

ART IN EMBASSIES EXHIBITION
UNITED STATES EMBASSY HAVANA



PATON MILLER

Caravan by the Sea (detail)

2014

Oil on canvas

70 x 74 in. (177,8 x 188 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Shchukin,

New York, New York

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>

WELCOME

This is an historic moment in U.S.-Cuba relations. President Obama has said that the U.S. is not only in the process of normalizing relations with the Cuban government, but we are also normalizing relations with the Cuban people. Indeed he has placed the interests of the people of both countries at the heart of our policy. Exhibitions such as the one we have assembled here provide an excellent opportunity to engage with diverse aspects of Cuban society to engage in dialogue, address differences, and deepen mutual understanding.

The Department of State's Art in Embassies program curated the exhibition of contemporary American art currently on display at the Chief of Mission's Residence in Havana. For more than five decades, Art in Embassies has played an active role in U.S. diplomacy by initiating meaningful cultural exchange through the visual arts. The Art in Embassies program uses exhibitions and artist exchanges to highlight the quality, scope, and diversity of American art and culture. The works engage audiences in U.S. embassies and official residences around the world, demonstrating that art can transcend borders and build connections among peoples.

The art displayed at the Residence in Havana highlights themes particularly relevant to our two countries: the sea that we share and wish to protect, the dialogue underway, the bridges being built, and the reconciliation that will take root. Ultimately, the works of these women and men, all born in the 1950s, who came of age during the Cold War, represent our efforts to look

to the future for the benefit of both our peoples. We should remember our history but not be trapped by it going forward.

We are turning the page and beginning to write a new chapter in the relationship between the United States and Cuba. Cultural exchange enables us in a concrete and powerful manner to bring the people of our two countries closer than they have been for decades. In furthering this goal, Jennifer and I are delighted to host this special exhibition in the U.S. Residence. This grand house was completed in 1942, and over the years has come to be regarded as an architectural treasure that epitomizes elegance and fine workmanship. We are deeply appreciative to the individual artists, art galleries, and the staff of the Art in Embassies program for making the exhibition a reality.

In addressing the Cuban people on March 22, 2016, President Obama quoted the opening line of Jose Marti's most famous poem, "Cultivo una rosa blanca," offering a greeting of peace and extending the hand of friendship. In that vein, it is a privilege to showcase the talent and creativity of these American artists to the increasing numbers of Cuban, American, and other visitors to the official American Residence in Havana.

Chargé d'Affaires Jeffrey DeLaurentis

Havana
April 2016

BIENVENIDOS

Este es un momento histórico en las relaciones de los Estados Unidos con Cuba. El Presidente Obama ha dicho que los Estados Unidos están, no sólo en el proceso de normalizar relaciones con el gobierno cubano, sino también normalizando relaciones con el pueblo cubano. De hecho, él ha situado los intereses de los pueblos de ambos países en el corazón de nuestra política. Exposiciones como la que hemos montado aquí ofrecen una excelente oportunidad para participar en diversos aspectos de la sociedad cubana, establecer un diálogo, afrontar diferencias, y profundizar el entendimiento mutuo.

El programa Arte en las Embajadas del Departamento de Estado fue responsable de la curaduría de la exposición de arte contemporáneo estadounidense que actualmente se muestra en la residencia del Jefe de Misión en La Habana. Por más de cinco décadas, Arte en las Embajadas ha jugado un rol activo en la diplomacia estadounidense, iniciando un significativo intercambio cultural a través de las artes visuales. El programa Arte en las Embajadas emplea las exposiciones e intercambio entre los artistas para resaltar la calidad, alcance y diversidad del arte y la cultura estadounidense. Las obras llegan al público en las embajadas de los Estados Unidos y en las residencias oficiales alrededor del mundo, demostrando que el arte puede trascender las fronteras y construir conexiones entre los pueblos.

La muestra que se exhibe en la residencia de La Habana destaca temas particularmente relevantes para nuestros dos países: el mar que compartimos y deseamos proteger, el diálogo en curso, los puentes que estamos construyendo, y la reconciliación que echará raíces. En última instancia, las obras de esas mujeres y hombres, todos nacidos en

la década de 1950, que alcanzaron su mayoría de edad durante la Guerra Fría, representan nuestro esfuerzo para mirar al futuro por el beneficio de nuestros dos pueblos. Debemos recordar nuestra historia, pero no quedarnos atrapados en ella mientras avanzamos.

