

## Artist's research connects art, music and emotion

Written by Lauren Sedam

Dec. 15

jconline.com



*Artist and musician Cheryl Kaldahl stands with a selection of her artwork at the Henriott Group, 250 Main Street in downtown Lafayette. Kaldahl has linked her paintings to musical tones and emotions to promote healing. / By John Terhune/Journal & Courier*

If you go

When: 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. Friday

Where: The Henriott Group, 250 Main St., Suite 650

How much: Free

As [Cheryl Kaldahl](#) puts her brush to canvas, she can already see how the pieces fit together.

To her, the hues she swishes and swirls aren't just colors. The blues and greens promote a calming effect. The red stands for middle C on the musical scale. She can turn your favorite color into a song or paint your mood.

Through art, Kaldahl can connect emotion and

music into one healing package .

"I feel like I've collected all these pieces and have put it all together in one big combined thing," she said.

Kaldahl will share the findings of her research, work she is planning to patent, in a lecture from 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. Friday at the [Henriott Group](#), 250 Main St., Suite 650. She also is working on a book called "Color: Music to My Ears."

Though Kaldahl has been involved in the arts since she was young, it was the sum of her experiences that brought her to this project, she said. She started playing piano when she was about 5, and when she was 13, she began classical training. By the time she was 17, she had even started writing her own music and recording. Eventually, her piano teacher couldn't teach her anything else, she said.

That's when she started learning about Eastern medicine and healing.

"I was trying to find how great healers — like Christ and Buddha — how they healed without depleting their own energies," she said.

She eventually became an ordained minister and a third-generation Dr. Usui Ryoho Reiki master.

But Kaldahl also started wondering what her purpose was in life. That led her to look into connecting the things she loved.

There already was a lot of research about colors and mood, and it made sense to her: Yellow means joy and mental stimulation — smiley faces and school buses typically are yellow. Red and pink can represent love, and when we draw hearts, we color them with those hues.

There was research connecting musical notes to colors too, based on the length of vibrations. The chakras — energy centers in the body — in Eastern practices also were linked to color.

“I think if I hadn’t dove so intensely into each of those different avenues, I wouldn’t have been able to connect the dots,” she said.

As she put it together, she began to paint, carefully keeping a list of every color she used in the order she used them. When the painting was done, she took the list and transposed it to song.

Almost magically, she said, it worked. Certain major chords fit exactly with the primary colors. The piece seemed divinely inspired, she said. And if ever there was a sour note in the song, it was in a place Kaldahl had felt was “off” about the painting.

She began to see the effects of the relationship between the arts. By tapping into the chakras and emotions, she said, anyone can look at the work and find something he or she likes. They might be attracted to a color because it’s something they love or because it represents something they need in their life, but it can help either way.

That, she said, is the reason her work matters. It helps people. Like the connections between the arts, her work helps her connect to the world.

“The purpose for me is to use the combination of art and music to help touch the heart and soul of people around the world,” she said.

“It seems like my whole life has led up to this.”