



ART IN EMBASSIES PROGRAM  
UNITED STATES EMBASSY LONDON

**COVER** Mark Rothko (1903-1970)  
**Untitled (Black and Gray)**, 1970  
Oil on canvas, 68 x 60 in. (172,7 x 152,4 cm)  
Courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles  
Gift of the Mark Rothko Foundation, Inc.

## MODERN AMERICAN CLASSICS

It is a privilege to live in Winfield House and to share this graceful structure and historic site with the thousands of visitors we greet each year. The exhibition that we have entitled *Modern American Classics* has added tremendously to the visual delight of our daily life and to the aesthetic and cultural experience of all who come here.

Under the auspices of the ART in Embassies Program, American artists become significant public diplomats as they communicate directly our rich and vibrant pictorial history. We chose works of mid-century masters that we especially admired. These artists came to prominence largely between the late 1940s and 1960s, a time of great creativity in the United States, particularly in New York.



Photo by Roland Kemp

Mr. Ellsworth Kelly (left), Mrs. Maria Tuttle and Ambassador Robert H. Tuttle

The exhibition includes works by Willem de Kooning, Mark Rothko, Franz Kline, Ellsworth Kelly, Roy Lichtenstein, Milton Avery, and Edward Hopper.

The works of de Kooning, Rothko and Kline are associated with the birth of abstract expressionism and yet are seen to be a bridge between the old world and the new. De Kooning built on the figurative interpretations of the early twentieth century in developing his lyrical yet powerful style. Rothko's atmospheric, spirited compositions have their antecedents in Impressionism. Kline's black and white paintings are said to have been inspired from small-scaled works on paper.

Lichtenstein exemplifies the non-traditional, commercial technique of Pop art – Paul Schimmel, Chief Curator of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles, wrote that “Lichtenstein removed the artist's hand, the touch, and gestured painterliness so significant to the New York School, instead making works with a detached, cool and ironic quality.”

Kelly is represented by an iconic shaped canvas and two poetic, yet spare, lithographs. This artist was, in effect, a link between abstract expressionism and minimalism, creating his own visceral yet serene aesthetic.

It is through the talent, dedication and hard work of Anne Johnson and Virginia Shore at the ART in Embassies Program that we can share these masterpieces of the American vernacular with those who join us at Winfield House. Thank you.

Ambassador and Mrs. Robert H. Tuttle

London, October 2006

## THE ART IN EMBASSIES PROGRAM

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

Modestly conceived in 1964, ART has evolved into a sophisticated program that curates exhibitions, managing and exhibiting more than 3,500 original works of loaned art by U.S. 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, represent one of the most important principles of our democracy: freedom of expression. The art is a great source of pride to the 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 multi-media installations. They are obtained through the generosity of lending sources that include U.S. museums, galleries, artists, institutions, corporations, and private collections. 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 international effort to present the artistic accomplishments of the people of the United States. We invite you to visit the ART web site, <http://aiep.state.gov>, which features on-line versions of all exhibitions worldwide.

