

Chicago Memories

Chaveevah Banks Ferguson is a whimsical and a colorful artist. Her paintings convey the feeling of motion by enhancing body proportions with elongated limbs and rounded faces. She says that she is usually “that person” who watches what everyone else is doing. Looking at her artwork reveals Chaveevah’s interpretation of day-to-day activities.

Since childhood her parents kept her stocked with crayons and pencils. A self-taught artist, she graduated to different mediums, such as sculpture and oil. Later, she would paint late at night after her children had gone to sleep. In the morning the oil painting was smeared with fingerprints, so she decided to change mediums and selected acrylic because of the quick drying time.

Much of her art is influenced by her love for dance and music. The images pay homage to the years she danced with the Muntu Dance Theatre of Chicago, or to Chicago’s vibrant music scene where jazz, blues, and reggae ruled.

Of her artwork she says:

When I’m painting “just because,” I often paint realistic images in totally unrealistic colors, like skin tones of blue, orange, purple or green. If an artist is inspired, or amused, or finds joy in what he or she creates, I believe that same inspiration, amusement or joy will be communicated to those who view the art. When illustrating children’s books, I work closely with the authors so that the images produced are detailed and colorful, and complement the story to engage the young readers.



Photo by Michael Muhammad

Chaveevah is the owner and founder of BaHar Publishing in Waterloo. The company, established in 2003, has published more than 60 books, including works of fiction, non-fiction, children’s literature and poetry. BaHar also works with editing and layout, cover design and illustration. Chaveevah earned her bachelor’s in public relations and master’s in communication education at UNI. Chaveevah has shown her work in more than twenty exhibitions.

Please contact Rod Library’s Fine & Performing Arts Collection desk on the fourth floor for a price sheet. Comments should be sent to the artist at chaveevahdread@yahoo.com. Everyone is invited to show art on the Learning Commons Exhibition Wall. Simply complete the online form located on Rod Library’s Fine & Performing Arts Collection web page, or call (319) 273-6252.