



UNITED STATES EMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
ART IN EMBASSIES EXHIBITION

Carol Sims

A Rhapsody of Blue Lilies, 2013

Acrylic on canvas, 40 ¾ x 30 ¾ in. (103,5 x 78,1 cm), detail

Courtesy of the artist, Wilsonville, Oregon

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 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

My wife Melanie and I are delighted to share an exhibition that has special meaning to us. The beautiful works of art you see were all created by artists living in our home state of Oregon. Through these works of art, we bring a piece of our home to Malaysia.

We are pleased to have an exhibition of works from Oregon that is as rich as the place it represents. Oregon is a state of astonishing beauty filled with green spaces, urban gardens and natural wonder. Each of these pieces reflects the environmental beauty that one can find in and around Oregon. We are proud to be displaying these works in our home here in Malaysia.

In the rich blues and greens of the landscapes, or the natural materials used in the sculpture, you will also see small reflections of the lush natural environment of Oregon, which in many ways echoes that of the forests and natural wonders found in Malaysia. Like Oregon, Malaysia is home to enormous natural beauty and diverse people, including unique indigenous cultures. We hope that this exhibition not only offers a window into the diversity and vitality of Oregon, but reminds you of the simple beauties of everyday life in Malaysia.

Just as we thank you and all Malaysians for welcoming us to your country, we thank you for allowing us to share these cultural expressions of the place we call home.

Ambassador Joseph Yun and Dr. Melanie Billings-Yun

*Kuala Lumpur
September 2014*

Rick Bartow [1946]

“Using Coyote’s tail for a brush and Raven’s beak to make my marks, I am blind to my destination.

At times I understand where an image originates, but more often than not it is the initial result of an unconscious use of line and form. The energy of the work sometimes becomes too active for a small format. The gestures need to utilize a larger area. As life becomes richer and dearer, the drawings become larger, more involved, the imagery more complex, and the color more intense, in an effort to express what I feel is authentic.”

Born in Newport, Oregon, in 1946, Rick Bartow is a member of the Wiyot Tribe of Northern California. In 1969 he earned his Bachelor of Arts degree in art education at Western Oregon State College. Although inspired by artists in Germany, Japan, and New Zealand, at the heart of Bartow’s art are personal experiences, cultural engagement, and global myths, especially Native American transformation stories. Animals and self-portraits populate his iconography, and he is known for astute interpretations of literary, musical, and visual sources. His artwork has also been influenced by the effects of a traumatic thirteen-month tour of duty in Vietnam.

Bartow’s work has been featured in many solo and group exhibitions nationally and internationally. His recent career highlights include completion of *We Were Always Here*, a monumental twenty-seven-foot sculpture commissioned by the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian, which stands on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.; inclusion in a three-person exhibit at the School of Sacred Music, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut; *Dog’s Journey*, a traveling twenty-year retrospective; and a work on view at the United States Ambassador’s residence in Sofia, Bulgaria.

www.froelickgallery.com



Bartow **Kestrel and Landscape for Jim M.**, 2007
Monotype, 30 x 22 in. (76,2 x 55,9 cm). Courtesy of the artist and Froelick Gallery, Portland, Oregon

Alene J. Davis [1967]

“In my work I strive to capture the elemental magic in the characteristics of light, textures, colors, and forms in the world around us. Still images allow us to pause the continuous rolling of time and focus our attention on just one thing, seeing more clearly in that frozen moment the beauty that constantly surrounds us.”

Alene J. Davis was formally trained in still photography by the U.S. Army Reserves in 1985. Also a licensed architect, Davis has continued to expand her photographic skills and artistic vision over time. Having traveled to many parts of the world, she finds endless fascination in the tremendous variety inherent in the natural and man-made world. Davis is happy to call the U.S. Pacific Northwest home, and much of her work is inspired by the snow-capped mountains, thundering waterfalls, cold clear rivers, lush temperate rain forests, and striking beaches found there.

<http://500px.com/AleneDavis>



Davis

Wahclella Falls Spring, 2012

Photographic metal print, 24 x 16 in. (61 x 40,6 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Portland, Oregon



Davis **Mt. Hood Trillium Blues**, 2013. *Photographic metal print, 24 x 16 in. (61 x 40,6 cm). Courtesy of the artist, Portland, Oregon*



Davis **Chief Kiwanda Sunset**, 2013. *Photographic metal print, 24 x 16 in. (61 x 40,6 cm). Courtesy of the artist, Portland, Oregon*

Lillian L. Pitt [1943]

“Everything I do, regardless of the medium, is directly related to honoring my ancestors and giving voice to the people, the environment and the animals. It’s all about maintaining a link with tradition, and about honoring the many contributions my ancestors have made to this world.”

Lillian L. Pitt is a Native American artist from the Big River (Columbia River) region of the Pacific Northwest. Born on the Warm Springs Reservation in Oregon, she is a descendent of Wasco, Yakama, and Warm Springs people. Her Native American name is Wa’Kamu, or Camus Root, meaning strongly rooted.