## MILTON AVERY (1885-1965)

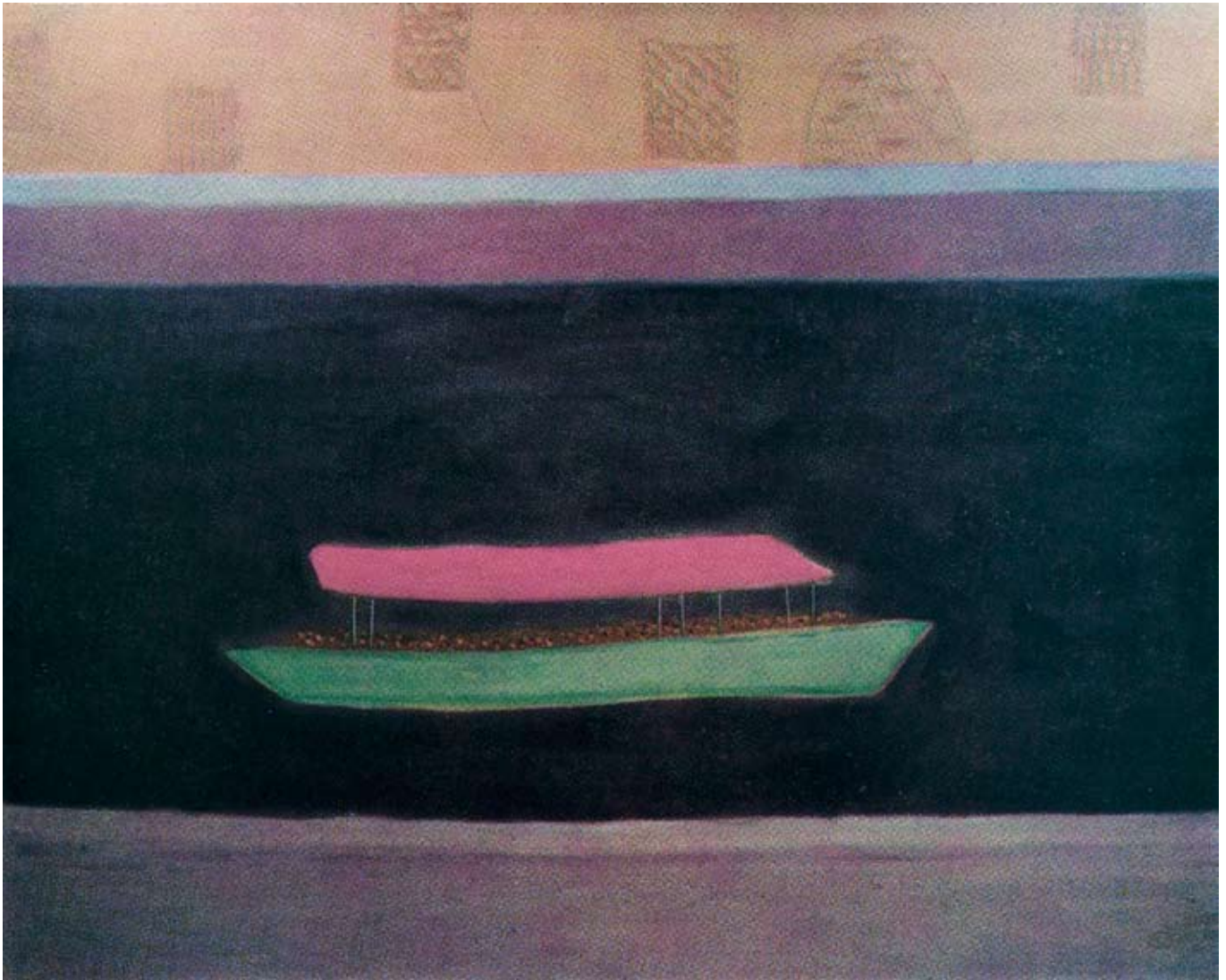
Milton Avery's roots lie in the conjunction of American regionalism and European and American impressionism. While Avery began as a relatively traditional painter in the 1920s, his style quickly ran counter to the social realism of the time. He combined elements of American impressionism with the simplified shapes of Matisse, to forge a unique style that became increasingly abstract later in his career.

Milton Avery was born at Sand Bank, New York City, and beginning in 1905, began attending the Connecticut League of Art Students in Hartford, where he remained an occasional life drawing student through 1919. He moved to New York in 1925; the decades that followed saw him show work at numerous exhibitions mounted by New York

galleries and American museums. Avery's preoccupation with French fauvism and German expressionism led him to develop a simplified formal idiom distinguished by clarity of line and an expressive palette. Even though his style was close to abstraction, Avery nonetheless clung to representation throughout his entire career. Classical motifs and subject matter in portraits, still lifes, and coastal landscapes were his main thematic areas and genres. Prolific as a painter, graphic artist, and ceramist, Avery received numerous awards from American art institutions before he died in 1965, although he only really became famous posthumously. Today he is acclaimed as one of the most influential twentieth century American artists.

[www.milton-avery.com](http://www.milton-avery.com)

**MILTON AVERY (1885-1965)**



**Excursion on the Thames, 1953**

Oil on canvas, 40 x 50 in. (101,6 x 127 cm)

Courtesy Milton Avery Trust, and Knoedler & Company, New York, New York



## WILLEM DE KOONING (1904-1997)

Willem de Kooning was born in Rotterdam, the Netherlands in 1904. From 1916 to 1925, he studied at night at the Academie van Beeldende Kunsten en Technische Wetenschappen, Rotterdam. De Kooning came to the United States in 1926 and settled briefly in Hoboken, New Jersey. He worked as a house painter before moving to

