

ART in Embassies Program



United States Mission to the United Nations Agencies in Rome

Benny **Andrews**

Viola Andrews Teaching Sunday School, 1989

Oil and collage on canvas

60 ½ x 24 ½ in. (153.7 x 62.2 cm)

Estate of the artist, New York, New York



Established in 1963, the U.S. Department of State's office of ART in Embassies 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, ART 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 ART's presence in more countries than any other U.S. foundation or arts organization.

ART'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

Villa San Sebastiano is full of the art I love, mostly created by self-taught artists from the American South. When I was a college student, I saw an exhibition at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., called *Black Folk Art in America, 1930-1980*, a groundbreaking show of what is sometimes referred to as outsider or visionary art. That exhibition changed the way I thought about art, and it has continued to influence the art I like to live with. You will see works at Villa San Sebastiano that convey the kind of honest expression, unconventional boldness, unexpected optimism and raw beauty of the art that the world began to recognize thanks to the Corcoran exhibition.

The artists selected for this exhibition take a diverse set of approaches but their nine artworks share some important themes with each other and with items I've collected over the years and brought to Rome. Most of the artworks exhibited have something to say about *place*. Though the places depicted and evoked are almost exclusively American (the notable exception being Washington artist Craig Cahoon's painted image of the Italian countryside, *Nebbia Verde*), art at its best conveys universal values and transcends cultural boundaries. The artists shown here all have a respect and even love for the earth and for those who live close to it. (Indeed, paintings by the great outsider artist Jimmie Lee Sudduth are painted *with* earth – with red Alabama mud specifically.)

Many of us in Rome have the privilege to work daily on issues of hunger and food security. In many respects, we see land as a precious source of food production, both the foundation for large-scale agricultural development and a critical instrument to enable poor people to feed themselves and transform their lives. It is no contradiction to look further and see the land and landscape as an object of great beauty, as depicted in this exhibition. Even more inspiring is the human drive to imagine a better and more beautiful world, and I think that is the element that ties together all the artists shown here, whether formally trained or self-taught.

I am extremely grateful to the artists and art owners who have made these pieces available for display in the Villa while I serve as the ambassador here. I am honored to be able to share these works by extraordinary American artists with guests from the international community who visit Villa San Sebastiano. I would like to thank curator Sarah Tanguy and all the other staff at ART in Embassies for their extraordinary efforts to bring this show together. Valeria Brunori and her colleagues at the U.S. Embassy in Rome also provided invaluable support getting the art displayed properly at the residence. And USUN's Sharon Ketchum helped bring this booklet together in record time.

I would also like to acknowledge three dear friends who made this endeavor especially fun for me. Jeanne Kronsoble of the Main Street Gallery in Clayton, Georgia, loaned me the very powerful Purvis Young painting and advised me on everything else. Her husband Jeffrey, whose wonderful paintings I acquire whenever I can manage to, contributed *America VI*, a stunning landscape I've long admired. And Mark Steitz had the inspired idea and the generosity to offer me a rare 400-year-old map that reveals an Old World vision of the New World, or at least the southern part of the New World inhabited by most of my favorite artists and most of my family.

I hope you enjoy this exhibition and become familiar with the artists who made it possible.

David Lane

Rome
September 2013

Villa San Sebastiano è piena dell'arte che amo, creata principalmente da artisti autodidatti provenienti dal Sud degli Stati Uniti. Durante il periodo universitario, vidi una mostra alla Corcoran Gallery of Art di Washington, D.C., intitolata Black Folk Art in America, 1930-1980, una mostra pionieristica di un genere d'arte che a volte va sotto il nome di outsider o visionaria. Quella collezione cambiò il mio modo di concepire l'arte, ed ha continuato ad influenzare la scelta delle opere di cui amo circondarmi. A Villa San Sebastiano potrete ammirare opere che trasmettono quel senso di onestà, di audacia non convenzionale, di ottimismo inaspettato, e di cruda bellezza che il mondo ha cominciato ad apprezzare grazie alla mostra della Corcoran Gallery.

