

## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our home. With the assistance of my colleagues at the Art in Embassies program, my wife, Deborah, and I chose an exhibition of paintings and photographs that we hope you will find beautiful, interesting and inspiring. The overall theme of the exhibition is an exploration of values shared by Americans and Mauritians. Half of the exhibition consists of paintings and photographs of the southwestern United States, my home region. Much of this area is desert, with a history of nomadic livestock rearing. The other half of the exhibition consists of paintings

by two American artists who lived in Mauritania and painted the people and scenery they encountered — hence, their work represents Mauritania as seen through American eyes. Please let Deborah and me know your impressions of the exhibition.

**Ambassador Larry E. André  
and Mrs. Deborah André**

Nouakchott  
December 2015

## INTRODUCTION

Bienvenue chez nous. Avec l'aide de mes collègues du programme d'Art dans les Ambassades, mon épouse, Deborah, et moi-même avons choisi une exposition de peintures et de photographies qui, nous l'espérons, vous trouverez belles, intéressantes et inspirantes. Le thème général de l'exposition est une exploration des valeurs partagées par les Américains et les Mauritiens. La moitié de l'exposition se compose de peintures et de photographies du sud-ouest des États-Unis, ma région d'origine. Une grande partie de cette zone est désertique, avec une histoire de l'élevage nomade. L'autre moitié de l'exposition se com-

pose de peintures faites par deux artistes américains qui ont vécu en Mauritanie et peint les gens et les paysages qu'ils ont rencontrés — par conséquent, leur travail représente la Mauritanie vue à travers les yeux américains. S'il vous plaît partagez avec Deborah et moi vos impressions sur l'exposition.

**Ambassadeur Larry E. André  
et Mme Deborah André**

Nouakchott  
Décembre 2015

## مقدمة

لرسامين أمريكيين عاشا في موريتانيا ورسمنا الأشخاص والمناظر التي مرا بها , ولذا لك فإن رسومهما تمثل رؤية لموريتانيا بعيون أمريكية. أخبرونا من فضلكم أنا و دבורا عن إنطباعاتكم عن العرض.

**السفير لاري آندري والسيدة دבורا آندري**

انواكشوط  
دجمبر-2015

أهلا بكم عندنا. بمساعدة زملائي في برنامج الفن بالسفارات اخترت أنا وزوجتي دבורا عرضا من الرسوم والصور التي نتمنى أن تكون جميلة ومثيرة وملهمة في رأيكم . إن الموضوع العام للعرض هو إستكشاف قيم مشتركة بين الأمريكيين و الموريتانيين. إن نصف العرض يتكون من رسوم وصور من المنطقة الجنوبية الغربية للولايات المتحدة, منطقتي الأصلية. إن معظم هذه المنطقة عبارة عن صحراء لها تاريخ في تربية الماشية والترحال. النصف الآخر من العرض يتكون من رسوم

# KATHLEEN STAFFORD

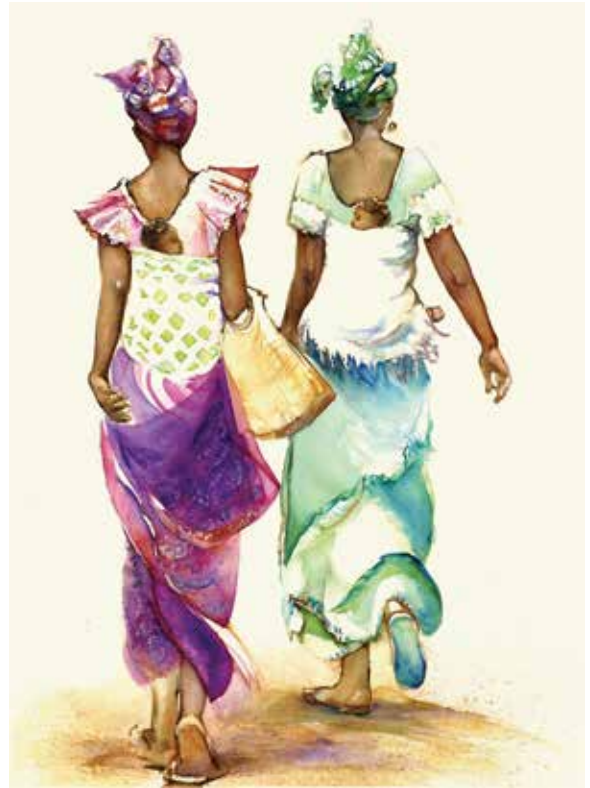
Kathleen Stafford earned her Bachelor's degree in fine art in 1973, and continued her studies in Rome and Palermo, Italy. Traveling with her diplomat husband for twenty-five years on the African continent, she has conducted workshops and held exhibitions, collaborating with local artists. The Chinguetti Mosque watercolor is one of the many paintings inspired by her three-year sojourn in Mauritania. The two watercolors of African women convey her respect and affection for the people she encountered every day. Her works are found in museums and collections around the world, including the shop at the Smithsonian National African Art Museum.