New York City in 1927, where he met fellow artists Stuart Davis and Arshile Gorky. He took various commercial-art and odd jobs until 1935 or 1936, when he was employed in the mural and easel divisions of the WPA Federal Art Project. Thereafter he painted full-time. In the late 1930s, his abstract as well as figurative work was primarily influ-



**Untitled I, 1977**

Oil on paper on canvas, 30 x 41 ½ in. (76,2 x 105,4 cm)

Courtesy of the Willem de Kooning Foundation, New York, New York

## WILLEM DE KOONING (1904-1997)

enced by the cubism and surrealism of Pablo Picasso and also by Gorky, with whom he shared a studio. During the 1940s, de Kooning participated in group shows with other artists who would form the New York School and become known as abstract expressionists. Willem de Kooning was

honored with a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1997. The artist died March 19, 1997.

[www.guggenheimcollection.org](http://www.guggenheimcollection.org)



**Untitled II, 1977**

Oil on paper on canvas, 30 x 41 ½ in. (76,2 x 105,4 cm)

Courtesy of the Willem de Kooning Foundation, New York, New York



## EDWARD HOPPER (1882-1967)

Edward Hopper was one of the foremost American realist painters of the twentieth century. In etching, watercolor, and oil paint, he portrayed ordinary places – drugstores, apartment houses, and small towns.

Hopper was born in Nyack, New York. After high school, he studied illustration and then fine arts, attending the New York School of Art from 1903 to 1906. His teachers there were William Merritt Chase and Robert Henri, the latter a realist painter who urged students to depict all aspects of urban life. The career of Edward Hopper is interwoven with the history of the Whitney Museum, beginning with its founder, Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney, who was an enthusiastic supporter of Hopper's work. In 1920 Hopper had his first one-artist show at the Whitney Studio Club, the precursor to the Whitney Museum.

Hopper's paintings of empty streets, storefronts, and solitary figures in urban settings evoke a sense of such profound loneliness and alienation that they seem to transcend their particular time and place. Iconic in their stillness and psychological force – achieved as much through composition and palette as through outright theme or subject – they have made Hopper one of America's most beloved artists.

[www.whitney.org](http://www.whitney.org)

## EDWARD HOPPER (1882-1967)



**Le Bistro or The Wine Shop, 1909**

Oil on canvas, Sight: 23  $\frac{3}{8}$  x 28  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (59,4 x 72,4 cm)

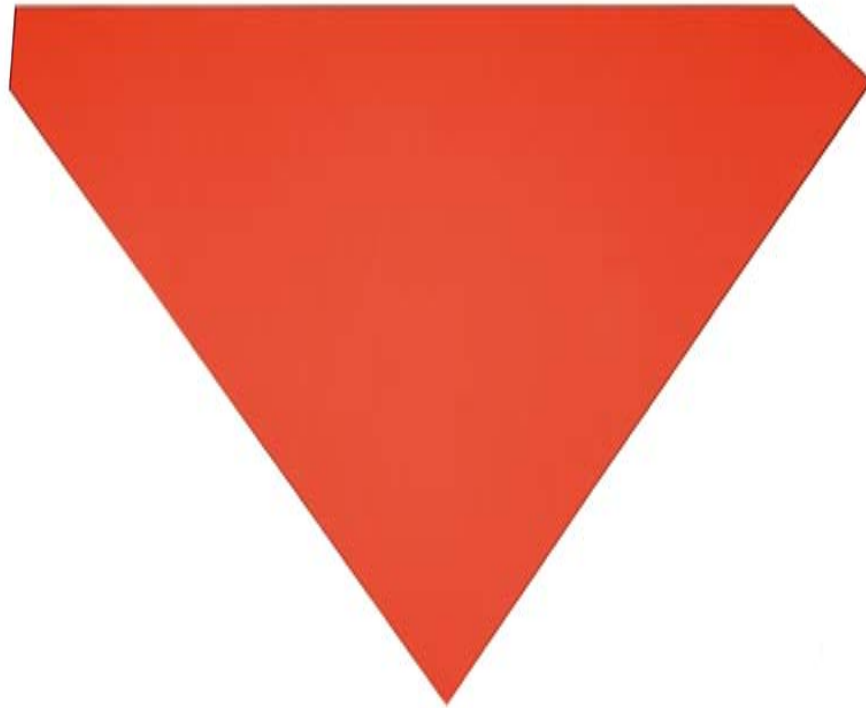
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Josephine N. Hopper 70.1187

## ELLSWORTH KELLY (BORN 1923)

Born in 1923 in Newburgh, New York, Ellsworth Kelly has commented on his continual search for forms and patterns in everyday objects, specifically mentioning “a fragment of a piece of architecture, or someone’s legs, or sometimes the space between things...” In *Red-Orange*, his objective is to achieve maximum emotion with severely limited means through the intuitive use of shape and sensuous color. Kelly abstracts the forms in his paintings from observations of the real world, such as shadows cast by trees or the spaces between architectural elements.