Gli artisti selezionati per questa mostra utilizzano diversi approcci, ma le loro nove opere hanno in comune temi importanti, che si ritrovano in altri lavori che ho collezionato negli anni e che ho portato con me a Roma. La maggior parte delle opere in mostra è legata al concetto di luogo. Nonostante i luoghi rappresentati ed evocati siano quasi esclusivamente americani (con la sola, rilevante eccezione di un dipinto che rappresenta la campagna italiana, intitolato Nebbia Verde di Craig Cahoon, artista di Washington, D.C.), l'arte nella sua massima espressione trasmette valori universali e trascende le barriere culturali. Nel lavoro di tutti gli artisti in mostra risulta evidente il rispetto e l'amore per la terra e per coloro che vivono a stretto contatto con la terra. (A dire il vero, le opere del grande artista outsider, Jimmie Lee Sudduth, sono effettivamente dipinte con la terra – in particolare con il fango rosso dell'Alabama).

Molti di noi qui a Roma hanno il privilegio di occuparsi ogni giorno del problema della fame e della sicurezza alimentare. Per molti versi, vediamo la terra come una fonte preziosa per la produzione alimentare, sia come la base per lo sviluppo agricolo a larga scala, sia come strumento fondamentale che consente a chi vive in povertà di sfamarsi e di trasformare la propria vita. Allo stesso modo, non è una contraddizione guardare oltre e considerare la terra ed i suoi paesaggi anche come un oggetto di grande bellezza, come rappresentato

da questa mostra. Ancora più d'ispirazione è la spinta dell'uomo a immaginare un mondo migliore, più bello, e credo sia questo l'elemento che lega tutti gli artisti in mostra, sia che si siano formati in accademie o da autodidatti.

Sono estremamente grato agli artisti ed ai proprietari delle opere, messe a disposizione nella Villa per la durata del mio incarico come ambasciatore. Sono onorato di poter condividere tali opere di straordinari artisti americani con gli ospiti della comunità internazionale che fanno visita a Villa San Sebastiano. Vorrei ringraziare la curatrice Sarah Tanguy e tutto lo staff di Art in Embassies per lo straordinario impegno profuso nella realizzazione di questa mostra. Valeria Brunori e le sue colleghe dell'Ambasciata degli Stati Uniti a Roma hanno inoltre fornito un aiuto fondamentale per il corretto allestimento delle opere d'arte all'interno della residenza. E grazie a Sharon Ketchum, collega a USUN, se questo opuscolo è stato realizzato in tempi record.

Il mio riconoscimento va anche a tre cari amici che hanno reso questa impresa particolarmente divertente. Jeanne Kronsoble della Main Street Gallery di Clayton, Georgia, che ha messo a disposizione l'intenso dipinto di Purvis Young e mi ha consigliato su tutto il resto. Suo marito Jeffrey, i cui dipinti meravigliosi cerco di acquistare ogni qualvolta che riesco, ha contribuito con America VI, paesaggio stupendo che ammiro da sempre. E Mark Steitz, che ha avuto un'idea illuminata e dimostrato la sua generosità, prestandomi una carta geografica molto rara risalente a 400 anni fa, che rivela come il Vecchio Mondo vedesse il Nuovo Mondo, o almeno la parte meridionale del Nuovo Mondo, abitata da molti dei miei artisti preferiti e quasi tutta la mia famiglia.

Spero che la mostra sia di vostro gradimento, e che vi aiuti a conoscere gli artisti che l'hanno resa possibile.

David Lane

Roma
Settembre 2013

Benny Andrews was born on November 13, 1930, in Plainview, Georgia. His family worked as sharecroppers, and his mother, Viola, made sure that her children attended school when it rained or when they were not needed as field hands. Although Andrews' education was sporadic, he distinguished himself with his talent in drawing and used it as a survival tool to get through school. Later, he used the G.I. Bill to partially fund his art education, after he received his honorable discharge from the U.S. Air Force in 1954.

In the fall of that year, Andrews began classes at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His drawings and paintings employed an economy of line, figures were elongated in order to emphasize gesture, and for the first time, he experimented with collage. The dominant art movement at the time was abstract expressionism, but Andrews adhered to his figural expressionistic style, which bears the influences of abstraction, social realism, surrealism, and the American scene. When he was awarded a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 1958, he left Chicago having had his work rejected from every art show at his school.

Andrews spent his career in New York City as an artist, teacher, author, activist, and advocate for the arts, as well as serving as a curator, critic, and writer. He was elected to the National Academy of Design in 1997, and received numerous awards and accolades. His work is found in more than thirty major museums, in addition to many private collections. Andrews produced the *Autobiographical* series as a result of a trip to his hometown in Georgia. This portrait of his mother is one of the works from that series.

