



ART in Embassies Exhibition

Embassy of the United States to the Republic of Fiji,
Kiribati, Nauru, Kingdom of Tonga, and Tuvalu

COVER:

Romare Bearden

Mecklenburg Autumn, 1980

Color lithograph, 27 x 21 ½ in. (68,6 x 54,6 cm)

Courtesy of Dr. Dianne Locke, Mitchellville, Maryland

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 1963, 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 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>.

Welcome to Somerset House, the official residence of the American Ambassador to The Republic of Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Kingdom of Tonga, and Tuvalu. It is my distinct pleasure to offer a temporary home to a number of original works of art by a diverse group of American artists. I extend my sincere gratitude to the artists, private collectors, and galleries that so generously loaned these extraordinary pieces, specifically the Michigan State University Museum, the Jerald Melberg Gallery, Evangeline Juliet Montgomery, and Dr. Dianne Locke. I would also like to express my gratitude to the United States Department of State's ART in Embassies Program for its integral role in creating this beautiful and unique exhibition.

Support of the arts is something very dear to me. With the launch of my initiative for the arts, the Embassy and I have forged a close relationship with the Fiji Museum and the Fiji Arts Council. In private showings, the ART in Embassies exhibition has already had an impact on the local arts community, which has expressed great appreciation for, and has been inspired by, its conceptual underpinnings. As we move forward with the construction and impending move to the new chancery, we plan to continue to showcase art as an integral part of the Embassy mission, with works drawn from throughout the Pacific region.

Just as the American Embassy in Suva, Fiji, reaches out to a broad spectrum of nationalities and cultures throughout the Pacific, the art I selected for this exhibition is a reflection and celebration of the cultural diversity of the United States of America, with art works representing Native American, Polynesian, and African American heritage. I wish to recognize the artists featured in this exhibition: Jacob Lawrence, Romare Bearden, Mario Martinez, Evangeline Juliet Montgomery, and Minnie Wabanimkee, for capturing different slices of American life, culture, and history. A variety of media is represented in this exhibition, ranging from black and white photography to digital prints. I hope that you will enjoy the art as much as I enjoy sharing it with you.

Ambassador C. Steven McGann

Suva, June 2009

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 known to 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 work 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 City; 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 burials, 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.

www.jeraldmelberg.com



Romare Bearden

Mecklenburg Autumn, 1980

Color lithograph, 27 x 21 ½ in. (68,6 x 54,6 cm)

Courtesy of Dr. Dianne Locke, Mitchellville,
Maryland



Romare Bearden

Dreams of Exile, 1971

Color Lithograph, 32 x 26 ½ in. (81,3 x 67,3 cm)

Courtesy of the Jerald Melberg Gallery,
Charlotte, North Carolina

Jacob Lawrence (1917-2000)

Jacob Lawrence, who lived much of his life in lower Manhattan, was a great American modern painter whose subjects were history and urban life. Born in Atlantic City, New Jersey, Lawrence is best known for his narrative series of tempera paintings expressive of his own life and that of his peers who migrated from the South to the North. His vivid canvases typically had bold planes of color and symbolic elements of the African-American heritage of struggles, aspirations, and accomplishments. His paintings are a unique blend of sensibilities – part narrative mural painting, part social realism, and part modernist abstraction.

In 1946 Lawrence began teaching at Black Mountain College in North Carolina, at the invitation of Josef Albers. He also taught in New York City at the Art Students League, the New School for Social Research, Pratt Institute, and in Maine at the Skowhegan School. In 1971 he became a professor of art at the University of Washington in Seattle, where he retired in 1986 as professor emeritus. Throughout the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, Lawrence continued to paint subjects that referred to racial and social issues of African-Americans and devoted himself to commissions, especially for murals and limited edition prints to benefit non-profit organizations, including New York's Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts, for which *Supermarket Flora* was created.

In 1999, the year before Lawrence's death, he and his wife, painter Gwendolyn Knight, established a foundation to create an art center in Harlem named for Lawrence. *Play* comes from Lawrence's *Harriet Tubman* series of prints, done after his painted biography of Tubman done in 1938-1940. The images celebrate the life of the African-American heroine who, at great risk, led hundreds of slaves to freedom along the Underground Railroad. In his narrative series, Lawrence introduces Harriet Tubman as a child, depicted among a group of slave children playing leaping and tumbling games in her native Dorchester County, Maryland. They are seemingly carefree, as children often are. Later images show the increasingly grueling nature of Harriet's life, as she grows, until her escape from slavery in her early twenties.

www.yale.edu



Jacob Lawrence

Supermarket Flora, 1997

Silkscreen on paper, 38 x 30 in. (96,5 x 76,2 cm)

Courtesy of the ART in Embassies Program, Washington, D.C.

Gift of the Foundation for Art and Preservation in Embassies



Jacob Lawrence

Play (Harriet Tubman Series), 1939-1940

Silkscreen print, 23 x 32 in. (58,4 x 81,3 cm)

Courtesy of the ART in Embassies Program, Washington, D.C.

Gift of Clifford Ames

Mario Martinez (born 1953)

“My work is a result of an intuitive artistic process. I feel my work combines the great abstract tradition in western art and a personal sense of ‘Yaquiness.’ When I say ‘Yaquiness,’ I mean ancient and modern Yaqui culture, the Great Sonoran Desert and diverse American popular culture.

In *The Desert, The Yaquis and NYC*, I revisit my ongoing primary theme, abstract natural forms. I see the image as a structure of organic energy. The image also contains straight architectural lines referencing the urban ‘cityscape’ (San Francisco and New York City). The print was drawn mostly on lithostone, a process I had not used in decades. That process lends itself to a drawing-like quality, which is what attracted me to lithography as a young artist in college.