Cover picture:

**Ferry Princess, 2012**

Watercolor, 37 x 29 ¼ in. (94 x 74.3 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Austin, Texas



**Chinguetti Mosque, 1999**

Watercolor, 27 x 35 in. (68.6 x 88.9 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Austin, Texas



**Baby Talk, 2012**

Watercolor, 40 x 27 ½ in. (101.6 x 70.2 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Austin, Texas

## PHIL EPP 1946

**“It isn’t a lonely view, but a reverent one.”**

—Phil Epp

Early in the pursuit of his art, Phil Epp was influenced by contemporary minimalist artists and color field painters, such as Mark Rothko. Their distillation of visual structures, balancing of spaces and colors, and analysis of light in color and color within light attracted him. Even today he admires and feels an affinity for the work of minimalist sculptor Richard Serra, and environmental works like James Turrell’s Roden Crater project. For someone born in Nebraska, and living most of his life in Kansas, with the prairie and open spaces at his aesthetic center, there is a visual logic to this. The artist has said, “I always had the plains.” However, even in college, Epp was also interested in earlier Kansas artists, doing research on John Rogers Cox in an art history class. That interest and respect grew, and later blossomed, not only into a collection of works by artists from his area of the country, but also influenced Epp’s own approach to painting. Noted regionalist realist painters such as Thomas Hart Benton and John Stuart Curry, the Wichita-based prairie printmakers, and other area artists who were important presences in the late 1920s, 1930s, and in the Works Progress Administration, became important for him.

Epp eschews artistic labels, and does not like art, or himself, to be classified by locality, ethnicity, culture, faith, or other label. His work may be characterized by a certain clarity, a lack — but suggestive ordering mark — of human presence, and often a low horizon line that allows for a dominant, active, and expressive sky. Epps states simply that: “I’m a rural artist.” For him, the true question for any art remains: Is it any good?



***Moonrise and Horses 2, 2014***

*Oil on canvas, 40 x 40 in. (101.6 x 101.6 cm)*

*Courtesy of the artist, Newton, Kansas, and*

*Modern West Fine Art, Salt Lake City, Utah*



***Tent, 2014***

*Oil on canvas, 24 x 36 in. (61 x 91.4 cm)*

*Courtesy of the artist, Newton, Kansas*

## GREGG ALBRACHT

"My life's passion started in the summer of 1969 when I had the opportunity to see a portfolio of fine art photographs. In a brief moment I was mesmerized by their richness and beauty . . . it was in that moment that photography took a hold of me and I discovered what was to become my life's work. To experience a magical moment when everything is just a perfect rare thing, but when it happens, to be there to capture it, experience it . . . to hold that moment forever in a photograph is what drives my life. Even today, over forty years later, there is nothing I'd rather do than grab the cameras, get in the car, and go out and take photographs. My passion

for photography is stronger than ever. Although I'd rather be in a field of horses than a room full of people, one of the greatest parts of being a photographer is sharing my love of the creative moment with others."

### *Once Upon A Time*

This photograph was taken in 1999 in Custer State Park, South Dakota, where there is a yearly round up of over 1,000 buffalo. The herd is brought in to holding pens where they are culled and the health of the animals is checked. Thousands of people show up from all over the world to witness the event.



*Once Upon a Time*, undated. Photograph on Archival paper, 11 x 20 in. (27.9 x 50.8 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist and Manitou Galleries, Santa Fe, New Mexico

# BRET WEBSTER

**“I like capturing Earth’s beauty as if we were exploring a new planet . . . it seems purposeful that our existence is embraced by such incredible depth of beauty and magnificence.”**

—Bret Webster

Bret Webster’s passion for capturing the desert in fresh and beautiful ways has put his photos into use by *National Geographic* magazine; the Natural History Museum of Utah; the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.; NASA’s “Astronomy Picture of the Day;” American Express; *Islands* magazine; *New Scientist*; and many others. Additionally, Bret was a rocket scientist for twenty-seven years.



*Shooting Star Over Hoodoos*, undated  
Archival photograph, 23 x 38 in. (58.4 x 96.5 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist, Bountiful, Utah

*Moon in Arch*, undated  
Archival photograph, 23 x 35 in. (58.4 x 88.9 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist, Bountiful, Utah



## KATHLEEN WALSH 1948

**"I see you are a stranger, shall I walk with you  
so [you] will find your way?"**

—Kathleen Walsh

"It is difficult to say what in Mauritania surprised me most. Was it the half marathon run in unimaginable heat, the handicapped leading the race? Perhaps the miracle of water at an oasis deep within the desert? Maybe the staggering beauty of the orange red sun melting into the horizon at sunset. No. None of these. It was the people. Not one day passed without a gesture of kindness from the people I met on the street.

'I see you are a stranger, may I offer you water?'

'I see you are a stranger, would you like to sit  
in the shade of this tree?'

'I see you are a stranger, shall I walk with you  
so [you] will find your way?'

In the USA I paint landscapes. In Mauritania the people became my landscape; the graceful stature of the women, the flow of robes and the flash of light, the energy and strength of the fishermen. I took these images home with me. I shared them with all who asked. And now I am pleased to share them with you.

Thank you for your hospitality to this stranger."

—Kathleen Walsh

*Nouakchott, Mauritania, 2014*

These paintings by Kathleen Walsh began as watercolor sketches done on the road or in a nearby shelter while she was living abroad. Back in the United States, she developed them into larger pieces using a mixed medium that included oil pastel, paper, and paint.

Kathleen Walsh began her art career ten years ago. Prior to that, over the course of over twenty years, she lived, worked, and raised a family overseas in Africa and Europe. Her paintings hang in private collections throughout the U.S., Japan, Switzerland, and England, and are included in permanent collections in the U.S., Europe, and Burkina Faso.

ArtbyKathleenWalsh.com



**Fishermen of Mauritania, 2010**

Mixed media on canvas, 47 x 32 in. (119.4 x 81.3 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Fredericksburg, Virginia



**At Rest**

Mixed media, 30 x 30 in. (76.2 x 76.2 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Fredericksburg, Virginia



*Water*, 2009. Mixed media on canvas, 16 x 31 in. (40.6 x 78.7 cm). Courtesy of the artist, Fredericksburg, Virginia

## 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

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ART IN EMBASSIES EXHIBITION  
UNITED STATES EMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT