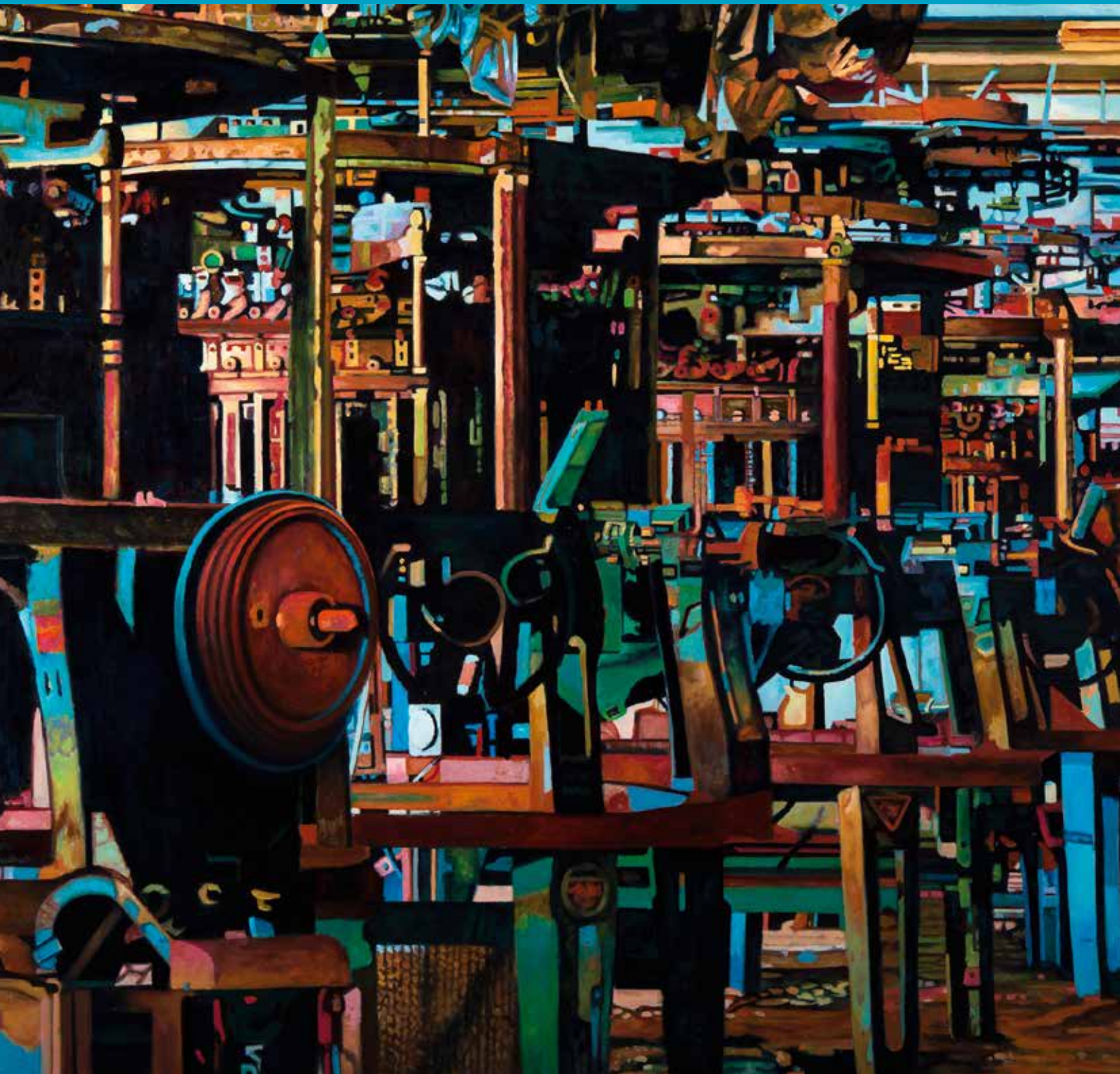


Art in Embassies Exhibition

United States Embassy Bandar Seri Begawan



MORGAN CRAIG

A Spirited Farewell (detail)

2014

Oil on linen

54 x 72 in. (137.2 x 182.9 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



Art in Embassies

Established in 1963, the U.S. Department of State's office of Art in Embassies (AIE) plays a vital role in our nation's public diplomacy through a culturally expansive mission, creating temporary and permanent exhibitions, artist programming, and publications. The Museum of Modern Art first envisioned this global visual arts program a decade earlier. In the early 1960s, President John F. Kennedy formalized it, naming the program's first director. Now with over 200 venues, AIE curates temporary and permanent exhibitions for the representational spaces of all U.S. chanceries, consulates, and embassy residences worldwide, selecting and commissioning contemporary art from the U.S. and the host countries. These exhibitions provide international audiences with a sense of the quality, scope, and diversity of both countries' art and culture, establishing AIE's presence in more countries than any other U.S. foundation or arts organization.

