



UNITED STATES EMBASSY VALLETTA ART IN EMBASSIES EXHIBITION

BRET WEBSTER

**Arches Symmetry**, undated

Archival photograph, 30 x 62 in. (76,2 x 157,5 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Park City, Utah

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## 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."

<https://art.state.gov>

## WELCOME

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the residence of the United States Ambassador in Malta. I invite you to enjoy the Art in Embassies exhibition, which includes works by a number of acclaimed American artists.

Art in Embassies (AIE) is a program within the U.S. Department of State that creates vital cross-cultural dialogue and mutual understanding through the visual arts and dynamic artist exchanges. As a public-private partnership, AIE engages over 20,000 international participants, including artists, museums, galleries, universities, and private collectors. The works of art displayed in the residence are from artists Joseph K. Dixon, Phil Epp, Robert Pummill, Karl Bodmer, Douglas Keats, Minnie Wabanimkee, Christian Barthelme, Susan Temple Neumann, Bret Webster, and Curtis Wade.

In selecting the art, I drew upon my heritage growing up in the American Southwest. My parents were avid collectors of American Western art and, in addition to the Art in Embassies' works, you will see many pieces from my collection. The exhibition

represents the full spectrum of life in the American Southwest—from the ancient Native Americans to the northern Europeans bringing farming and cattle ranching to the melding of Spanish and native cultures that brought the richness of the Hispanic influence to the region. And always these images are set against the backdrop of the amazing western landscape.

This exhibition is a tribute to the American artists who have produced these masterpieces with skill and talent, many of whom have generously loaned their works to us and our visitors to enjoy and appreciate.

I would like to thank the staff at the Art in Embassies program in Washington, D.C., for their hard work, dedication, and guidance in helping assemble this exhibition. I commend their tireless efforts to promote the appreciation of American art overseas.

### **G. Kathleen Hill**

Ambassador of the United States of America  
to the Republic of Malta

*Valletta  
April 2018*

## CHRISTIAN BARTHELMESS

(1854-1906)

In 1866, through an act of Congress, legislation was adopted to create six all African-American Army units. The units were identified as the 9th and 10th cavalry and the 38th, 39th, 40th, and 41st infantry regiments. The four infantry regiments were later reorganized to form the 24th and 25th infantry regiments. These men represented the first Black professional soldiers in a peacetime army. The recruits came from varied backgrounds including former slaves and veterans from service in the Civil War. The nickname “Buffalo Soldiers” came from the Plains Indians—although several different theories exist about what “Buffalo Soldiers” refers to. One is that the nickname was given out of respect and the fierce fighting ability of the 10th cavalry. Whatever the reason, Buffalo Soldiers became a moniker for all African-American soldiers, who considered the name high praise.

The duties of the 25th infantry included exploring and mapping the Southwest and establishing frontier outposts for future towns. They established and operated a lumber camp and sawmill, managed food and supply route; built roads, buildings, and telegraph lines; and carried out scouting functions.

[www.buffalosoldiermuseum.com](http://www.buffalosoldiermuseum.com)



**Buffalo Soldiers of the 25th Infantry, 1890**

Digital print of silver gelatin cabinet card mount photograph, 11  $\frac{3}{8}$  x 14  $\frac{3}{8}$  in. (28,9 x 36,5 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.;

Library of Congress, The Gladstone Collection From the African American Odyssey Collection  
(Library of Congress, Digital ID cph 3g06161 )

## KARL BODMER (1809-1893)

Karl Bodmer was born in Switzerland and studied art in Paris. In 1832 he was asked to be the artist for the German Prince Maximilian's expedition across the American West. By 1833, the company had reached St. Louis where they came under the protection of John Jacob Astor's Fur Company and traveled up the Missouri River by steamboat. Bodmer recorded events occurring in the present states of Nebraska, South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, and Wyoming. He sketched Native Americans and their surroundings at every stop, making detailed illustrations of the life, habits, and customs.

While in Nebraska during the spring of 1834 the steamboat stopped near present day Bellevue for trading. The Prince and Bodmer took this opportunity to observe the Omaha Indians and their cattle, and Bodmer created several paintings of the encounter. He was known for his careful observation and attention to detail. Unlike some other artists in the American West he tried not to romanticize his subjects but show them as they were. In 1834 Bodmer returned to Barbizon, France, where he finished eighty-one paintings to illustrate his journal of the trip. He also completed many of the plates used for the prints that he had executed from these works. He exhibited at the Paris Salon beginning in 1836 and became known for his forest landscapes and depictions of birds and mammals.

<http://monet.unk.edu/mona/artexplr/bodmer/bodmer.html>





**Great Plains Indian, c. 1840**

Watercolor on wove paper,  
16 ¼ x 13 in. (41,3 x 33 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies;  
Donation of Mr. and Mrs. Albert Small,  
Bethesda, Maryland, to the Foundation  
of Art and Preservation in Embassies,  
Washington, D.C.

## JOSEPH K. DIXON (1856-1926)

Joseph K. Dixon was an American documentary photographer born in New York to English immigrant parents. He worked as a pastor in several states before becoming a lecturer for a photographic company in 1904 in the United States, England, and Germany.

From 1908 to 1913, Rodman Wanamaker sponsored a series of *Expeditions to the American Indian* headed by Dixon. He and the Wanamakers became actively involved in the Native American policy reform movement. Wanamaker was particularly concerned that the life and culture of the “vanishing race” would be lost to modernity and relegated to reservation life. To further his cause and to publicize the plight of Native Americans, Wanamaker funded the expeditions to document Native American life and culture through photography, film, and sound recordings.

