



# Melissa Weiss

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Portfolio: [www.melissaweiss.com](http://www.melissaweiss.com)

## About

I have over 20 years of experience producing high quality images for top astrophysics institutions (NASA, CfA, NRAO). Many of the images I have created have been featured in publications across the world. I collaborate closely with scientists and public relation team members to effectively explain science concepts to a general audience.

For the past 7 years, I have also had experience in creating abstract art professionally for galleries and art institutions. These include everything from small-scale drawings to large-scale installation to sound artworks. The one continuous connection is that the work is often rooted conceptually in science topics.

This dual practice has provided the opportunity to communicate with a diverse audience and clientele, which has allowed me to hone my skills in problem solving and flexibility.

## Experience

### Science Illustrator

Portfolio: <http://www.melissaweiss.com>

October 2015 - present

Create high-resolution images of the wonders of our Universe, including (but not limited to) black holes, supernovas, neutron stars, galaxies, and exoplanets.

Communicate and collaborate with scientists/authors/public affairs officers to understand their intent for press releases.

Read and interpret science papers.

General understanding of astrophysical phenomena like black holes, gravitational waves, and gravitational lensing.

Provide all relevant files, including proper metadata.

Maintain schedules for efficiency.

**Clients:** NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory, Center for Astrophysics | Harvard & Smithsonian, University of California Santa Cruz, National Radio Astronomy Observatory

**Skills:** communication, team collaboration, time management, project planning, problem solving, astronomy, digital illustration, science research, project organization

### Artist

Portfolio: <http://www.melissawalterart.com>

October 2014 - present

Create abstract multimedia art for display at art galleries, other art and educational institutions, and private homes.

Artworks range from small-scale drawings to large-scale installation to sound works.

Artworks are research-based and conceptually connected to science topics from astrophysics to forensic science to psychology.

Presented work in nine solo exhibitions:

Oceanside Museum of Art (Oceanside, CA) 2021


ICE Gallery (San Diego, CA) 2019

Sepehri Gallery (San Diego, CA) 2019

SD Mesa College (San Diego, CA) 2018

Space-In-Between Gallery (San Diego, CA) 2017

1805 Gallery (San Diego, CA) 2017



Bread & Salt (San Diego, CA) 2017  
Teros Gallery (San Diego, CA) 2016  
The Vishuddah Creatives (San Diego, CA) 2014

Participated in over a hundred group shows. Noted examples:  
Smithsonian's S. Dillon Ripley Center (Washington, D.C., USA) – *Artist at Work* 2017  
Quint Gallery (La Jolla, CA USA) – *Distant Light* 2018  
Warehouse9 (Copenhagen, DK) – *Empedocles' Ghost: Exploring science and mysticism's forgotten relationship* 2019  
Southwestern College Art Gallery (Chula Vista, CA, USA) - *Dark: Artists in Dialogue with Bruce Nauman* 2019  
La Caja Galería (Tijuana, MX) – *Colectiva* 2019  
San Diego International Airport (San Diego, CA, USA) – *Intergalactic Dreaming* 2017

Attended artist residencies:  
PLAYA Residency (Summer Lake, OR) 2022  
1805 Gallery (San Diego, CA) 2017  
Bread & Salt (San Diego, CA) 2017

Given numerous artist talks in gallery, museum, and classroom settings.

**Skills:** art making, drawing, painting, basic woodworking, installation, paper manipulation, public speaking, art workshop development and leading, artwork hanging, independent research into various science topics, concept creation, mural creation

### **Science Illustrator and Graphic Designer**

NASA's Chandra X-ray Observatory

May 1998 – October 2015

Created space science illustrations of astronomical objects such as black holes, galaxies, neutron stars, etc. This includes interpretation of science-based materials, smooth communication with people from multiple fields, and appropriate research to properly convey the science behind the illustration.

Designed full-scale interactive, educational websites, which includes huge amounts of information.

Designed numerous infographics and other shareables.

Continued maintenance and updating of website materials including, but not limited to, layout for frequent image releases, independent creation and collaborative creation of interactive educational pieces, design of various desktop wallpapers in appropriate formats, ecard design, creation of all thumbnails and main images.

Designed logo and branding for Chandra and other NASA projects.

Designed various educational printed materials including, but not limited to, posters, games, large format exhibits, booklets.

Organized and maintained all external social network formats.

**Programs:** Adobe Photoshop, Adobe InDesign, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Flash, Microsoft Powerpoint, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Excel, Quark Xpress, Macromedia Director, Hootsuite, Twitter, Facebook, Google+

**Skills:** digital illustration, science illustration, graphic design, web design, social media administration, logo design, team collaboration, science research

### **Graphic Designer**

Freelance

May 1998 – May 2015

Designed printed promotional materials for clothing company, nightlife promotion, and music/entertainment industry (ie. posters, flyers, ads, handout materials, etc.).

Logo and branding design.

Designed full-scale interactive websites.

CD and vinyl packaging design.

Package Design.



**Clients:** Digit-L Web Services, Leftover Cuties, Sedna Films, Court Discovery Management, Authors Kimberly Arcand and Megan Watzke, Travis Walter, Graphic Design Solutions Inc., Cosmic Era, UPN9

**Programs:** Adobe Photoshop, Adobe InDesign, Adobe Illustrator, Quark Xpress, Bryce, Poser

**Web Designer**

Invisible.Ink

January 1999 – June 2001

Led and participated in client interaction.

Designed full-scale interactive websites.

Created website architectures.

Designed promotional materials (i.e. leave-behinds, banner ads, annual features).

Maintained websites; updating design elements and company standards.

Prepared files for coding.

Research related to the field and client.

**Clients:** IBM, EyeWeb, Nathans Famous, John H. Murcott Inc., Strategics, WSPN, JanCentral

**Programs:** Adobe Photoshop, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe ImageReady, Macromedia Flash

**Graphic Designer**

ADS Publishing Services

May 1998 – January 1999

Created logos for websites, electronic equipment, and newsletters.

Silhouetted images and designed layouts for catalogs and ads.

Designed images for websites.

Designed bezel layouts.

Maintained and organized archived materials.

**Programs:** Adobe Photoshop, Quark Xpress, Adobe Illustrator

**Education**

University of Rhode Island  
Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA), Studio Art

1994 – 1998

3.5/4.0 GPA  
Dean's List 7/8 semesters  
Graduated Cum Laude

**Honors & Awards**

**San Diego Art Prize Recipient** - San Diego Visual Arts Network – 2020

**Honorable Mention** - 26th Annual Juried Exhibition at the Athenaeum Music & Arts Library – 2017

**Finalist** - International Science & Engineering Challenge – 2012

**Award of Excellence** - University of Rhode Island – 1998

**Aquila Biopharmaceutical Public Health Fellowship** - RI Partnership in Infectious Disease Control – 1998



**Professional  
Associations &  
Leadership**

Arts & Culture Commission of La Mesa (CA) – Commissioner – 2022 - present

International Association of Astronomical Artists – Member – 2022 - present

La Mesa Activists for Good Governance – Board member – 2021 - present