



United States Embassy Helsinki
ART in Embassies Program

Cover: Alex Katz, "Myrtle", 2002. Oil on canvas, 102 x 102 in. (259,1 x 259,1 cm)

WELCOME

Curating an art exhibition for the United States Embassy Residence in Helsinki gave the Ambassador and me our first opportunity to think about what image we wanted to project to the many Finns and other guests who would be visiting us throughout our tenure here. It was an interesting exercise as it made us stop and consider the purpose of displaying American art within the embassy walls.



We quickly came to the realization that because the Residence is a temporary home to past and future Ambassadors, the works of art they select are very much a reflection of themselves – their interests, the region of the country in which they live, and their personal perspective on American life. Accordingly, we thought that our exhibition should reflect who we are and what cultural influences have affected us. Our decision was further shaped by the fact that our predecessors' exhibitions in recent years tended to focus on nineteenth and early twentieth century American art. Therefore, we thought that this exhibition should illustrate a contemporary American art theme, created in a variety of styles and media.

The Ambassador and I have both lived in New York City our entire adult lives, and have been very active in its cultural life. New York has been a nexus in contemporary art for more than half a century, nurturing such legendary painters as Roy Lichtenstein, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg, Jackson Pollock, Ellsworth Kelly, Francesco Clemente, and Brice Marden, to name only a few. The vitality of the contemporary art scene has continued from the mid-1950s into the new millennium. We decided that our exhibition should showcase works by some of the accomplished artists who have been our friends or acquaintances, and whose work we have watched devel-

op over the years. We also looked for artists who represent a continuance of the spirit of experimentation that began over half a century ago.

In displaying the works of these contemporary artists, we hope to present a unique perspective on who we are and from whence we come as well as a sense of New York's contemporary art scene. The only real problem that we faced was how to narrow the field of artists, as there is a surfeit of exception-

ally talented ones working in New York City. Therefore, we decided to approach only those artists whom we have known for years. Having established that criterion, we did amend it slightly by adding two artists whom we did not know, but whose work we admire.

The ART in Embassies Program was created to build bridges between cultures by utilizing art as the vehicle to foster dialogue, and to communicate something of our country within a residential setting. The wonderful coincidence is that the aesthetics of the exhibition and that of the Finns both result from a mutual respect for modern and experimental design. It is this shared sensibility that, for us, further confirmed the appropriateness of our selections. We consider ourselves very fortunate to be able to live with these outstanding works of art, and to share them with our many host country friends and other guests. Our only regret is that we lack the space to present work by more of America's many talented artists, whose creativity enriches and enlivens the cultural life of our nation.

Carol and Earle Mack

Helsinki, December 2004

The Residence of the United States Ambassador to Finland



The Residence of the United States Ambassador to Finland is located in the leafy Kaivopuisto (Park Side) district of Helsinki, overlooking the Gulf of Finland. The Georgian style brick structure was completed in 1940, modeled after the mansion at Westover Plantation, located on the James River in Virginia. Westover was built around 1730 by one of colonial America's leading citizens, William Byrd II, the founder of Richmond, Virginia.

The Residence and attached Chancery were designed by Harrie T. Lindeberg (1879-1959), one of America's most prominent twentieth century residential architects. Lindeberg trained in the firm of McKim, Mead and White, and is considered to be of equal importance in American architecture to his mentor, Stanford White. Lindeberg's client list reads like a page out of Who's Who: Armour, Astor, Doubleday, DuPont, Pillsbury, Vanderbilt, to name a few. An architecture critic of his era said of Lindeberg's houses: "To analyze them is to be impressed by their practicality and at the same time by their interesting character... They exhale so much ability and taste. They exhale so much beauty."

www.gfacademy.org

The ART in Embassies Program

The ART in Embassies Program is a unique blend of art, diplomacy, politics, and culture. Regardless of the medium, style, or subject matter, art transcends barriers of language and provides the means for ART to achieve its mission: to promote dialogue through the international language of art that leads to mutual respect and understanding between diverse cultures.