Andrews



Viola Andrews Teaching Sunday School, 1989
Oil and collage on canvas
60 ½ x 24 ½ in. (153.7 x 62.2 cm)
Estate of the artist, New York, New York

“Through the process of painting I relive sensations and memories while engaging in formal investigations of composition and materials. Making art has allowed me to expand my fascination with the material world while being a spiritual pursuit, a meditative practice, and a link with the past.

As a child I became interested in other countries and cultures, their archetypal images, geography, histories, and languages. I have been satisfying these interests through travel around the world, staying with friends, relatives and fellow artists, and through painting. I enjoy experiencing different artworks, architecture, color and design sensibility, all of which greatly inform my own work.

The evolution of my paintings has made significant leaps during residencies at art centers and colonies, both in the United States and abroad. I prefer observing the ambient light and colors of a new place over a long period of time and responding to that experience through paint. I consider myself a process painter, with each new experience and technique adding to the previous responses.

I employ figuration to represent personal episodes in my life, using imagery from different cultures as well as my own dreams. Sometimes the figurative elements eventually evolve into more abstract imagery. Although rooted in representational figurative painting, abstraction allows me to paint more what I am feeling rather than realistically reproducing what I am seeing.”

Craig Cahoon holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from St. Joseph College, Rensselaer, Indiana (1970), and subsequently studied at Weston College, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Northern Virginia Community College, Bailey’s Cross Roads, Virginia; and Central Piedmont Community College, Charlotte, North Carolina. The recipient of several awards, grants, and artist residencies, he has exhibited his work throughout the United States in addition to Ecuador, The Czech Republic, Germany, and Malaysia. His work is also included in many noted private and public collections.



Nebbia Verde, 2009
Acrylic on canvas
20 x 32 in. (50.8 x 81.3 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Washington, D.C.

"Thirty-five thousand years ago, the first intentional burials with ritual objects occurred, and with them the first expressions of human faith appeared. Among these objects, a predominant burial image was the animal. The use of ritualized animal images has had enduring religious, mythic, and aesthetic significance. The inherent power of these artifacts and my love for animals have made their image central to my work and philosophy. For me, animals symbolize a bridge between the rational and instinctual worlds.

I sculpt using wire, mesh, and hydrocal or clay. The sculptures vary in scale from one to five feet tall, each piece is hollow and unique. The surfaces of the sculptures are covered with epoxy and found objects making them rich in texture. These surfaces refer to human creation, memory, and pattern. African grave markers and old Southern 'Memory Jars' have inspired the exterior embellishments. I search for found objects at flea markets and junk stores. Favorite objects are watches, dice, jewelry, keys, porcelain figurines, precious stones, buttons, and Milagros. Titles for my pieces often come from charm bracelets, pins, or other objects with etched or printed names. *Louise* is a sculpture covered with lambs, elephants, monkeys, dogs, horses, and deer figurines and gets her title from a swan souvenir placed on her paw from 'Lake Louise.' A dog sculpture covered with watches has *Watch Dog* in the title, another covered with porcelain birds is *Bird Dog*, and *Lucky Pup* is a dog rolling over covered with dice.

Through my work, I aspire to create whimsical animated creatures using gesture and 'movement' to capture a presence I feel animals possess. To date, my sculptures have been single figures, gazing in a distinct direction, implying an invitation to play, or to otherwise interact with an implied other. My new body of work uses multiple forms to create relationships between figures and metaphoric possibilities. The animal, as archetype, found in diverse cultures' myths and fables, whether similar or disparate, is fascinating to me. The sculptures are not meant to represent a single 'story.' My Interpretation comes from combining the viewers' imaginations, belief systems, and personal connections to their 'herd,' 'pack,' or 'cub.'"

Mary Engel holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Illinois State University, Normal (1988), and a Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Georgia, Athens (1993). Originally from Chicago and currently living and working in Athens, Georgia, Engel has shown and been reviewed extensively nationally since 1986. Her work is held in numerous important private collections, as well as institutions including Children's Healthcare of Scottish Rite in Atlanta, the Detroit Zoo, and the President's Collection of the University of Georgia. Engel's work has been shown at international art fairs, and has been exhibited at several museums.