Pitt is one of the most highly regarded Native American artists in the Pacific Northwest. Primarily a sculptor and mixed media artist, she is also versed in clay, bronze, wearable art, prints, and most recently, glass. The focus of her work draws on over 12,000 years of Native American history and tradition of the Columbia River region. Her works have been exhibited and reviewed regionally, nationally, and internationally, and she has been the recipient of numerous awards and distinctions. Pitt’s works are included in private collections, art galleries, and museums. They are also found in numerous public spaces, including parks, schools, and cultural institutions throughout the region. Her most recent public works are featured at the Vancouver Land Bridge, one of the seven sites for the *Confluence Project*, a series of artworks along the Columbia River Basin designed by internationally renowned architect Maya Lin.

www.lillianpitt.com



Pitt

Red Shirt's Ghost

*Anagram, (wood) fired clay, peacock feathers,
found wood, metal, and copper wire
59 x 19 x 5 in. (149,9 x 48,3 x 12,7 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Portland, Oregon*

Aaron Reed [1973]

A Pacific Northwest native, Aaron Reed has no shortage of stories to tell through the lens of his camera. From the Cascade mountain range, to the coastline of the Pacific Ocean and everything in between, his goal is to share with you the beauty of our natural world, as well as giving you a glimpse of life in the city through his vision and his art.

Reed has been the recipient of several awards, and his work has appeared in numerous publications, including *Outdoor Photographer* and *National Geographic*. Top American companies and publishing firms such as Intel, the United States Postal Service, Microsoft, National Geographic Explorer, the Portland Japanese Garden, and others regularly license his work for use.

www.aaronreedphotography.com



Reed

Mt. Hood & Trillium Lake, 2011

Color photograph

24 x 36 in. (61 x 91,4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Renton, Washington



Reed

Abiqua Falls, 2011

Color photograph

24 x 36 in. (61 x 91,4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Renton, Washington

Carol Sims [1946]

Having grown up on a farm surrounded by flora and fauna, Carol Sims draws inspiration from the natural world, as well as from her professional background as a commercial graphic artist. When asked to participate in the Art in Embassies' exhibition in Kuala Lumpur, Sims was thrilled at the idea of having her art represent her in a diplomatic setting. *A Rhapsody of Blue Lilies* holds special significance – the flowers are taken from a pond she designed and planted in the garden of her former home. Working from a photograph, she began by sketching the essential forms of the composition in pencil. Then, she quickly filled the positive shapes with layers of acrylic medium using a dry brush and a bold improvised palette. From a distance, her subject is instantly readable, but up close familiar shapes dissolve into an abstract interplay of patterned color: “I enjoy the challenge of creating a puzzle to guide the viewer through the composition and to imagine the effect my painting will have. A viewer once said he wanted to bathe himself in the color. I consider this a great compliment.”



Sims **A Rhapsody of Blue Lilies**, 2013.

Acrylic on canvas, 40 ¾ x 30 ¾ in. (103,5 x 78,1 cm). Courtesy of the artist, Wilsonville, Oregon

Roger V. Thomas [1951]

“It’s an accident that I’m an artist. As a self-professed ‘maker of things,’ I join a large portion of the human race in believing that it is good to build. With age, after enough history and experience sinks in, the temporal nature of building becomes apparent and I am left with the realization that it is the effort, not the object that gives merit to the doing. Art is the detritus of the creative act, and creating is a worthwhile goal for my life.”

Roger V. Thomas began working with glass in California in 1973, first in stained, then in blown glass, and a decade later in fusing. In 1988 he and his wife moved to Portland, Oregon, and there he continued to work out of the basement of their house creating his iconic images in bowls and light fixtures, and then in large “paintings” of glass. Two decades later, he finally opened his dream studio, Roger Thomas Glass, where he continues to expand and develop his technique.

Thomas is something of a charming curmudgeon – one easily distracted by balls of yarn and ceiling fans, but a devoted friend and giver of advice (even when it isn’t wanted...). He brings this same dichotomy to his artwork. Thomas is easily distracted by color, design, and structure wherever he goes; he’s well known for wandering off when he finds a copse of trees that he absolutely must photograph. Yet in his art, Thomas attempts to extract the very essence of the form of those trees in order to communicate his view of the world to others. And he chooses to do it with one of the most unforgiving mediums in the art world.

Glass is something so belligerent and unyielding that it creates a narrow set of confines upon which he works his will. Each of Thomas’s images was once a technique learned in an attempt to work within those narrow confines. By now, these techniques are second nature to him, enabling Thomas to take pictorial art and abstract it, so that the representation surpasses the technique. He has chosen a medium that responds so broadly to manipulation that he only hopes, after a lifetime of study, to finally bend it with precision to his desires, and express the world in a brush stroke. Thomas approaches glass as a sculptural medium and ends up creating masterful paintings.

www.rogerthomasglass.com



Thomas **Marble Kodama, Opus 505, 2010**

Glass panel, 17 ½ x 11 in. (44,5 x 27,9 cm). Courtesy of the artist and Brian Marki Fine Art, Portland, Oregon

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