

ART in Embassies Program



Embassy of the United States of America, Maseru

Cover Robert Freeman, "Geranium Garden," 2000
giclée print, 28 ½ x 25 in. (72,4 x 65,5 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Weston, Massachusetts

Welcome

It gives my husband and me much pleasure to welcome you to the Residence of the United States Ambassador, and to invite you to enjoy our ART in Embassies Program exhibition.

King Moshoeshoe I, the father of the Basotho Nation, welcomed many different groups to join together in creating modern Lesotho. The U.S. shares this same history of inviting difference. Moreover, these differences have been the catalyst for our great advances as a society, and the cultural diversity that we enjoy and celebrate is fundamental to the American experience. This exhibition depicts American life and the many cultures that, together, make us who we are as a nation. As Americans ourselves, we benefit from rich heritages derived from Native American, African, Asian, and European ancestors; my husband and I value each work of art as a prism through which we view our history and culture.

The art works that we selected present American life as variously shown through the visual arts. They showcase the many different kinds of people that one finds throughout the United States, as well as the achievements of major artists such as Romare Bearden, Jacob Lawrence,



and Synthia Saint James, whose works on paper reflect African, European, and African American influences. Donald Bourdeaux's lush, evocative paintings exude Afro-Caribbean influence, whereas Wayne Wildcat's painted sketch of a Native American Indian girl in traditional dress represents the influence

of our country's original inhabitants and their twenty-first century descendants. Douglas Keats' photographs present haunting architectural examples of the centuries old Hispanic influence in our culture.

Without recognition of the influence of its many multi-faceted social cultures, American life cannot be accurately portrayed. The sculptures of Polly Seliger-Egelson capture both the intimacy of family life and the impersonal nature of the workaday existence. Hubert Jackson's *Requiem*, Linda Ammons' *White Hats Pew*, and Donald Boudreaux's *Voodoo Mistress* make vivid our diverse religious traditions and the rich social life that revolves around them. The spontaneity of social life as experienced in an urban, public setting is captured in Ammons' photograph entitled *Aaron the Juggler*, a street scene from the Puerto Rico Day celebration in New York City. In contrast, Robert Freeman's print, *Geranium Garden*, depicts formally attired party guests mingling in a private setting.

Diversity is also represented by the many different media of the works that we selected for the exhibition. We were intrigued by the striking tactile contrast between the hard surfaces of a bronze sculpture and the soft folds of a quilt. While the photographs convey a sense of immediacy, the oil paintings provide a sense of permanence.

Finally, I want to thank the U.S. State Department's ART in Embassies Program, which, since 1964, has produced exhibitions of American art for use as a means of transcending political, national, and cultural boundaries. It is an invaluable

tool to traditional diplomacy, providing the U.S. ambassadors with the opportunity to reach out to colleagues across all boundaries. The dedication of our curator, Robert Soppelsa, and the ART in Embassies team – Camille Benton, Pamela Richardson Jones, Marcia Mayo, and Sally Mansfield – made it possible to share these windows onto American life with you.

Ambassador June Carter Perry
and Mr. Frederick M. Perry

Maseru, January 2005

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 web site, <http://aiep.state.gov>, which features on-line versions of all exhibitions worldwide, and hyperlinks with artists and lenders.

Linda Ammons (born 1953)

“For over twenty-five years, I have sculpted with light by photographing the world around me. My photography career began while I was a television anchorperson in the southern United States during the 1970s. Photojournalism, social documentary, portraiture, travel, landscapes, and other fine art genres are included in my published and exhibited works. Capturing city life, in sacred and secular settings, is often the subject of my social documentary, black and white photographs.

My fine art photography can be found in private, corporate, and public collections, internationally, including the ART in Embassies Program’s current exhibitions in the U.S. Embassies in Uganda and Qatar.”