Watch Dog, 2012

Mixed media sculpture

9 x 17 x 6 ½ in. (22.9 x 43.2 x 16.5 cm)

*Courtesy of the artist, Athens, Georgia, and
Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, Georgia*

Engel



www.maryengel.net www.marciawoodgallery.com

"My recent artworks reflect critically on the way mass media is used to convey social agenda. Among other concerns some of the paintings manifest judgmental, censorious ways of life and the many oxymoronic extensions in our so-called union. Visually, these paintings explore the relationships between the abstract and the representational with an easily recognizable urban perspective. [I begin by] using acrylic paint, oil stick, collage, sand, cement, and blends of mixed media – usually starting with an abstract field of energy – followed by added elements, such as drawn images culled from sketchbooks as well as from my imagination. The end result is loose narrative paintings using bold contrasts of deep, strong colors with a mixed word usage of reversed type as the principal process.

The use of reversed type as an element and operative device within the paintings serves as a signifier of personal as well as societal conflict. This element in these paintings conveys both informational and symbolic readings. Reversed type becomes an entry point into hidden (yet parallel) worlds that hints at the struggles some members of society have in reading a simple word. By extension this alludes to a dimension of disenfranchisement, separation, and humiliation endured by individuals who, through no fault of their own, feel isolated and disconnected from the world around them, a world they otherwise feel strongly attached to.

These artworks project my observation of the disparity in cultural, economic, educational, and political agendas throughout our society that often leads to conflicting social practices and irreconcilable tensions within the body politic. While examining tribal identification and its crisscross of connotations as an African-American artist, I also offer the viewer insights into an accurate account of the many often-contradictory aspects of contemporary culture. Simultaneously, [my work] points to conditions that hamper self-awareness and thus create self-consciousness, while suggesting how such conditions shape the possibility or denial of self-actualization."

Jeffrey Kent was born in 1963 in Boston, Massachusetts, and currently lives and works in Baltimore, Maryland. Kent earned his Master of Fine Arts degree from the prestigious Hoffberger School of Painting at the Maryland Institute College of Art (Baltimore) in 2010, and is known for "some of the most spectacular use of color I've ever seen," according to Rebecca Hoffberger, Founder and Director of the American Visionary Art Museum. As a painter, Kent's artistic vision is an important contribution to the continuous spectrum of urban cultural expression and identity.

In 2003 Kent founded Sub-Basement Artist Studios, a 12,000 square foot underground artists' studios and gallery space located in downtown Baltimore. In 2008 he was awarded Best Visual Artist by *Baltimore City Paper* and received the Joyce C. Scott Exhibition Award. In 2003 he was the recipient of the City Arts Grant. He was featured in Baltimore's 2008 Top Ten Artist list by the *Examiner*. Since 2001, Kent has participated in numerous group exhibitions in Baltimore, Chicago, and Washington, D.C. One of his career highlights was participation in the exhibition *Ten Years After 9/11* held at the Pepco Gallery in Washington, D.C. It featured the work of thirty-nine international artists commemorating the tenth anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack. His solo exhibitions included *Preach* held at the Frederick Douglass-Isaac Myers Maritime Museum; *Good, Bad and Ugly* shown at the Creative Alliance in Baltimore; and *Jeffrey Kent Recent Works* featured at the DesignSmith Art Gallery in Chicago, Illinois. His art is in many private and corporate collections.



Unintended Consequences, 2009

Acrylic on canvas

72 x 42 in. (182.9 x 106.7 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Galerie Myrtis, Baltimore, Maryland

“Over the course of my fifty-year career, I have used photography extensively as a tool in my artwork. I have incorporated photos from magazines and newspapers, as well as my own photos in various combinations and arrangements. These often took the form of collage. At first, I was using a true collage as a maquette for a painting, and later making a virtual collage by digital means.

Every now and then, however, a photograph that I have made strikes me as complete unto itself, not needing other elements to complete the image. I have used eight of these images, all landscapes, to paint a long running series of pictures titled *America I*, 1990, through *America VIII*, 2009. *America VI*, which Ambassador Lane has chosen for the Villa San Sabastiano in Rome, was painted in 2003. It depicts a pasture across the road from a rural church in Rabun County, Georgia. The pasture, a hay field falling away from the road, has inspired me to paint it a number of times, reminding me of the Mont Sainte-Victoire paintings by Paul Cezanne.