The artist studied at Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York, from 1941 to 1943. After military service he attended the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, from 1946 to

1947. The following year Kelly went to France and enrolled at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. In France, he was introduced to surrealism and neo-plasticism, which led him to experiment with automatic drawing and geometric abstraction. Kelly has executed many public commissions, including a mural for UNESCO in Paris in 1969, sculpture for the city of Barcelona in 1978, and a memorial for the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington, D.C., in 1993. In 1996 the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York organized a career retrospective that traveled to the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California; the Tate Gallery, London, England; and Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany.



**Red-Orange, 1980**

Oil on canvas, 91 x 113 in. (231,1 x 287 cm)

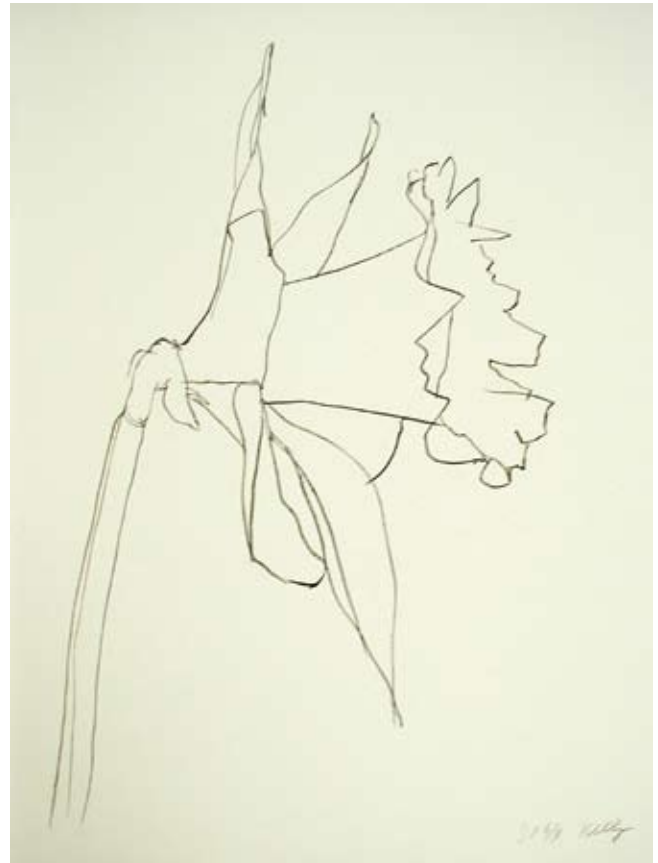
Courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Gift of Douglas S. Cramer

## ELLSWORTH KELLY (BORN 1923)



**Sunflower II, 2004**

One color lithograph, 37 x 29 in. (94 x 73,7 cm)  
Collection of the UCLA Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts  
Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, California  
Gift of Gemini, G.E.L.



**Daffodil, 2004**

One color lithograph, 31 1/8 x 29 in. (79,1 x 73,7 cm)  
Collection of the UCLA Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts  
Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, California  
Gift of Gemini, G.E.L.



## FRANZ KLINE (1910-1962)

Associated with the abstract expressionists of the New York school, Franz Kline was born in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. While enrolled at Boston University, he took art classes at the Boston Art Students League from 1931 to 1935. In 1935 Kline went to London and attended Heatherleys Art School from 1936 to 1938. He settled permanently in New York City in 1939. During the late 1930s and the 1940s, Kline painted cityscapes and landscapes of the coal-mining district where he was raised, as well as commissioned murals and portraits.

In 1943 Kline met painter Willem de Kooning, and within the next few years also met Jackson Pollock. Kline's interest in Japanese art began at this time. His mature abstract

style, developed in the late 1940s, is characterized by bold gestural strokes of fast-drying black and white enamel. In 1949, after viewing some of his black-and-white sketches enlarged by a projector, he realized their potential impact as large, abstract compositions. In the decade before his death, he was included in major international exhibitions, including the 1956 and 1960 Venice Biennales and the 1957 São Paulo Bienal, and he won a number of important prizes. Kline died May 13, 1962, in New York. The Gallery of Modern Art, Washington, D.C., organized a memorial exhibition of his work that same year.