White Hats Pew, 2004

Photograph, 8 x 10 in. (20,3 x 25,4 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, University Heights, Ohio



Portraits of Sunday Morning Style and Grace, undated

Photograph, 16 x 20 in. (40,6 x 50,8 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, University Heights, Ohio



Aaron the Juggler, 2003

Photograph, 11 x 14 in. (27,9 x 35,6 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, University Heights, Ohio

Romare Bearden (1912-1988)

Born in Charlotte, North Carolina in 1911, Romare Bearden, by the time of his death in 1988, had achieved a stature attained by few artists during their lifetimes. He was, and is, considered America's greatest collagist, and was thus honored by receiving the National Medal of Arts in 1987. The artist's works are in the permanent collections of many American museums, including the Museum of Modern Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, both in New York City. Retrospectives of Bearden's art have been organized by the Museum of Modern Art; the Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte, North Carolina; the Detroit Institute, Michigan; the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York; and the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Throughout his life, Bearden depicted many rituals and social customs of twentieth century rural Black America. The images of spiritual ceremonies, baptisms and burial, industrial hardships, musical arrangements, and daily life have become the themes that critics and collectors most frequently associate with his work. Visually and emotionally stimulating, Romare Bearden's collages and prints are beautiful to behold and fantastic to contemplate.

<http://www.jeraldmelberg.com>



Dreams of Exile, 1971

Color lithograph, 22 x 16 ½ in. (55,9 x 41,9 cm)

Courtesy of the Jerald Melberg Gallery, Charlotte, North Carolina

Donald **Boudreaux** (born 1958)

“My compositions are rendered through a combination of abstract and figurative constructions, overlapping (triangular) forms, and through building visually upon shapes and textures and juxtaposing them against subtle and emerging figures.

My work is a festival of life and a hybrid of Africa and Louisiana. My paintings speak to the birth of life, the essence of spirituality, the spontaneity of jazz and movement, the symbolism of African masks and sculptures, and hieroglyphic writing.”

Donald Boudreaux was born in Lafayette, Louisiana. In 1981 he earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the University of Louisiana, Lafayette. His work has been featured in one-man shows at venues that include the Delegation du Quebec in Lafayette; Augusta Savage Gallery in Amherst, Massachusetts; and the Amistad Foundation’s fundraiser in Martha’s Vineyard, Massachusetts. It has been featured in several group shows, and is held by public and corporate collections, including those of the Global Financial Press, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and the Phoenix Insurance Company, Enfield, Connecticut. Boudreaux has received numerous grants for public murals in the greater Hartford, Connecticut area, and has worked successfully in private and public schools and at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, also in Hartford.



Dark Descendants, 2002

Acrylic on Masonite, 14 x 11 in. (35,6 x 27,9 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, East Hartford, Connecticut



Voodoo Mistress, 2002

Acrylic on Masonite, 14 x 11 in. (35,6 x 27,9 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, East Hartford, Connecticut

Adam and Eve, 2002

Acrylic on Masonite, 24 x 10 in. (61 x 25,4 cm)
Courtesy of Deirdre Bibby, Hartford, Connecticut



Robert Freeman (born 1946)

“As an African American artist I feel that it is important to produce positive images of people of color. The past visual history of people of color has been for the most part governed by others outside of our race. The opportunity for Black artists to tell their own stories is one that I participate in and celebrate. These prints are just one story about life, love, and human social nature. They attempt to show a slice of the human condition through the medium of the print.”

Robert Freeman earned both a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Boston University, and in 1997 received the school’s Distinguished Alumni Award. Freeman is represented by the Clark Gallery in Lincoln, Massachusetts, and has shown his work extensively throughout the United States. He is currently Artist-in-Residence at Noble and Greenough School in Dedham, Massachusetts.



Geranium Garden, 2000

Giclée print, 28 ½ x 25 in. (72,4 x 63,5 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Weston, Massachusetts

Hubert Jackson (born 1943)

“The driving elements of my paintings are color, shape, and texture. I am inspired by the forces of nature and by artists from various cultures who have reacted to the wonders of the universe to create works of lasting beauty and energy.