AIE's exhibitions allow foreign citizens, many of whom might never travel to the United States, to personally experience the depth and breadth of our artistic heritage and values, making what has been called a "footprint that can be left where people have no opportunity to see American art."

"For over fifty years, Art in Embassies has played an active diplomatic role by creating meaningful cultural exchange through the visual arts. The exhibitions, permanent collections and artist exchanges connect people from the farthest corners of an international community. Extending our reach, amplifying our voice, and demonstrating our inclusiveness are strategic imperatives for America. Art in Embassies cultivates relationships that transcend boundaries, building trust, mutual respect and understanding among peoples. It is a fulcrum of America's global leadership as we continue to work for freedom, human rights and peace around the world."

— John Forbes Kerry
U.S. Secretary of State

<http://art.state.gov>

Transformation and Renewal

Transformation and Renewal is the theme of the artwork displayed at the U.S. Chief of Mission Residence in Brunei through the Art in the Embassies program. We greatly enjoyed selecting contemporary art that wrestles with these quintessential and timeless American concepts. The United States of America is, at its core, all about change, adaptation, growth, and regeneration.

The natural world of the United States is one prism through which *Transformation and Renewal* is explored. The remarkable diversity and drama of seasonal change in American physical landscapes lend themselves to vivid depictions. Teresa Neptune captures the surrealistic shadows of deserts in her *Colorado Dunes*. Bruneians, used to the luscious fertility of their tropical rainforests, are enjoying the stark beauty of Neptune's photographic image. The wonder of rejuvenation in Nature is contrasted in a "trio about trees" — the color and nuance in Ria Krishnan's gentle *Winter Grays*; the skeletal outlines in Aleksander Titovets's *No Boundaries*; and evergreens' dependability in Titovets's *On the Top*. *The Marsh* from Beverly Brodsky suggests a vast, interconnected watery ecosystem and hints at the challenges of maintaining balance in a delicate environment. In symbiosis, all parts must work together if harmony is to be sustained; imbalance or even disaster is never far away. The power of water in Nature is present too in Andrea Belag's *Summer Stage 1*. Her bold, forceful brushwork models the majesty of a rainbow, the elusive reward from a sun emerging after a heavy rain. The transformational magic of water, the world's essential scarce resource, is also addressed in a delightful trilogy from Gudrun Mertes-Frady. The three selections from her *Skylight* series charm with their wistful yet ordered watery streaks and mirages.

In *South of Duane Street*, Peter Colquhoun depicts urban *Transformation and Renewal*. What better subject for an oil study of a city than globally loved New York City, the epitome of ever-changing skylines and unrelenting human adaptation to a challenging environment?

Manufacturing and industry too are examined. Morgan Craig's provocatively titled *A Spirited Farewell* shows boldly the machinery of factories gone by. As the necessity of diversifying economies grows, Craig's nostalgic study doesn't project what type of re-industrialization might emerge. He merely confirms how much economies have already changed.

Wonder Bread Baby is John Bodkin's playful ode to an American dietary staple of yesteryear, when many Americans were raised consuming pre-sliced and nutritiously questionable Wonder Bread. *Transformation and Renewal* in the American diet is whimsically treated through Bodkin's doodling with the famous yellow, red, and blue dots of Wonder Bread packaging. The range of options now available for daily bread consumption is dizzying. The sad reality though is that the possibility of diversifying away from Wonder Bread is not available to all; socio-economic disparities are sadly reflected in dietary inequities too.

Our family treasures displaying this inspiring and original art in the Residence. Promoting the talents of creative Americans gives us great pleasure. We know how fortunate we are to be able to enjoy the exquisite art on a daily basis. Our heartfelt thanks go to all the artists who loaned their work for this particular Art in Embassies exhibition. Thank you too to all guests to the Residence — Bruneians, Americans, and other nationalities — for their warm and appreciative comments about the displayed artwork.