The particular photo that I used seemed to hold the quintessence of that beautiful meadow, usually empty but that day with a neighbor’s horses. It was what I called a ‘ready-made.’”

Jeffrey Kronsoble was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He earned his Bachelor’s degree from the University of Wisconsin, and his Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Michigan in 1963. That year, he joined the art faculty at the University of South Florida, in Tampa.

Kronsoble’s paintings and drawings have been exhibited in regional and national competitions, as well as group and solo exhibitions. He has been featured in solo shows and a twenty-five year retrospective at ACA Galleries in New York, Milwaukee, New Orleans, La Jolla, and throughout Florida. Group show venues have included The Milwaukee Art Museum; the Detroit Institute of the Arts; the Chicago Art Institute; the High Museum of Art, Atlanta; New Orleans Museum of Art; the Federal Reserve Board, Washington, D.C.; the National Academy of Design, New York; and the Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio.

His work is represented in the permanent collections of art museums and over 175 public, corporate, and private collections. Kronsoble’s awards include the William A. Paton and Thomas B. Clarke prizes from the National Academy of Design in New York, and three Individual Artists Grants from the Florida Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs.

In 2008 Kronsnoble was featured in a show, *Notes on the 19th, 20th and 21st Centuries*, at the Morris Museum of Art in Augusta, Georgia. Of his art, Museum Curator Jay Williams says: "...Kronsnoble's paintings and drawings are poetic commentaries – he calls them 'notes' – about the struggle between order and chaos in modern life and contemporary art."

www.mainstreetgallery.net

America VI, 2003

Oil on linen canvas, 48 x 72 in. (121,9 x 182,9 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Main Street Gallery, Clayton, Georgia



Jodocus Hondius was born in Wakken, Flanders, and grew up in Ghent. In his early years he established himself as an engraver, instrument maker, and globe maker. In 1584 he moved to London to escape religious difficulties in Flanders. While in England, Hondius was instrumental in publicizing the work of Francis Drake, who had made a circumnavigation of the world in the late 1570s. In particular, in 1589 Hondius produced a now famous map of the Bay of New Albion, where Drake briefly established a settlement on the West coast of North America. Hondius' map was based on journal and eyewitness accounts of the trip and has long fueled speculation about the precise location of Drake's landing, which has not yet been firmly established by historians. Hondius is also thought to be the artist of several well-known portraits of Drake that are now in the National Portrait Gallery in London.

In 1593 Hondius moved to Amsterdam, where he remained until the end of his life. In cooperation with the Amsterdam publisher Cornelis Claesz, in 1604 he purchased the plates of Gerard Mercator's *Atlas* from Mercator's grandson. Mercator's work had languished in comparison to the rival *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum* by Abraham Ortelius. Hondius republished Mercator's work with thirty-six additional maps, including several that he himself had produced. Despite the addition of his own contributions, Hondius gave Mercator full credit as the author of the work, listing himself as the publisher. Hondius' new edition of Mercator's work was a great success, selling out after a year. Hondius later published a second edition, as well as a pocket version *Atlas Minor*. The maps have since become known as the Mercator/Hondius series.

Between 1605 and 1610 Hondius was employed by John Speed to engrave the plates for Speed's *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine*. After his death, his publishing work in Amsterdam was continued by his widow, two sons, Jodocus II and Henricus, and son-in-law Johannes Janssonius, whose name appears on the *Atlas* as co-publisher after 1633. Eventually, starting with the first 1606 edition in Latin, about fifty editions of the *Atlas* were released in the main European languages. In the Islamic world, the atlas was partially translated by the Turkish scholar Katip Çelebi. The series is sometimes called the Mercator/Hondius/Janssonius series because of Janssonius's later contributions.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jodocus_Hondius

A cartographer, philosopher and mathematician, Gerard Mercator is best known for his work in cartography, particularly the world map of 1569, based on a new projection that represented sailing courses of constant bearing as straight lines. He was the first to use the term atlas for a collection of maps.