Estamos pasando página y comenzando a escribir un nuevo capítulo en la relación entre los Estados Unidos y Cuba. Los intercambios culturales nos permiten de una forma concreta y poderosa acercar a los pueblos de ambos países, de una forma que no habían estado por décadas. Para promover este objetivo, Jennifer y yo estamos encantados de ser los anfitriones de esta especial exposición en la Residencia de los Estados Unidos. Esta gran casa fue terminada en 1942, y a través de los años se ha convertido en un tesoro arquitectónico que epitomiza la elegancia y el buen oficio. Apreciamos profundamente a los artistas individuales, las galerías de arte y el equipo del programa Arte en las Embajadas por hacer esta exposición una realidad.

Al dirigirse al pueblo cubano el 22 de marzo de 2016, el Presidente Obama citó el primer verso del más famoso poema de José Martí “Cultivo una rosa blanca”, ofreciendo un saludo de paz y extendiendo una mano amiga. En ese sentido, es un privilegio mostrar el talento y la creatividad de esos artistas estadounidenses al creciente número de cubanos, estadounidenses y otros visitantes a la residencia oficial estadounidense en La Habana.

Encargado de Negocios Jeffrey DeLaurentis

La Habana
Abril de 2016

HUGO BASTIDAS 1956

“The approach behind the artwork is firstly visual and secondly conceptual. I apply paint to the surface with quick, even, short strokes that build and amount to the image. The result is that of a blurry, monochromic photograph encouraging closer inspection. I am purposely generating a journalistic photographic appearance to direct the viewer’s attention to the narrative. By considering what is being viewed as an actual event, or accepting it for what it is, the context becomes personal. The situation in each picture seems innocuous at first, but the complex formal qualities gradually may be discerned. My intention is that the allegorical elements reflect a larger cultural malaise and environmental disruption.”

Born in Quito, Ecuador, Hugo Bastidas moved to the United States in 1960. He was awarded a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Rutgers University, New Jersey, in 1979, before receiving his Master of Fine Arts degree from Hunter College, New York City, in 1987. Bastidas is the recipient of several prestigious awards including the Robert Smithson Memorial Scholarship in 1979-1980, a Fulbright Fellowship in 1990, and a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant in 1992. In 1995 he received the Colombian Ecuadorian Association of America Award in the Visual Arts, as well as an Award of Merit from the Jersey City Museum, New Jersey and the Mayor’s Office. Bastidas has been teaching almost continuously since 1981, and has exhibited his work in the United States, Europe, and Latin America. He currently lives and works in New York and New Jersey.

www.tfaoi.com



Howard's Bridge

2010

Oil on linen

40 x 60 in. (101,6 x 152,4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Nohra Haime Gallery, New York, New York

JULIE HEDRICK 1958

Julie Hedrick is a Canadian artist known for her abstract and vibrant oil paintings. Through the span of her career, recurring elements are visible in her paintings; yet they consistently experience artistic evolution, resulting in a coherence that is highly unique. The work is a direct effect of her open and spacious studio, housed in an old church chapel, operating as a temple of meditation and creation.

Hedrick's art displays a characteristic peeling texture – a tactile, terrene, and humane quality that belongs to the visible and material world, connecting to the environment and human senses. Another notable quality is the nature of her paintings, visual poems of an exquisite delicacy and a bursting energy. They combine in such perfect harmony, that they achieve a rare and personal expressive power beyond words and images. The works become part of her meditations on nature, the Earth's spiritual planes, and the collaborations with her husband, musician Peter Wetzler.

There is also a color property that evolves in a directly parallel way to Hedrick's artistic and personal development. In her early series, the colors have a shaded appearance, almost like a nebula in constant

flux; however in recent years, she has used a more solid application of color, tending to a monochromatic essence. Hedrick often chooses the predominance of a primary color, according to the perceptions she receives from the moment we live, in connection to that particular color.

Hedrick's compositions have an ancestral sensitivity, the painting of universal concepts that goes back to the origins of human existence. She easily achieves a connection with the spectator, through works and concepts that are deep but unaffected, direct, natural and transparent.