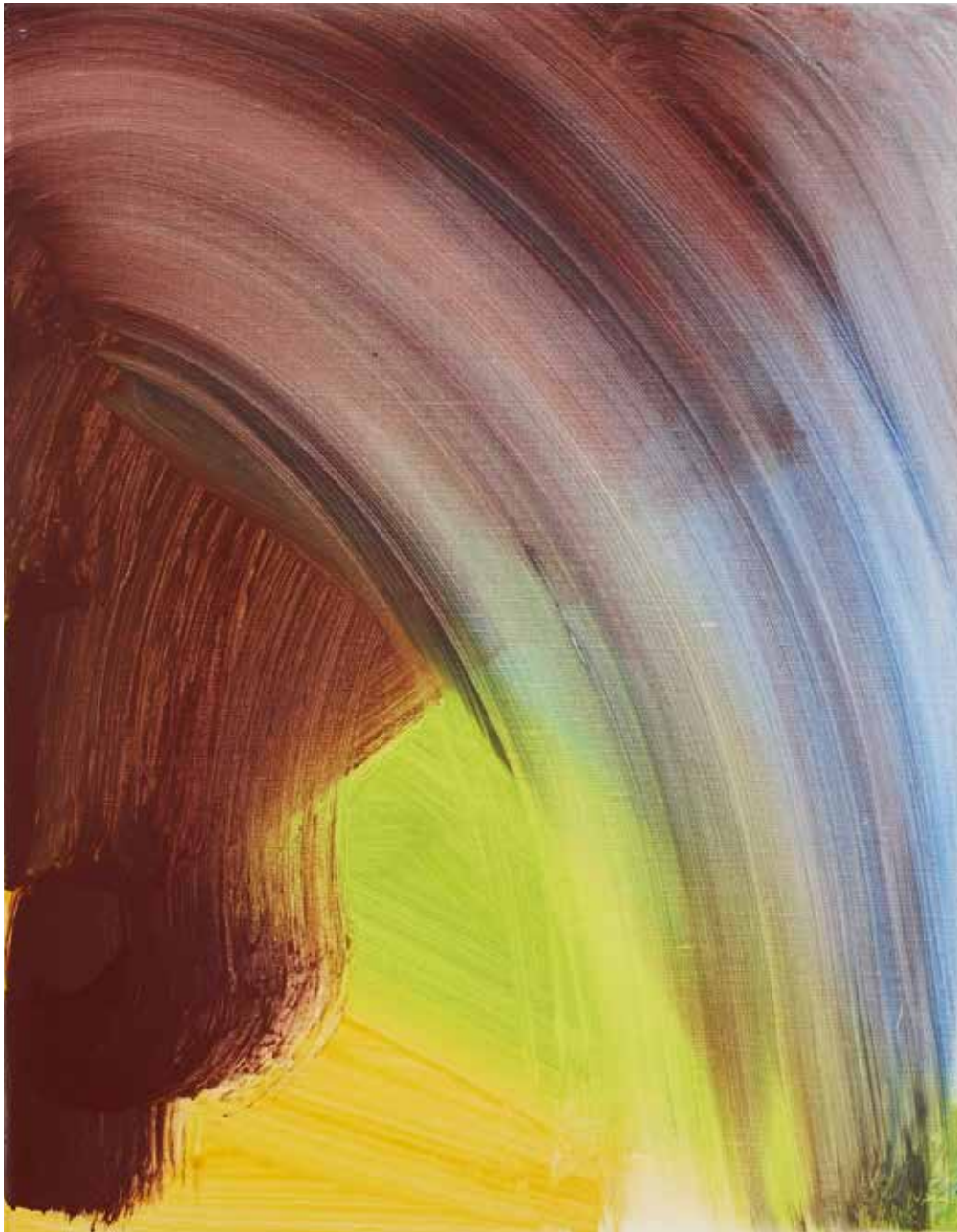
With gratitude,
Ambassador Craig Allen and Micheline Tusenius

*Bandar Seri Begawan
June 2016*

Andrea Belag 1951

Andrea Belag works in several two-dimensional media, including photography, digital lithography, cyanotype, woodblock printing, watercolor and gouache, as well as her primary focus: oil paint on linen and wood.

Belag attended Boston University (Massachusetts), Bard College (Annandale-on-Hudson, New York), and The New York Studio School of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture, and is a faculty member at the School of Visual Arts, New York. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Newark Museum, New Jersey; Mead Museum, Amherst College, Massachusetts; and the Sprengel Museum, Hanover, Germany, among others. She has been awarded a commission from New York's MTA Arts for Transit and Urban Design that will be fabricated in glass and installed in 2017.



Summer Stage 1

Oil on linen
14 x 11 in. (35.6 x 27.9 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, New York, New York

John Bodkin

“One of my oldest friends said to me ‘each of us is our own creative gatekeeper. How demanding we are of ourselves has everything to do with the quality of the work produced.’ I believe this to be a foundation tenet for all artists. I am not concerned with a particular style or approach. I am focused on a personal exploration and hopefully, within that journey, growth is realized. I try to plumb all that I can in exploring a particular approach and then move on. I know that in the end it is the only way to truly grow. The growth and exploration is, in the end, my ultimate goal.”