Modestly conceived in 1964, this visual diplomacy initiative has evolved into a sophisticated program that curates exhibitions, managing and exhibiting more than 3,500 original works of loaned art by United States citizens. The work is displayed in the public rooms of some 180 U.S. embassy residences and diplomatic missions worldwide. These exhibitions, with their diverse themes and content, silently yet persuasively represent one of the most important principles of our democracy: freedom of expression. The art is a great source of pride to U.S. ambassadors, assisting them in multi-functional outreach to the host country's educational, cultural, business, and diplomatic communities.

Works of art exhibited through the program encompass a variety of media and styles, ranging from eighteenth century colonial portraiture to contemporary glass sculpture. They are obtained through the generosity of lending sources that include U.S. museums, galleries, artists, institutions, corporations, and private collectors. In viewing the exhibitions, the thousands of guests who visit U.S. embassy residences each year have the opportunity to learn about our nation – its history, customs, values, and aspirations – by experiencing firsthand the international lines of communication known to us all as art.

The ART in Embassies Program is proud to lead this global effort to present the artistic accomplishments of the people of the United States. We invite you to visit the ART website, <http://aiep.state.gov>, which features on-line versions of all exhibitions worldwide, and hyperlinks with artists and lenders.

Donald Baechler (born 1956)

New York artist Donald Baechler was born in Hartford, Connecticut, in 1956, and received his formal education at the Maryland Institute, College of Art, Baltimore (1974-1977); Cooper Union, New York City (1977-1978); and the Staatliche Hochschule für Bildende Kunst, “Staedelschule,” Frankfurt-am-Main, Germany (1978-1979). His work has been exhibited and reviewed internationally since 1980, and is in private, corporate, foundation, and public collections. These include the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Guggenheim Museum, all in New York City; the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Centre Georges Pompidou, Musée National d’Art Moderne, Paris; Museum Ludwig, Budapest; National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul; Museu de Arte Moderna de Rio de Janeiro; and the Malmö Konsthall, Sweden.

Baechler is an avid collector of images exploring the different approaches to drawing that he finds across cultures, and in any format from fine art, to cheap magazines, graffiti, and the Yellow Pages. He mixes drawings with photographs, texts, acrylic paint, and enamel house paint to form collages. His post-modernism has been described as a combination of “... Expressionism and Bad Painting, references and quotations, art brut and naïve painting, high and low, realism, gestural painting and flat masses of color.”

www.askart.com



Untitled (Thistle), 2000

Acrylic and fabric collage on canvas, 72 x 48 in. (182,9 x 121,9 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, New York, New York

Ross Bleckner (born 1949)

For Ross Bleckner the canvas is “a place where countless different meanings cross and enter into relationship with one another.” His large format paintings are glowing and contemplative, combining abstraction with recognizable images such as birds, cages, flowers, grilles, drops of water, oceans, and chandeliers. They form introspective and melancholy meditations on perception, transcendence, and loss, and vibrate with a kind of inner light.

Born in New York City in 1949, Bleckner received his Bachelor of Arts degree from New York University in 1971, and his Master of Fine Arts degree from the California Institute of Art in 1973. Upon returning to New York in 1975, he had his first one-man show and was included in the Whitney Museum of American Art's Biennial. Since then Bleckner's work has been exhibited across the United States and around the world from London to Tel Aviv, Bangkok, and Melbourne, among many other locations. Both the San Francisco Museum of Art, California, and the Milwaukee Art Museum, Minnesota, have honored him with solo exhibitions.

www.askart.com



Falling Birds I, 2004
Oil on linen, 30 x 30 in. (76,2 x 76,2 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, New York, New York



Falling Birds II, 2004
Oil on linen, 30 x 30 in. (76,2 x 76,2 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, New York, New York

Dale Chihuly (born 1941)

Born in 1941 in Tacoma, Washington, Dale Chihuly was introduced to glass while studying interior design at the University of Washington. After graduating in 1965, Chihuly enrolled in the first glass program in the country at the University of Wisconsin. He continued his studies at the Rhode Island School of Design, where he later established the glass program and taught for over a decade.