Mercator was born Gerard de Kremer or de Cremer in the Belgian town of Rupelmonde to parents from Gangelt in the Duchy of Jülich, part of the Holy Roman Empire, where he was raised. Mercator is the Latinized form of his name. It means merchant. He was educated in 's-Hertogenbosch by the famous humanist Macropedius and at the University of Leuven. Despite Mercator's fame as a cartographer, his main source of income came through his craftsmanship of mathematical instruments. In Leuven, he worked with Gemma Frisius and Gaspar Myrica from 1535 to 1536 to construct a terrestrial globe, although the role of Mercator in the project was not primarily as a cartographer, but rather as a highly skilled engraver of brass plates. Mercator's own independent map-making began only when he produced a map of Palestine in 1537; this map was followed by another – a map of the world (1538) and a map of Flanders (1540). During this period he learned Italic script because it was the most suitable type of script for copper engraving of maps. He wrote the first instruction book of Italic script published in northern Europe.

Mercator went on to become the leading European globe maker of the age. His terrestrial globe from 1541 is now in the museum collection of the Palazzo Ducale in Urbania, Italy, and is one of about twenty-two existing Mercator globes. In 1552, he moved to Duisburg, one of the major cities in the Duchy of Cleves, part of the United Duchies of Jülich-Cleves-Berg, Holy Roman Empire, and opened a cartographic workshop where he completed a six-panel map of Europe in 1554. He worked also as a surveyor for the city. His motives for moving to Duisburg are not clear. Mercator might have left the Netherlands for religious reasons or because he was informed about the plans to found a university. He taught mathematics at the academic college of Duisburg. After producing several maps, he was appointed Court Cosmographer to Wilhelm, Duke of Jülich-Cleves-Berg in 1564. He constructed a new chart and first used it in 1569. It had parallel lines of longitude to aid navigation by sea, and compass courses could be marked as straight lines.

Mercator took the word atlas to describe a collection of maps, and encouraged Abraham Ortelius to compile the first modern world atlas, *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*,

Mercator

in 1570. He produced his own atlas in a number of parts, the first of which was published in 1578 and consisted of corrected versions of the maps of Ptolemy (though introducing a number of new errors). Maps of France, Germany, and the Netherlands were added in 1585 and of the Balkans and Greece in 1588. Following his move to Duisburg, Mercator never left the city and died there in 1594, a respected and wealthy citizen. His son Rumold Mercator published additional maps in 1595 after his father's death.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerardus_Mercator

Hondius & Mercator



Mercator-Hondius Map of Florida, Carolina, and Virginia, 1616

Work on paper

14 x 19 1/2 in. (35,6 x 49,5 cm)

Courtesy of Mark Steitz, Washington, D.C.

"One is the title of this beautiful work of art. It took me six years to complete this statue; I did not know where it would carry me. Nor, did I understand what I was doing at the time. I would set it aside months at a time, before undertaking the task of finishing this piece of art. However, now I know, it's an ideography. Which means the direct representation of ideas by symbols. It is from the spirits, to the spirit of the souls of man. It is saying, 'Let his light shine.' Although I could explain this step by step, I think its best said by professor, John S. Mbiti in his book *African Religions and Philosophy*. I would like both black and white to know of our African past. Five years after *One* was completed, I was working on another statue called *Members Don't Get Worried*. As people walked past my house and saw me working, they would say, 'right on brother.' One day I met a brother, whose name I've forgotten. He gave me a book to read and I still have this book and never saw this brother again.

There was a particular section in chapter three of Mr. Mbiti's book that explained the concept of time (African concept of time). The answers I've been looking for, for years were there. Reaching from across the waters, was the power of the pen, and the spirit from within. Showing me the picture I had completed eleven years ago. Here, then, is his quotation and the meaning of this work of art I did years ago.

'Africans have their own ontology but it is a religious ontology and to understand their religion we must penetrate that ontology. I propose to divide it up into five categories but it is an extremely anthropocentric ontology in the sense that everything is seen in terms of its relation to man and these categories are:

- 1) God as the ultimate explanation of the genesis and substance of both man and all things.
- 2) Spirits being made up to superhuman beings and the spirits of man who died a long time ago.
- 3) Man including human beings who are alive and those about to be born.
- 4) Animals and plants, or the remainder of biological life.
- 5) Phenomena and objects without biological life."