Bodkin received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Ringling School of Art, Sarasota, Florida, and his Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Tulsa, Oklahoma. His work is represented in over 160 private collections and eighteen corporate collections.

Wonder Bread Baby

2012

Oil on panel

48 x 60 in. (121.9 x 152.4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Gambrills, Maryland



Beverly Brodsky 1941

“My work is a choreography of the unique physical forms in nature, and an expression of the transformative energy in the universe. I visualize a dynamic presence that imprints its language on all its surfaces. When I layer the paint, I think about beginnings, of primordial worlds, and about the way nature carves the Earth’s crust or core to create form. My paintings, therefore, reflect the passage of geological time. They are also concerned with mysterious, non linear realities of the spirit world and my own dream world, where memories of ancient origins incubate and eventually emerge. Recently, I have been painting my abstract perceptions of the Hudson River [Valley], where I live and work. Nature is a voice that translates into form and color on my canvases. Ultimately I want to engage viewers in a visceral way through the materiality of paint surfaces, and with an intuitive approach.”

Beverly Brodsky graduated in 1964 from Brooklyn College, New York, where she studied with Ad Reinhardt and Burgoyne Diller. She has been awarded several painting fellowships and grants, including The New York Foundation for The Arts Fellowship (2000), and The Vermont Studio Center Fellowship (2010). In 2012 she was The Adolf and Esther Gottlieb Foundation Grant recipient. Brodsky was also included at the Whitney Museum of American Art Exhibition entitled *The American Century Part 11: 2000*. At Lake Placid, her work was exhibited during the 1980 Olympics, where she received a National Fine Arts Committee Medal. Brodsky has been teaching painting and color theory at Parsons / The New School University for many years.

The Marsh

undated

Oil on canvas

52 x 56 in. (132.1 x 142.2 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, New York, New York



Peter Colquhoun

1955

Peter Colquhoun was born in New York City in 1955, and he was educated there. From 1972 to 1976 he attended the Brooklyn Museum Art School, and from 1987 until 1990 he attended and graduated from Pratt Institute. Then he traveled to Italy, and from 1983 through 1986 lived, worked, and exhibited for six month intervals in Venice, Milan, and Casole d'Elsa. In recent years Colquhoun's focus has been on the city that is his home. As he stated in a recent interview for *American Arts Quarterly*, "places are meaningful — they feed me as a painter. Certain locations generate a specific power or energy. New York City generates this in an alive and changing manner." Colquhoun has been awarded grants through the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation and the Pollock Krasner Foundation.





South of Duane Street

undated

Oil on linen

30 x 72 in. (76.2 x 182.9 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, New York, New York

Morgan Craig

“I believe that architectural structures act as both repositories and as vehicles for memory by profoundly influencing culture and identity and by providing a tangible framework through which facets of a society can be expressed. I have been inspired to build a body of work dealing with how identity is influenced by the types of architectural edifices present in a given landscape. All must take into account the forgotten factory, asylum, or prison. Neglected, ignored, or often instilling rancor in the public, these buildings paradoxically offer one the most scintillating of subject matter: how beautiful the bitter pill. My work is not merely a method of documentation, but a visual forum where one may question what it is about these edifices that instills such emotion in people. While evidence of these pasts or present day difficulties may not be pleasant, I feel it imperative that societies realize their impact on the past, present, and future concepts of identity and history.”

Morgan Craig has exhibited throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and Australia. He has received numerous awards, including the Pollock Krasner Foundation Grant, the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation Grant (2007, 2011), and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts Individual Artist Fellowship (2006, 2008). Craig has also been invited to several residencies, including Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris; the Macdowell Colony, Peterborough, New Hampshire; Bemis Center for the Contemporary Arts, Omaha, Nebraska; and Proekt Fabrika in Moscow, Russia. During the fall semester of 2010, he was the visiting artist at the Australian National University, Canberra.

A Spirited Farewell

2014

Oil on linen

54 x 72 in. (137.2 x 182.9 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



Ria Krishnan

“The transformation from an art lover to a professional artist demanded a dramatic shift in my interpretation of colors found in Nature. I remember going through a constant struggle trying to erase stereotypical notions of colors from my mind and attempting to deduce the true colors as apparent to my naked eye. When a landscape captivates me, my soul yearns to paint it and my mind cooperates by trying to understand or remember the colors. I often have a sketch book that helps me take notes. It’s a process that starts with visiting a place, conception of a composition and ends with realization of a painting. The play of light in a landscape is the key aspect that motivates me to make a painting. I like to think of it as a challenge to ‘capture the light before I lose it.’”

