



KAREN McCALLUM

BIOGRAPHY

Karen McCallum loved to play in the Mill Creek ravine in Edmonton when she was a kid, exploring the tree-filled playground for hours. She still loves to be outside where nature brings her joy and inspires all her contemporary landscapes. In her paintings she wants to capture light and aims to evoke a feeling of awe. She is always captivated by sunlight filtering through a thick canopy of trees, canola fields, and the striated faces of the Rocky Mountains under endless Alberta skies. Her vibrant landscapes are connections to the places she has experienced often leading the viewer to look up or through or inviting them closer to enjoy abstract passages of energetic brushstrokes.

Karen is a full time creative, working in a variety of media: acrylics, mixed media and ceramics. She works both in studio as well as on mural projects most recently completing a series of 12 large scale murals for a local market. Karen is always looking for creative opportunities to promote art locally. She worked with an Edmonton business (Flexxaire) to design and execute a bold Mondrian-inspired exterior for their machine shop.

Karen is an award-winning Exhibiting Member of the Federation of Canadian Artists where she exhibits frequently and sits on the board of her local FCA chapter coordinating exhibitions. As a founding member of the Budding Art Collective, she organizes exhibitions and art opportunities for both emerging and professional artists to highlight local creatives.

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ARTIST STATEMENT

As a contemporary landscape painter born and raised in the prairies, I have a deep appreciation and connection to the Canadian landscape. My love of nature started in the 70's as a kid hanging out in the forests of Millcreek Ravine in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. I find peace and beauty in the natural world I explore. Taking time to live in the moment and becoming acutely aware of what's around me fuels my creativity and inspires my paintings.

Landscapes fascinate me because they change before your eyes: the clouds move and morph, light changes, colours diminish and intensify. I try to capture the constant flux of this natural playground. Each brushstroke reflects the dynamic interplay of light, shadow, and movement, allowing me to convey the fleeting essence of the natural world as it shifts and evolves. Using photographic references helps me to remember the moment of time, and in studio I transfer that to canvas, panel or paper.

The perfect medium for my impatience is acrylic. It's fast drying nature allows me to paint spontaneously and quickly. I begin intuitively, with layers of glazes—building up rich, translucent colour. Dripping and lifting colour and scratching or using tools to create interesting marks is part of this underpainting too. Sometimes I'll add papers, fabric, or use stencils to enhance pattern and add texture. Then it's a push and pull of opaques and glazes to find the subject. I delight in negative painting and usually paint my background last. I want the viewer to see hints of my first layers and explore up close passages that look abstract.

I am a member of the Federation of Canadian Artists, and Exhibition Chair for our local chapter. And a founding member and exhibiting coordinator of the Budding Art Collective.