



abigail wall

Winnipeg-born Abigail Wall grew up in a household of six adoptees from diverse backgrounds, “warrior-women who carried pain in their eyes.” She says that in La Salle, MB – where she was the first black kid – it was her aboriginal siblings who really took care of her. She later studied acting and has done stand-up comedy and improv. She also studied classical voice (Conservatory, Grade 8) and has more recently sung jazz and written songs.

About five years ago, she added painting to her repertoire – and so far has had three solo shows – but in this domain she is self-taught. She paints in acrylic on canvas using ink splatters as highlights. Abby says early influences include Japanese anime, the work of pin-up illustrator Gil Elvgren, and Archie comic characters Betty & Veronica. Her twist on these precedents is to embody the personalities of “women I can recognize in all shapes and sizes,” including especially women of colour, whom she considers under-represented in art. Where she portrays partial nudity, it is not to focus on sex, but to better explore human form and movement. Her colours are bright and her backgrounds vibrant, ranging from cosmic, to psychedelic, to plaids reminiscent of traditional Jamaican bandana or madras patterns. “I’m an extrovert,” Abby says, “so painting is my company when no one’s around. I’m prolific, and will stick with a project for twelve hours at a time. Art heals and feeds me.”