Julie Hedrick now lives and works in Kingston, New York. She is a graduate of the painting studio program, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD). She also studied anatomy and physiology, and has been writing poetry since 1990. Hedrick has exhibited extensively throughout the United States and Canada. She has also participated to great acclaim in performances, poetry readings, set designs, and discussion panels.

www.nohrahaimegallery.com



Celebration

2009

Oil on canvas

36 x 36 in. (91,4 x 91,4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Nohra Haime Gallery, New York

VALERIE HIRD 1955

Valerie Hird is recognized for creating work that has a unique focus on cultural myths and their interaction with historical memory. Her research led her to travel the world for eighteen years. She has visited and traveled with semi-nomadic communities in Morocco, Turkey, and Central Asia. Through the years she has also tackled the legacy of myth and metaphor within her own society – the culture America consciously or unconsciously exports to the rest of the world.

Hird believes that the fictionalization of history provides a rich and evocative tool for societies that rely on oral narrative. That wealth of metaphor, fact, and cultural myth was her creative home while abroad for eighteen years. Hird now focuses on her own oral traditions – based on radio stations, television news, and other forms of media that bombard us with opinions and information on a daily basis. She finds that these sources utilize a similar strategy compared to the oral histories she embraced while traveling – they are equally rich as a source for visual imagery.

Hird holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Rhode Island School of Design and a Master of Fine Arts degree from

Vermont College. The recipient of an award from the Community Foundation of Vermont in 2008, she has exhibited widely in the United States and abroad. Her work belongs to such public and corporate collections as The Rhode Island School of Design, Providence; The Fleming Museum, Burlington, Vermont; The Exxon Corporation, Dallas, Texas; and Pfizer Inc.; among others. Hird moved to Vermont in 1979, where she currently lives and works.

www.nohrahaimegallery.com





**Gentlemen, When the Bell Rings,
Shake Hands and Come Out Fighting**

2005

*Oil and acrylic base on linen
48 x 72 in. (121.9 x 182.9 cm)*

Courtesy of the artist and Nohra Haime Gallery, New York

Santayana's Revenge

2005

Oil on linen

30 x 35 in. (76,2 x 88,9 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Nohra Haime Gallery, New York, New York

STEVE MILLER 1951

Born in Buffalo, New York, Steve Miller currently resides in New York City and Sagaponack, New York. He teaches at the School of Visual Arts in New York City.

Steve Miller has been making work at the intersection of art and science for the past thirty-five years, exhibiting nationally and internationally. He was one of the first artists in the 1980s to experiment with computer generated images, and he collaborates with scientists in the diverse fields of molecular biology, environmental science, quantum mechanics, and big data. The artist has presented forty solo exhibitions at major institutions in the United States, China, France, and Germany. His exhibitions have been reviewed in *Le Monde*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *ArtForum*, *ARTnews*, and *Art in America*.

Miller is well known for several art-science projects, including his long-term collaboration with Nobel Laureate, Dr. Rod MacKinnon, who studies the way ions move across cell membranes. Miller worked on a project at the Relativistic Heavy Ion Collider at Brookhaven National Labs called Neolithic Quark. He is also working with scientists at the Large Hadron Collider at CERN and most recently, investigating the world of big data as it relates to culture, collaborating with Sean Green and Raymond Nguyen on the mobile app *ArtLocal*.

The artist's current project, entitled *Health of the Planet*, is about the rainforest in Brazil. The forests of the Amazon are the lungs of our planet in that they process the oxygen/CO₂ exchange essential for a healthy global environment. This project gives Brazil a medical check-up with an examination of our global lungs by taking X-rays of the plants and animals of the Amazon.

The *Health of the Planet* series involved travel to Brazil and working with a local hospital to create high-quality digital X-rays of Amazon plants. The plants are caught like patients under the scrutinizing eye of the X-ray. While all photography arrests motion, it is only the X-ray that allows us to climb inside a particular moment and subject and parse the beauty of its structure from within. What was hidden is now revealed. Currently, Miller is designing surfboards with images of X-rayed animals from the Amazon rain forest. In one example, the historic iconic image of a stuffed alligator on the wall is replaced by a new “trophy” of the interior bone structure of an alligator on a surfboard that is ready to be surfed.