In 1968 Chihuly was awarded a Fulbright Fellowship to work at the Venni factory in Venice, Italy. While in Venice, Chihuly observed the team approach to blowing glass, which is critical to the way he works today. In 1971 Chihuly co-founded Pilchuk Glass School in Stanwood, Washington. With this international glass center, Chihuly has led the avant-garde in the development of glass as a fine art.

His work is included in over two hundred museum collections worldwide. He has been the recipient of many awards, including seven honorary doctorates and two fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts. He has created large architectural installations in Venice, Jerusalem, Chicago, and the Bridge of Glass in Tacoma, Washington.



Golden Pheasant Macchia Set with Sapphire Lip Wraps, 2002

Glass, 9 x 16 x 12 in. (22,9 x 40,6 x 30,5 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Seattle, Washington; Photo credit: Teresa Nouri Rishel

Eric Freeman (born 1970)

Eric Freeman's luminous, cool, pulsating abstract paintings have been described by his friend, mentor, and fellow painter Ross Bleckner as "...the volatile mix of the ineffable and the physical. The beauty of these paintings is that they so succinctly and clearly seem to reconcile these two worlds." Freeman himself admits to using historical references, but says: "... I don't really want that many external influences. I want my work to be self-contained, from my own head. ... I like bright colors and colors that are a bit artificial looking. I want them to seem at first very natural and then seem inorganic. They pulsate a little. When I start a painting I have an idea of a certain sensation I want to convey. As the painting evolves, it kind of takes on a life of its own. It becomes a fantasy. It's not concrete, it's a little more intangible."

Born in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn, New York, in 1970, Freeman earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Tufts University (Medford, Massachusetts) in 1993. That same year he met Bleckner and became intrigued with the process of painting. Freeman has had solo exhibitions in New York City; Los Angeles (California); Budapest, Hungary; and Stockholm, Sweden. He prefers to work in the relative isolation of Long Island, New York's East End.

www.findarticles.com

www.western-project.com



Untitled, 2004

Oil on linen, 60 x 60 in. (152,4 x 152,4 cm)
Courtesy of a Private Collection, New York, New York

Mary Heilman (born 1940)

Mary Heilman creates lush works that explore the possibilities of abstraction as a medium by which to convey meaning. She uses color and structure to relate human experience, from the personal to shared cultural references. Her compositions refer to an underlying ordered grid and rely on sensitive relationships of interrelated fields of color.

Currently living and working in New York, Heilman was born in 1940 in San Francisco, and received her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of California, Santa Barbara, in 1962, and her Master of Arts degree from the University of California, Berkeley, in 1967. Having studied ceramics and writing, she began making sculpture when she moved to New York in 1968, and then took up painting. Her style has remained individual, independent of fashions and trends. Heilman's work has been extensively exhibited in the United States and Europe, including solo shows at such venues as the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, and the San Francisco Art Institute, California, and has been included in the Whitney Museum of American Art's Biennial in New York City.



Mint Boy, 1998

Etching, 38 x 29 ½ in. (96,5 x 74,9 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Pace/Prints: Published by Pace Editions Inc.



Mint Print, 1998

Etching, 38 x 29 ½ in. (96,5 x 74,9 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Pace/Prints: Published by Pace Editions Inc.

Alex Katz (born 1927)

The son of cultured, educated, Russian immigrants, Alex Katz was born in 1927 in Brooklyn, New York, and grew up in a liberal Bohemian atmosphere in suburban Queens. He studied at the Cooper Union in New York City from 1946 to 1949, and at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine from 1949 to 1950. Returning to New York, Katz had his first one man show at the Roko Gallery in 1954, and through the 1960s he held teaching positions at the New York Studio School; the School of the Visual Arts at Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut; and the Pratt Institute, New York. Katz's work has been the subject of nearly 200 solo exhibitions internationally, and he has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors, including a Guggenheim Grant in Painting; a Visiting Chair in Painting endowed in his name at the Cooper Union; the "Artist of the City" award from the Cooper Union; and the building of the Paul J. Schupf Wing for the Art of Alex Katz at the Colby College Museum of Art in Waterville, Maine. His work can be found in public collections worldwide.