Ria Krishnan often makes sketches or small plein air studies on location with the intent of capturing the moment. These studies along with several reference photographs translate into larger studio pieces. Krishnan, who was born and raised in India, is primarily self-taught. Her knowledge and proficiency with oils has improved through workshops and her own personal experience. After earning her Bachelor’s degree in 2006 in electronics and telecommunication, Krishnan’s career took a different path in 2009 when she decided to quit the software industry in order to pursue her passion. She is an Associate member of the Oil Painters of America.



Winter Grays

undated

Oil on panel

26 x 22 in. (66 x 55.9 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Portland, Oregon

Gudrun Mertes-Frady 1939

“As a timeless organizing principle, geometry is the underlying matrix or architecture of all my work. I am drawn to its symmetry and quasi symmetry and the limitless potential to create my own world. My work is about clarity and structure, pared down to essential forms. In my recent paintings and drawings, I use metallic pigments, like aluminum and graphite. I also use mica particles mixed with my colors to affect a kinetic quality of illusory motion depending from which angle the work is seen. I’m very interested to explore physical fact and psychic effect of color and form with this process. I work toward the instant the work has its own center, its own logic, physically and intellectually.

Most of all I want my work to be about deceleration, in the spirit of the works by Olafur Eliasson and the Swiss architect Peter Zumthor, as a counter point to the ever accelerating whirl of our time, in which our lives seem trapped. There is one more thing of importance to me – a sense of beauty.”

Gudrun Mertes-Frady was born in Cologne, Germany, where she received her education in painting and art history at the Koelner Werkschule, (Academy for Art and Design). She moved to New York in 1981.

Skylight # 11

2014

Water based and metallic media on Mylar
19 x 24 in. (48.3 x 61 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Brooklyn, New York, and Kathryn Markel Fine Arts, New York, New York



Skylight # 14

2014

Water based and metallic media on Mylar

19 x 24 in. (48.3 x 61 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Brooklyn, New York, and Kathryn Markel Fine Arts, New York, New York



Skylight # 21

2015

Ink and mixed media on Mylar
19 x 24 in. (48.3 x 61 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Brooklyn, New York, and Kathryn Markel Fine Arts, New York, New York



Teresa Neptune

Teresa Neptune first picked up a camera as a teenager in Paris, learning the basics of black-and-white photography and taking to the streets to capture Paris on film. This began her lifelong love of the medium and street photography. Her landscapes reflect the spontaneity and observation of a street photographer. In 2005 Neptune was awarded the Willard Van Dyke Grant. Her photographs are in the collections of The National Museum of Women in The Arts, Washington, D.C.; The Palace of The Governors Museum, Santa Fe, New Mexico; The State of New Mexico, Art in Public Places Program; The Historic Santa Fe Foundation, and more. Neptune's photography has been praised in *The New York Times*, *The Chicago Sun Times*, and other publications. She has a studio and gallery on Canyon Road in Santa Fe.



Colorado Dunes, Colorado

2006

Black and white photograph
Courtesy of the artist, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Aleksander Titovets 1960

“Through art, we can answer the questions of who we are, what we live for and what we will leave behind when we’re gone from this world. It is my goal to make these connections so that the people who see my paintings will understand and maybe will treasure their time on earth more.”

Aleksander Titovets immigrated to the United States with his wife, Lyuba, from Russia in 1992. Although the painter resides in El Paso, Texas, he finds his inspiration in memories of his homeland and in the work of the painters Titian and Velazquez. Titovets was born and raised in a cabin in a Siberian Forest. At age ten he and his parents moved to St. Petersburg, where he later earned both Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees from Leningrad (St. Petersburg) State University College of Fine Art. His classical art skills reflect his training in the Russian School of Oil Painting, a style that combines a powerful realistic involvement with the soft, lyrical looseness of impressionism.

Titovets has participated in competitions at the National Academy of Design in New York, and in the Oil Painters of America Regional Competition. He won Best of Show in the International Fine Art Competition four years in a row, among competitors in his region. His work is included in public and private collections worldwide, including those of actress Sophia Loren and the King of Spain, His Majesty Juan Carlos.

On the Top

undated

Oil on canvas

24 x 30 in. (61 x 76.2 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, El Paso, Texas



No Boundaries

undated

Oil on canvas

48 x 60 in. (121.9 x 152.4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, El Paso, Texas



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