICE Broadly, CNN's Great Big Story, Oprah Magazine and Bored Panda. Melissa has also been a featured speaker at TEDxLafayette College in 2016, and TEDxUNC in 2018.

Melissa McCracken currently lives and works as a full-time artist in Brooklyn, NY, and has been represented exclusively by Blue Gallery, Kansas City, MO since 2017.

## *Education*

William Jewell College, Bachelor of Psychology, 2013

## *Solo Exhibitions*

- 2023 SOUND + VISION, Blue Gallery Kansas City, MO
- 2018 INCANDESCENCE, Blue Gallery, Kansas City, MO
- 2017 CONVERGENCE, Blue Gallery, Kansas City, MO
- 2016 Playlist No. 2, Hilliard Gallery, Kansas City, MO
- 2015 Visual Opus, Hilliard Gallery, Kansas City, MO

## *Printed Publications*

- 2018 American Lifestyle Magazine
- 2018 The Kansas City Star
- 2016 Onyx
- 2015 Oprah Magazine
- 2014 Andy Warhol's Interview Magazine

## *Videos*

- "Painting a Song" TEDxLafayetteCollege Make Your Mark <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EDzvPmAap8M>
- "Synesthesia and What It Has Taught Me" TEDxUNC Colorwheel <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvPd3wH21z8>
- "The Artist Who Paints What She Hears" Great Big Story <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zbh7tAnwLCY&t=4s>
- "Melissa McCracken Kansas City, MO" American Lifestyle <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ryWPijXPf5o&t=8s>
- "Meet an artist who sees orange in Michael Jackson songs and blue in the letter A" The Kansas City Star <http://www.kansascity.com/entertainment/article208767614.html>



**Melissa McCracken**  
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*Press/Publications Online*

A Plus: Melissa McCracken Is An Artist With A Neurological Condition That Allows Her To See More Than Most People

American Lifestyle Magazine: Shades of Sound: The Art of Melissa McCracken

Andy Warhol's Interview Magazine (de): Ich Sehe Songs

Art Inspiration: Melissa McCracken paints music she can see

Art Sheep: Synesthete Artist Paints The Music She Hears And These Are The Results

Artist Inspire Artists: Melissa McCracken paints music she can see

Bored Panda: I See Music, So I Decided To Paint What I Hear