Katz is one of the most important American artists to emerge since 1950, practicing a kind of modern realism against the overwhelming predominance of abstract expressionism, and influencing the popular new realism of the 1970s. His portraits and landscapes combine aspects of both realism and abstraction, with forms flatly painted and dramatically but casually cropped.

www.pacewildenstein.com

www.godardgallery.com

www.askart.com



Myrtle, 2002

Oil on canvas, 102 x 102 in. (259,1 x 259,1 cm)
Courtesy PaceWildenstein

Art © Alex Katz/Licensed by VAGA, New York, N.Y.

Photograph by Ellen Page Wilson, courtesy PaceWildenstein, New York

Antonio Murado (born 1964)

Regarding his painting, Antonio Murado has said: “I have always thought that there is not much difference between the figurative and the abstract and I don’t think it is a very appropriate classification for painting. To me, everything is abstract and everything is figurative. My most recent paintings, particularly, are a mixture of these two things. The subject is abstract and the approach is figurative in the sense that it is not a representation of reality, rather it is a creation of reality. I have never had the urge to portray an image that has already been seen. In my work I try to carry out an investigation of virtual space.” Murado uses biomorphic and botanical forms, layering paint to create lush, glowing, matte surfaces for works that are sensual and hypnotic.

Born in Lugo, Spain, in 1964, Murado lives and works in New York City. He was educated at the Círculo de Bellas Artes, Madrid, and graduated in fine arts in 1988 from the University of Salamanca. His work has been exhibited around the globe, and is in private, corporate, and public collections, including Microsoft Corporation, Redmond, Washington; the Museo Marugame-Hirai, Merugami, Japan; and the Museo de Bellas Artes de Alava, Vitorio, Spain. He has been the recipient of many grants and awards.

www.gowlangsfordgallery.co.nz



Untitled, 2001

Oil on paper, 11 x 15 in. (27,9 x 38,1 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Lucas Schoormans Gallery, New York, New York



Untitled, 2001

Oil on paper, 11 x 15 in. (27,9 x 38,1 cm)

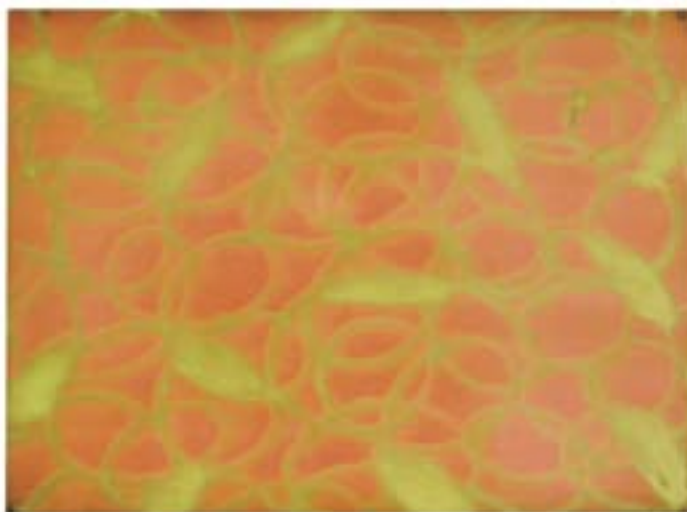
Courtesy of the artist and Lucas Schoormans Gallery, New York, New York



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Oil on paper, 11 x 15 in. (27,9 x 38,1 cm)