In short, I feel *The Desert, The Yaquis and NYC* is a true reflection of what has impacted my life in the past to the present: the Sonoran Desert (the primordial home of my people); Yaqui cultural and spiritual traditions (such as our animal dances and ancient ‘Mythology,’ both based on nature); western modernism; and my contemporary life which began in a small Yaqui village (called ‘Penjamo’ in Scottsdale, Arizona) and continues in a great urban environment called New York City.”



Mario Martinez

The Desert, The Yaquis and NYC, 2007

Seven-color lithograph printed on Somerset satin paper, 27 x 18 ½ in. (68,6 x 47 cm)
Courtesy of ART in Embassies Program, Washington, D.C.

Evangeline Juliet Montgomery

(born 1933)

Arts administrator, artist, curator, consultant, lecturer, collector, and cultural activist, Evangeline Juliet Montgomery, known to her friends as “E.J.,” has made an outstanding contribution to the study and presentation of African-American art and the art of the African Diaspora. As an artist, Montgomery has been featured in numerous group exhibitions, nationally and internationally. Her work has been included in many private and public collections such as the Paul Jones Collection at the University of Delaware in Wilmington; the Oakland Museum in Oakland, California; the Museum of the National Center for Afro-American Artists in Boston, Massachusetts; the Howard University Art Gallery in Washington, D.C.; and the James E. Lewis Museum at Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland. She has received a number of awards and fellowships from prestigious institutions and organizations, including the Women's Caucus for the Arts, The National Endowment for the Arts, the Brandywine Workshop Residencies, the American Craft Council, and Blacks in Government. Montgomery recently retired from a career in the arts at the Department of State. She lives and works in Washington, D.C.

www.crumpfinearts.com



Evangeline Juliet Montgomery

Evergreen Park, 2007

Digital print with hand coloring in acrylic paint, 30 x 28 ¼ in. (76,2 x 71,8 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Washington, D.C.



Evangeline Juliet Montgomery

Merry-go-round, 2007

Digital print with hand embellishments in acrylic, 31 ¼ x 24 in. (79,4 x 61 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Washington, D.C.



Evangeline Juliet Montgomery

Magnetic Current II, 2001

Lithograph with serigraphy, 21 x 29 in. (53,3 x 73,7 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Washington, D.C.



Evangeline Juliet Montgomery

Napa Weeds, 2006

Lithograph with serigraphy, 19 x 24 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (48,3 x 62,9 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Washington, D.C.

Unknown photographer

These photographs are four of more than 6,000 images in the Josephus Daniels Collection in the Photographic Archives at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Josephus Daniels (1862-1948) was a journalist from North Carolina who served as Secretary of the Navy under President Woodrow Wilson (1913-1921) and was America's Ambassador to Mexico under Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1933-1942). Daniels made official visits to Hawai'i in 1906, 1909, and several times thereafter, with the last visits being made when he was Secretary of the Navy. These images and others in the Library of Congress' Josephus Daniels Collection probably come from a portfolio of photographs that was presented to Daniels during one of his early visits to Hawai'i. Daniels' photograph collection was donated to the Library of Congress by his sons after his death.

Paul Vanderbilt, "The Daniels Collection," *Guide to the Special Collections of Prints and Photographs in the Library of Congress* (1955): 45.



Unknown photographer

Four Selections from Hawai'i Album: Honolulu Bay Surfriders

Photograph, c. 1900, 5 x 13 ½ in. (12,7 x 34,3 cm)

Courtesy of the ART in Embassies Program; Photography Archive, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.



Unknown photographer

Four Selections from Hawai'i Album: Spear Fisherman

Photograph, c. 1900, 16 x 20 in. (40,6 x 50,8 cm)

Courtesy of the ART in Embassies Program

Photography Archive, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.



Unknown photographer

**Four Selections from Hawai'i Album:
Moanalao Gardens**

Photograph, c. 1900, 20 x 16 in. (50,8 x 40,6 cm)

Courtesy of the ART in Embassies Program

Photography Archive, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.



Unknown photographer

**Four Selections from Hawai'i Album:
Queen Liliuokalani**

Photograph, c. 1900, 9 ¼ x 7 in. (23,5 x 17,8 cm)

Courtesy of the ART in Embassies Program

Photography Archive, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Minnie Wabanimkee (born 1952)

Minnie Wabanimkee (Odawa) is a freelance photojournalist. Born in northern Michigan, she has received numerous awards, including the Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award for Excellence in Photojournalism. She has worked for the Associated Press, the Michigan State University Museum, the Nokomis Learning Center, and several tribes within the State of Michigan. Her work was included in the Michigan State University Museum exhibition and publication *Anishnaabek: Artists of Little Traverse Bay*.

Photographs and text are from *Contemporary Great Lakes Pow Wow Regalia "Nda Maamawigaami (Together We Dance)"* edited by Marsha MacDowell; photographs by Minnie Wabanimkee; Michigan State University Museum, East Lansing, Michigan, 1997.

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“The Fancy Shawl Dance represents the wings of a butterfly ...
we open our wings and we're happy that that person is going to the spirit world
... No other style of American Indian dance has such widespread popularity
among native peoples across the country as the Fancy Dance.
Its regalia has become the pervasive outfit of the Pan-Indian dance.”

~Netawn Alice Kiogima



Minnie Wabanimkee

Women's Shawl Dancer, 1995

Color photograph, 30 x 30 in. (76,2 x 76,2 cm)

Courtesy of the Michigan State University Museum, East Lansing, Michigan, Michigan Traditional Arts Program



Minnie Wabanimkee

Lisa Ojibway, 1996

Color photograph, 20 x 24 in. (50,8 x 61 cm)

Courtesy of the Michigan State University Museum, East Lansing, Michigan, Michigan Traditional Arts Program

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