This body of work is a diagnosis of the relationship between the organic and the technical, the developing and the decaying, the empty and the full, in carefully rendered black and white photography pressured by paint. This marriage of the organic to the technical asks the viewer to diagnose both their own state and that of the Earth.

www.stevemiller.com



Feeding Power

2011

Inkjet, pigment dispersion, and silk screen on canvas
60 x 40 in. (152,4 x 101,6 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, New York, New York



Gator White 002

2013

Surfboard

75 x 18 x 3 in. (190,5 x 45,7 x 7,6 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, New York, New York

PATON MILLER 1953

Paton Miller's natural talent as an artist was apparent from an early age when his family noticed Miller drawing caricatures of the family. This interest in the family condition grew into an interest in the human condition, leading him to his early studies of works by Honoré Daumier, Francisco de Goya, and William Hogarth. The family moved to Hawaii when he was quite young. In 1973, following his formal art studies at the Honolulu Academy of Arts, Miller embarked on a year-long journey that took him west from the island of Oahu, Hawaii, to the Philippines, China, much of Asia, and Europe, finally returning to the United States at New York. In 1978 he graduated from Long Island University.

In the ensuing years, Miller has had over fifteen solo exhibitions and numerous group shows in New York, and more across the United States and around the world. His penchant for capturing the comedy and drama of the human condition continues to this day. Reminiscing about those first early days in Southampton, Miller remarked on his first exposure to the titans of contemporary art: "I found myself in the studios of Willem de Kooning, Roy Lichtenstein, Larry Rivers, and Frank Stella. It was a great experience for a young artist." Miller's work is a combination of his early influences, his own life's experiences, his personal life, and his extensive adventures.

Many writers have commented on Paton Miller's unique works, including American art critic, poet, and professor Donald Kuspit, who wrote: "These pictures make clear a familiar, but often forgotten point: that the expressivity of a representational scene often depends upon the abstract intensity generated in response to the medium. Without this visionary intensity, representational painting can become a kind of perceptual journalism. It becomes all the more important when the artist is picturing inner rather than overt horror. The achievement of ecstatic abstractness also indicates that the artist is master of the scene, rather than overwhelmed by what he or she is rendering – to make it appear magically upon command, which is what Miller's version of magic realism does."

www.galleryshchukin.com





In the Wadi

2012

Oil on canvas

48 x 96 in. (121,9 x 243,8 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Shchukin, New York, New York

PATON MILLER



Caravan by the Sea

2014

Oil on canvas

70 x 74 in. (177,8 x 188 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Gallery Shchukin, New York, New York

ADAM STRAUS 1956

Adam Straus is an American artist based in Riverhead, New York. Starting as a photographer and sculptor, Straus had a fascination for the creative process, and his observations of the galleries at the Metropolitan Museum of Art redirected him to a self-taught painting career.

Straus creates paintings that are seductive and gloomily romantic with views of skylines, seascapes, fields, and mountains. The paintings go beyond contemplation and present his concerns about the cruel reality for our planet. In his oils, Straus represents the struggle and survival of mankind and mankind's effect on nature. His technique has evolved throughout the years, but always with a marked personality. In framing the paintings in lead or steel he adds a unique touch, and more recently, his pixelating technique evokes the particulate matter suspended in the air and water.

Adam Straus earned his Bachelor of Arts degree from Miami-Dade Community College, Miami, Florida, and a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics at the University of Florida, Gainesville. He later received his Master of Fine Arts degree from Florida State University, Tallahassee. The winner of numerous prizes in juried competitions, he received a grant from the Southern Arts Federation and a Painting Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts. Straus has exhibited extensively throughout the United States and internationally. His works can be seen in such collections as The City of Orlando and The Art Museum at Florida International University, Miami, both in Florida; Mead Art Museum, Amherst, and Fidelity Investments, Boston, both in Massachusetts; and Lavandoo Corporation, Geneva, Switzerland, among others.

www.nohrahaimegallery.com

ADAM STRAUS



The Wave

2011

Oil on canvas

49 ½ x 87 ¾ in. (125,7 x 222,9 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Nohra Haime Gallery, New York, New York



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<http://art.state.gov/>

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