Anderson Pigatt was born in Raeford, North Carolina, October 20, 1928. He received vocational training in general woodworking and carpentry at George Washington Carver High School. Pigatt served in the United States Army from 1950 to 55; studied cabinetmaking on the G.I. Bill after leaving the military;

and apprenticed under James W. Leach, Baltimore, Maryland, in refinishing and repairing period antique furniture. Pigatt undertook free-lance work in New York after 1963, working for firms such as Worldwide Antiques, Leonard's Antique Gallery, and Knapp and Seigal Antiques, et al. His restoration experience includes work on Chippendale, Jacobean, Sheraton, and Queen Anne furniture collections, as well as other types of collections.

Pigatt launched his sculpture career late in the 1960s. A self-taught sculptor, his work is represented in a number of private and institutional collections. *Nigger Chained*, a seminal work is in the permanent collection of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York. Other sculptures are in the collections of the Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York, as well as the Reginald F. Lewis Museum, and the Visionary Museum, both in Baltimore, Maryland.

Pigatt participated in exhibitions sponsored by the American Federation of Fine Arts, the Urban Center of Columbia University, and the Harlem Council. From December 1967 to 1976, his work was exhibited in such venues as the Empire State Building Observation Tower, The Pam Am Building, the Brooklyn Museum, and Columbia University, all in New York; Elma Lewis School of Fine Art, Dorchester, Massachusetts; University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida; Reading Public Museum and Art Gallery, Reading, Pennsylvania; University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee; and Milliken University, Decatur, and Illinois State Museum, Springfield, both in Illinois.

Significant exhibitions in which the artist participated include: *Black New Artists of the 20th Century: Selections from the Schomburg Center Collections*, 1970; traveling exhibitions *New Black Artists*, 1971; and *Black Art – Ancestral Legacy: The African Impulse in African-American Art*, 1989-1991. Pigatt was selected to participate in the exhibition and publication, *Black Art Ancestral Legacy*, sponsored by the Dallas Museum of Art, which traveled to the High Museum in Atlanta, Georgia; the Milwaukee Art Museum, and the Virginia Museum of Fine Art in Richmond.

Pigatt



One, 1980
Painted wood
44 x 10 x 9 in. (111,8 x 25,4 x 22,9 cm)
Courtesy of the Estate of the artist and
Galerie Myrtis, Baltimore, Maryland

Keith Sharp is a photographer based in Media, Pennsylvania. Solo exhibitions include Silver Eye Center for Photography, Pittsburgh, and Philadelphia International Airport, both in Pennsylvania; The Arts Club of Washington and the U.S. Botanical Gardens, both in Washington, D.C.; The Delaware Center for the Contemporary Arts, Wilmington, Delaware; and FotoFest, Houston, Texas. His work was included in various group shows, including Woodmere Art Museum, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, Delaware; and the Robin Rice Gallery, New York City. Collections include the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Texas; Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; and the State Museum of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg; and Allentown Art Museum in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

As Rachel Frankford noted in her review in the Philadelphia *City Paper*: "... Sharp continues his fascination with quirky combinations of human and natural elements by placing domestic objects in the natural world and vice versa. Trees sprout from wood floors. Ivy hangs from a bathroom rack instead of a towel. A framed photo of a tree in winter hangs from the tree itself, or so it first appears; it might be the other way around, and the small space inside the frame shows the actual tree. Which is an image of an image, and which is reality? ... the photos ... come close to the bottomless strangeness of the best surrealist art."

Sharp



Suspended, 2012
Color photograph
16 x 24 in. (40,6 x 61 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Media, Pennsylvania

Purvis Young was born in 1943 in Miami, Florida. His mother was from the Bahamas and encouraged his artistic talent from an early age. He began seriously painting around the age of twenty, using collected objects from the ghetto streets and house paint. He covered the sides of abandoned buildings with his canvases and used his art to protest war, poverty, and racial indifference. Working from a warehouse in his hometown, he painted compulsively and passionately. In the early 1970s his work began to be recognized and collected, and in the following decades he gained an international reputation. Young died in April 2010, in the city of his birth. Today he is sometimes called the Picasso of the Ghetto.

Young's paintings hang in more than sixty galleries and museums nationwide and abroad; among them are the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, Georgia; The Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; the Tampa Museum of Art, Florida; the St. Petersburg Museum of Fine Art, Florida; and the Mennello Museum of American Art, Orlando, Florida.

Purvis **Young** | 1943-2010

Young



Saints and Leaders, c. 1985

Mixed media

74 x 50 in. (188 x 127 cm)

Courtesy of Main Street Gallery, Clayton, Georgia

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