Requiem is a composition which honors those artists and teachers who have inspired me to make images which express my deepest emotions, attract the attention of others, pique the imagination and leave a positive lasting impression.”

Hubert Jackson was born in Culpepper, Virginia in 1943. After graduating from high school, during which time he took a correspondence course in commercial art, he enrolled at Virginia State University, Petersburg, where he received a Bachelors degree in fine arts education. He moved to the Washington, D.C. area in 1965, and began a teaching career that spanned thirty-four years. He received a Master of Fine Arts degree from Howard University in 1971, and completed further studies at the Corcoran School of Art, both in Washington.

After retiring from the Washington, D.C. Public School System in 1999, where he taught art and photography at Woodrow Wilson High School, Jackson moved to Colonial Beach, Virginia, where he maintains his studio.



Requiem, 1973

Acrylic on canvas, 48 x 40 in. (121,9 x 101,6 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Colonial Beach, Virginia

Douglas Keats

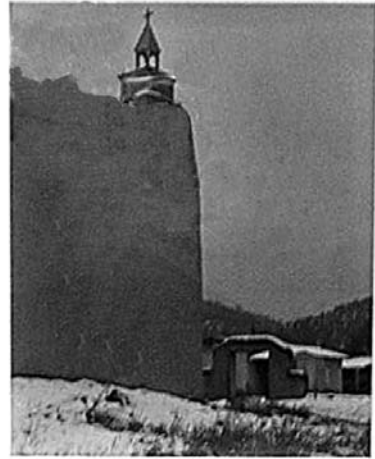
“These New Mexico churches are the spiritual center of every village; they serve to unite the ancestral past of all its people. Here, removed from mainstream America, is a view of this country that is unique to New Mexico. There exists a sense of place that only these handmade adobe walls, so delightfully irregular and yet gracefully correct, can inspire. This is a serenity that has not been returned to; rather, it is one that has never been left.”

– Douglas Keats



Chimayo, New Mexico, 1984

Photograph, 15 x 12 in. (38,1 x 30,5 cm)
Courtesy of the artist and Ernesto Mayans Gallery,
Santa Fe, New Mexico



Las Trampas, New Mexico, 1984

Photograph, 15 x 12 in. (38,1 x 30,5 cm)
Courtesy of the artist and Ernesto Mayans Gallery,
Santa Fe, New Mexico



Los Palomas, New Mexico, 1984

Photograph, 15 x 12 in. (38,1 x 30,5 cm)
Courtesy of the artist and Ernesto Mayans Gallery,
Santa Fe, New Mexico



Los Lentos, New Mexico, 1984

Photograph, 15 x 12 in. (38,1 x 30,5 cm)
Courtesy of the artist and Ernesto Mayans Gallery,
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Jacob Lawrence (1917-2000)

Jacob Lawrence was a great American modern painter of history and urban life. His paintings are a unique blend of sensibilities – part mural painting, part social realism and part modernist abstraction.

In 1962 and 1964 Lawrence traveled to Africa, lecturing and teaching in Nigeria. There he created elaborately patterned paintings of village life in a post-colonial country. Throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, Lawrence committed himself to commissions, especially murals and limited edition prints, for the benefit of non-profit organizations, including New York's Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, for which Supermarket Flora was created.



Supermarket Flora, 1997

23-color silkscreen, 30 x 22 ¾ in. (76,2 x 57,8 cm)

Gift of the Foundation for Art and Preservation in Embassies, Washington, D.C.