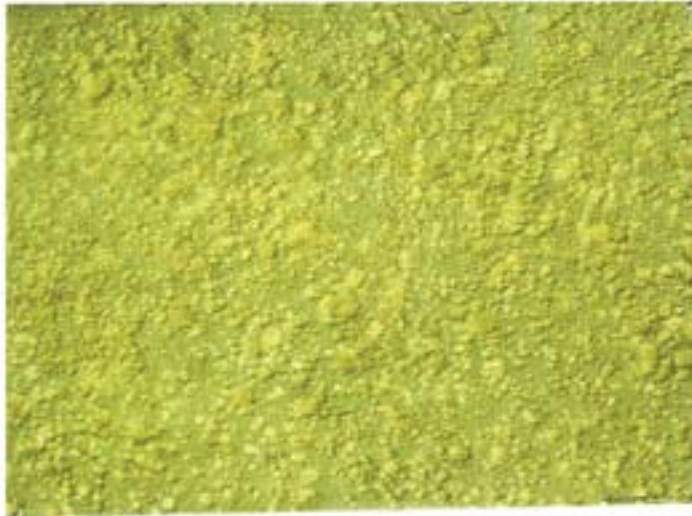
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Oil on paper, 11 x 15 in. (27,9 x 38,1 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Lucas Schoormans Gallery, New York, New York

David Salle (born 1952)

One of the most significant American artists to have emerged in the 1980s, David Salle developed a unique style of painting that influenced an international revival of large-scale figurative painting. He overlaid and juxtaposed seemingly unrelated images in different styles from a variety of found sources, including film noir, theater, art history, advertising, design, erotic and decorative arts, tapestries, puppets, and all manner of popular culture from cultures the world over. His more recent work is more colorful with fewer photo-based elements, as he reinvents images in new ways, often with evocative, ironic overtones.

Born in Norman, Oklahoma, in 1952, Salle received his Bachelor (1973) and Master of Fine Arts (1975) degrees from the California Institute for the Arts in Valencia, studying with John Baldessari, among others. He had his first solo exhibition in Los Angeles, at age twenty-three, and his work was included in the 1993 Venice Biennale and major retrospectives at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City. Salle regularly exhibits across the United States and around the world. He lives and works in New York.

www.guggenheim-bilbao.es

www.askart.com



Untitled, 2003
Watercolor on paper, 11 x 15 ¾ in. (27,9 x 40 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Brooklyn, New York



Untitled, 2003
Watercolor on paper, 11 x 15 ¾ in. (27,9 x 40 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Brooklyn New York

Elyn Zimmerman (born 1945)

Although best known as a sculptor with an emphasis on large scale, site specific projects, Elyn Zimmerman has created and exhibited drawings and photographs since graduating from the University of California, Los Angeles, with a Master of Fine Arts degree in painting and photography in 1972. She continues to mix and match these media in her two-dimensional works, sometimes emphasizing one over the other, but over time keeping a balance between these two processes. Until the mid-1980s all the drawings were black and white or monochrome, but the series entitled *Ceremonial Objects*, done in vividly colored encaustic medium on paper, was a departure – introducing color and texture into her two-dimensional work.

Zimmerman was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and received both her undergraduate and master's degrees in art from the University of California, Los Angeles. She taught university level art classes from 1974 to 1986 in California and later in New York, and has lived in New York City and Columbia County, New York, since 1980. Currently she serves on the board of directors of the Columbia County Land Conservancy and is a commissioner on the Fine Arts Commission, Washington, D.C. Her work has been exhibited across the globe, and is found in private, corporate, and public collections, including the Whitney Museum of American Art and the Museum of Modern Art, both in New York City, and the Los Angeles Museum of Art, California. Zimmerman has been the recipient of numerous honors and awards, including National Endowment for the Arts fellowships.



Ceremonial Object, 1993
Encaustic on paper, 20 x 30 in. (50,8 x 76,2 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, New York, New York



Ceremonial Object, 1993
Encaustic on paper, 20 x 30 in. (50,8 x 76,2 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, New York, New York

Acknowledgments

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