

INTRODUCTION

All the art in the current exhibition in Lilongwe is by living American artists whose work has some personal meaning for Ambassador and Mrs. Bodde. Hunt Slonem and Tom Christopher, both from New York City, exhibit their work at the Barbara von Stechow Gallery in Frankfurt, where Ambassador Bodde was previously posted at the Consulate General, and where he actually met them while he was participating in diplomatic outreach activities. Angela Sarkela-Saur's medium is coffee, which is a major agricultural export from Malawi, and her subject is often her dog Gidget, a Boston bull terrier, a

breed that is particularly dear to the Bodde family. The same is true of *The Eavesdropper*, the bronze sculpture of a Labrador retriever by André Harvey. In choosing this small exhibition, Ambassador and Mrs. Bodde hope to please their visitors, and also to introduce them to some praiseworthy American art and artists.

Robert Soppelsa, Curator
ART in Embassies Program

Washington
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THE ART IN EMBASSIES PROGRAM



Founded in 1964, the U.S. Department of State's ART in Embassies Program is a unique blend of art and diplomacy. Through exhibitions with diverse themes and content, ART presents more than 3,500 original works of art by U.S. citizens in a variety of media and styles. They are obtained through loan from sources that include museums, galleries, corporations, artists, and private collectors, and displayed in the public rooms of some 180 U.S. Embassy residences and diplomatic missions worldwide.

The ART exhibitions are a source of great pride to U.S. ambassadors, assisting them to reach the host country's educational, cultural, business, and diplomatic communities. 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 American art first-hand. Detailed information about the Program may be obtained by accessing the ART web site, <http://aiep.state.gov>.

TOM CHRISTOPHER (born 1952)

Tom Christopher was born in California in 1952. He earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at the Art Center College in Pasadena, California. Christopher's paintings reflect his love for his adopted home, New York City. Indeed, his compositions take viewers to street corners of the modern city. The paintings are a powerful explosion of color and light. His characters seem about to walk out of the canvas and jump towards the viewer. Honking cabs

scoot by like bumper cars, pedestrians fight their way to the nearest subway station, as bike messengers gracefully weave ballet-like through the traffic. In his paintings one experiences immediately the activity and life of the streets of New York.

Christopher's painting style is something between abstraction and realism. What appears first as a shadow becomes a hovering figure at second glance.

TOM CHRISTOPHER

Seemingly random brushwork coalesces, when viewed from a greater distance. Abstraction within a realistic context leaves room for imagery to shift and evolve. The speed and spontaneity of this style captures not only the dynamism, but also the pressures, of life in the new millennium.

www.galeriebarbaravonstechow.com



GOLDEN GLOW, 1998

Acrylic on canvas, 48 1/8 x 48 1/8 in. (122 x 122 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, New York City, and Galerie
Barbara von Stechow, Frankfurt, Germany

TIMES SQUARE 4:15, 2003

Silkscreen, 41 5/8 x 31 7/8 in. (105 x 81 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, New York City, and Galerie
Barbara von Stechow, Frankfurt, Germany



FROM A 42ND STREET CORNER, 2006

Silkscreen, 35 7/8 x 41 3/4 in. (90 x 106 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, New York City, and Galerie
Barbara von Stechow, Frankfurt, Germany



ANDRÉ HARVEY (born 1941)



THE EAVESDROPPER (LABRADOR RETRIEVER), 1974

Bronze, 8 ½ x 12 x 6 in. (21,6 x 30,5 x 15,2 cm). Courtesy of Sallie Ketham and André Harvey Studio, Rockland, Delaware

André Harvey was born in 1941. He graduated from the University of Virginia (Charlottesville) with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1963. After working as a journalist and educator, he traveled throughout Europe for a year. In 1969, while in Valauris, France, Harvey worked with abstract sculptor Michael Anasse. Upon returning to the United States, he began his own career as a sculptor, first working in fiberglass and then bronze, eighteen and twenty-two karat gold, collage, and granite.

Harvey is largely self-taught, and he has been a professional sculptor since 1970. He is a fellow and former board member of the National Sculpture Society in New York City, and is also professionally associated with the International Sculpture Society in Washington, D.C., and the New York Artists Equity Association. He has been a recipient of the National Sculpture Society's Joel Meissner Award, and the Tallix Foundry Award. Harvey's sculpture is highly realistic and his preferred subject matter is animals. His works are the result of extensive research, including work with biologists on location in the wild.

HUNT SLONEM (born 1951)

Called a neo-expressionist, Hunt Slonem inserts realism into his abstract expressionism. He combines abstract expressionist techniques with mysticism and animal subjects from Islam and Mexico, and is best known for his paintings of tropical birds, drawn from his personal aviary in which he keeps about 100 live birds of various species.

Born in Kittery, Maine, Slonem spent his childhood in various states, including California, Connecticut, New Hampshire, Hawaii, Virginia, and Washington because his father was in the U.S. Navy. During college, he lived in Mexico and Nicaragua, and these cultures greatly influenced his art. He studied art at Vanderbilt University in Memphis, Tennessee, and Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana, and spent a summer at the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture in Maine.

BELLS OF IRELAND AND LILLIES, 2003

Oil on canvas, 48 1/16 x 48 1/16 in. (122 x 122 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, New York City, and Galerie Barbara von Stechow, Frankfurt, Germany



In 1972 Slonem moved to New York City and started using Nicaraguan holy cards as subject matter for paintings, and he has continued to do paintings of saints. In the 1980s, after three trips to India, Slonem created work that was more formal and complex in composition. He builds patterns of repeat images of the bird subject and paints them in recognizable settings such as cages. His focus is on the act of painting, and he does not strive to convey a narrative message. Slonem paints quickly, and often his colors are jarring; he is fascinated by the manipulation of paint, and he usually begins by filling in a canvas with one color, then blocks in other hues, adds the animals or figures, and then the hatched scratch marks.

www.askart.com



RABBITS, 2003

Oil on canvas, 48 1/16 x 48 1/16 x in. (122 x 122 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, New York City, and Galerie Barbara von Stechow, Frankfurt, Germany

ANGEL SARKELA-SAUR (born 1977)



GIDGET, 2008. *Coffee on paper, 20 x 30 in. (50,8 x 76,2 cm). Courtesy of the artist, Duluth, Minnesota*

Andy Saur and Angel Sarkela-Saur have been painting with coffee for several years, and have completed hundreds of original works. Curious people who view the paintings are amazed that they are painted entirely in coffee – no additives, just 100% pure coffee. Artists have been using coffee in washes for sketches and other shading for some time, but the

Saurs are among the first to use the process to attain very dark hues. When people ask them what they do to achieve this intensity, all they divulge is that it takes a special process, and that it is their secret formula.

www.justcoffeeart.com

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Cover: Tom Christopher, **Times Square 4:15**, 2003. *Silkscreen, 41 5/16 x 31 7/8 in. (105 x 81 cm). Courtesy of the artist, New York City, and Galerie Barbara von Stechow, Frankfurt, Germany*



ART IN EMBASSIES EXHIBITION

UNITED STATES EMBASSY
LILONGWE • MALAWI