Synthia Saint James (born 1949)

Internationally recognized self-taught artist and author Cynthia Saint James was born in Los Angeles, California. Her professional career began in New York City in 1969, and her work has been used on the covers of over fifty books, including those by Alice Walker, Terry McMillan, Iyanla Vanzant, and Julia Boyd. Since 1990 Saint James has completed commissions for major organizations, corporations, and individual collectors, including the House of Seagram, the Los Angeles Women's Foundation, UNICEF, and the Girl Scouts of America's 85th Anniversary commemoration. The United States Postal Service commissioned the artist to create the first Kwanzaa Stamp, released in 1997.



Legacy

Print, 24 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 20 in. (61,9 x 50,8 cm)

Gift of the artist to the ART in Embassies Program, Washington, D.C.



Oromo Woman, undated

Print, 24 3/8 x 20 in. (61,9 x 50,8 cm)

Gift of the artist to the ART in Embassies Program, Washington, D.C.

Polly Seliger-Egelson (born 1928)

"I am a Humanist forming images in clay or wax for bronze casting. My last body of work involved women in stress experiencing difficulties in their daily lives. Dorothea Lange's book, which featured photographs of migrant workers during the Depression, influenced me to depict the faces of women from different cultures from youth to age, a circle of life in female form.

I combine differently colored clays to make my sculptures. Some I rub with dry oxides for color before firing. On others I apply stains and paints after firing. Rotten stone is then rubbed on the finished work to give a greying weathered patina."

Seliger-Egelson is also a quiltmaker.



The Rainforest, 1998

Quilt, 48 ¼ x 36 ¾ in.

(122,6 x 93,3 cm)

Courtesy of the artist,

East Falmouth, Massachusetts

Subway Riders, 1996
Bronze, 16 x 8 x 8 in.
(40,6 x 20,3 x 20,3 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, East
Falmouth, Massachusetts



The Family, 1996
Bronze, 14 x 12 x 8 in.
(35,6 x 30,5 x 20,3 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, East
Falmouth, Massachusetts

Wayne Wildcat (born 1955)

“My paintings ask the viewer to witness a portrait, like this Native American child from the Crow tribe, who stands before you now. It is important that indigenous people be seen in all their natural dignity and grace. In my large paintings, I often blend realistic portraits into an ideological landscape. I paint portraits and history, often forgotten moments and people of history, lasting issues, and fate dramas.

I have painted all my life and am self-taught. It is a testament to the power of art that this Native American Crow child is in Maseru, Africa. My dad was full blood Native American Indian, Euchee (Creek rolls), a tribe removed from the southeastern United States to the center of the United States (now Oklahoma) on the Trail of Tears.”*

www.WayneWildcat.com

* Under a bill enacted by the U.S. Congress in 1830, the Native American people indigenous to the East Coast were dispossessed and relocated by forced march to the arid land west of the Mississippi River in Arkansas and Oklahoma. Ill fed and poorly clothed, many died along the way.



Crow Child, 2002

Oil on Masonite, 48 x 36 in. (121,9 x 91,4 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Lawrence, Kansas

Acknowledgments

Washington

Anne Johnson | Director, ART in Embassies Program

Robert Soppelsa | Curator

Camille Benton | Associate Curator

Pamela Richardson Jones | Registrar

Marcia Mayo | Publications Editor

Sally Mansfield | Publications Project Coordinator

Maseru

Edith Ann Dunn PhD | Community Liaison Officer (installation)

Mamosa Mapeshoane | Public Diplomacy Assistant (photography)

Alison Blosser | General Services Officer (customs clearance, condition reports, installation)

Benedict Tlali | GSO Assistant (customs clearance, installation)

Molefi Motloang | Warehouseman (installation)

Mochochonono Mokhutlole | Maintenance Supervisor (installation)

Chere Makuebu | Maintenance (installation)

Khomo Letele | Maintenance (installation)

Jed Taro Dornburg | Public Affairs Officer (publication)

Frederick M. Perry | Senior Foreign Service Officer [Retired] (installation)

Vienna

Nathalie Mayer | Graphic Design



Published by the ART in Embassies Program
U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C.
July 2005