[www.guggenheimcollection.org](http://www.guggenheimcollection.org)

## FRANZ KLINE (1910-1962)



**Black and White, 1957**

Oil on canvas, 32 x 24 in. (81,3 x 61 cm)

Courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The Panza Collection

## ROY LICHTENSTEIN (1923-1997)

Roy Lichtenstein was born in New York City. In 1939 he studied under Reginald Marsh at the Art Students League in New York, and the following year at the School of Fine Arts at Ohio State University, Columbus. He served in the army from 1943 to 1946, after which he resumed his studies and was hired as an instructor. He obtained his Master of Fine Arts degree in 1949. From 1957 to 1960, Lichtenstein held a teaching position at the State University of New York, Oswego. By then, he had begun to include loosely drawn cartoon characters in his increasingly abstract canvases. From 1960 to 1963, he lived in New Jersey while teaching at Douglass College, a division of Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey. In 1961 he began to make paintings consisting exclusively of comic-strip figures, and introduced his Benday-dot grounds, lettering, and bal-

loons of text; he also started cropping images from advertisements. In his attempt to fully grasp and expose how the forms, materials, and methods of production have shaped the images of Western society, the artist also explored other mediums such as polychromatic ceramic, aluminum, brass, and serigraphs.

Lichtenstein participated in the Venice Biennale in 1966, and was honored with solo exhibitions in 1967 and 1968 at the Pasadena Art Museum, California, and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York City, respectively. The artist was the subject of a major retrospective at the Guggenheim in 1994, three years before his death September 30, 1997.

[www.guggenheimcollection.org](http://www.guggenheimcollection.org)



Image copyright Estate of Robby Lichtenstein

**Sleeping Muse**, 1983. Patinated bronze, 25 ½ x 34 ¼ x 4 in. (64,8 x 87 x 10,2 cm). Courtesy of the Estate of Roy Lichtenstein, New York

## ROY LICHTENSTEIN (1923-1997)



Photo credit: Douglas M. Parker Studio

**I'm Sorry**, 1965-66

Oil and magna on canvas, 60 x 48 in. (152,4 x 121,9 cm)

Courtesy of the Broad Art Foundation, Santa Monica, California  
The Eli and Edythe L. Broad Collection



## MARK ROTHKO (1903-1970)

One of the preeminent artists of his generation, Mark Rothko is closely identified with the 1940s New York school. Rothko's work is characterized by rigorous attention to formal elements such as color, shape, balance, depth, composition, and scale. His later works frequently consist of floating rectangles of luminous color on enormous canvases that manage to simultaneously convey a deep sensuality and a profound spirituality.

Mark Rothko was born in Dvinsk, Russia. In 1913 he left Russia and settled with the rest of his family in Portland, Oregon. Rothko attended Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, from 1921 to 1923. That year, he left Yale without receiving a degree and moved to New York City. In 1925 he studied under Max Weber at the Art Students League. During the early 1930s, Rothko became a close friend of artists Milton Avery and Adolph Gottlieb. In the early 1940s, he worked closely with Gottlieb, developing a painting style with mythological content, simple flat shapes, and imagery inspired by primitive art.

The late 1940s and early 1950s saw the emergence of Rothko's mature style, in which frontal, luminous rectangles seem to hover on the canvas surface. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, gave Rothko an important solo exhibition in 1961. In 1964 he accepted a mural commission for an interdenominational chapel in Houston, Texas. Rothko took his own life February 25, 1970, in his New York studio. The Rothko Chapel in Houston was dedicated the following year.

[www.nga.gov](http://www.nga.gov)

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[www.guggenheimcollection.org](http://www.guggenheimcollection.org)



**Red and Brown, 1957**

Oil on canvas, 69 x 43 ¼ in. (175,3 x 109,9 cm)  
Courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles;  
The Panza Collection

**MARK ROTHKO (1903-1970)**



**Untitled (Black and Gray), 1970**

Oil on canvas, 68 x 60 in. (172,7 x 152,4 cm)

Courtesy of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Gift of the Mark Rothko Foundation, Inc.

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