The Wanamaker Collection of the Mathers Museum of World Cultures, Indiana University Bloomington, consists of over 8,000 photographs of Native Americans made between 1908 and 1923, predominantly by Dixon. The individuals photographed represent over 150 tribes.

[www.davidcookgalleries.com](http://www.davidcookgalleries.com)

<http://dlib.indiana.edu/omeka/mathers/collections/show/15>



**Bone Titta, San Carlos Apache Tribe, 1913**

Archival pigment copy print from original photograph  
38 x 30 in. (96,5 x 76,2 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.;  
Courtesy of the Mathers Museum of World Cultures,  
Indiana University, Bloomington

**Hoska Yilth Na Ga, 1913**

Archival pigment copy print from original  
photograph, 38 x 30 in. (96,5 x 76,2 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.;  
Courtesy of the Mathers Museum of World Cultures,  
Indiana University, Bloomington



## PHIL EPP (1946)

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 (he 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 not only into a collection of works by artists from his area of the country, but also into an influence on 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 tag. 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. He simply states: "I'm a rural artist." For him, the true question for any art remains: Is it any good?



**Running Horses**, undated  
Acrylic on board, 40 x 40 in. (101,6 x 101,6 cm). Courtesy of the artist, Newton, Kansas

## DOUGLAS KEATS (1948)

“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.”

**Las 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 Hueros, New Mexico, 1984**

Photograph, 12 x 15 in. (30,5 x 38,1 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Ernesto Mayans Gallery, Santa Fe, New Mexico

## DOUGLAS KEATS



**Los Lentes, 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 Lentes, 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

## SUSAN TEMPLE NEUMANN

(1953)

After graduating with a fine arts degree from the University of Texas at Arlington, Susan Temple Neumann owned and operated a graphic design business for thirty years. Realizing her dream of painting full-time has been pivotal in creating her love of traveling and painting the West and Southwest. "Plein air painting has forced me to hone my skills and make quick decisions when dealing with the rapidly changing light and elements... There is no better teacher than direct observation and nature itself."

Working in oils, Neumann's art is born from a desire to capture the emotion or mood of a particular scene. Whether it be a figurative piece or a landscape, her objective is to engage the viewer and make an emotional connection. The spirit of the Southwest and its history led Neumann to passion for painting western art. A life-long fascination with Native Americans, cowboys, horses, wildlife, and the Western genre has fueled her art these past several years and her work is displayed nationally and internationally.

<https://susantempleneumannfineart.com/about>



**Three Compadres, 2017**  
Oil on canvas, 18 x 24 in. (45,7 x 61 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist, Rowlett, Texas

## ROBERT PUMMILL

(1936)

Robert Pummill, from Kerrville, Texas, has painted western scenes for over 40 years. “To create a visual storyline you have to have a fairly vivid imagination and be able to put yourself in the scene.” Pummill has put that skill to use researching, envisioning, and depicting experiences that people associate with the “Old West” such as that of a bone-tired stagecoach driver whose stage is slogging through rim-deep mud after days of rain.

With the Guadalupe River nearby, his hometown of Kerrville was once a jumping off point for trail herds bound north for Dodge City, Kansas. His surroundings rich with inspiration, Pummill has said, “I’m always looking for new stories and new ways to tell them. You know, you’ve got all the different landscapes in the West, from deserts to snowy mountain ranges. There must be a million ways to tell these stories. It never gets boring or dull.”

Pummill grew up in rural Ohio and took correspondence courses from the Famous Artists School, with instruction from Normal Rockwell, Harold Von Schmidt, and others. The lessons gave him what he needed to continue improving his drawing and painting skills. After serving nine years in the U.S. Air Force, he studied at the Art Center School of Design in Los Angeles, California, and later worked as an illustrator for Vought Aeronautics in Dallas, Texas. Eventually, Pummill and his wife settled in Kerrville where he continues to paint full time.

[www.southwestart.com/articles-interviews/featured-artists/imagining\\_the\\_past](http://www.southwestart.com/articles-interviews/featured-artists/imagining_the_past)



**Before Sundown**, undated  
Lithograph, 31 x 38  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. (78,7 x 98,4 cm)  
Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of Robert Pummill

## MINNIE WABANIMKEE (1979)

“Photographs are woven through all of life, evoking memories of our past. Photography is my greatest joy, preserving the history of the Anishnaabek (first people).”

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. Her work is included in the Michigan State University Museum exhibition and publication *Anishnaabek: Artists of Little Traverse Bay*.

– Michigan State University Museum, East Lansing, Michigan, 1997



**Fancy Shawl Dancer, 1996**

Color photograph, 23 x 14 7/8 in. (58,4 x 37,8 cm)

Courtesy of Michigan State University Museum, Michigan Traditional Arts Program

## MINNIE WABANIMKEE



**Fancy Shawl Dancer, 1996**  
Color photograph, 14 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 23 in. (37,8 x 58,4 cm)  
Courtesy of Michigan State University Museum,  
Michigan Traditional Arts Program





**Men's Traditional Dancer Donnie Dowd, 1995**  
Color photograph, 23 x 14 7/8 in. (58,4 x 37,8 cm)  
Courtesy of Michigan State University Museum,  
Michigan Traditional Arts Program



**Men's Fancy Dancer Frank Buswa, 1996**  
Color photograph, 23 x 14 7/8 in. (58,4 x 37,8 cm)  
Courtesy of Michigan State University Museum,  
Michigan Traditional Arts Program

## CURTIS WADE (1979)

Curtis Wade, known for his dynamic, vivid oil paintings, depicts the wild spaces, scenic vistas, and the unique adobe architecture of the American Southwest. Wade is primarily a plein air painter and believes that the best way to capture the feel of a place is to experience it while painting. He has hiked with his easel and canvases into countless arroyos, canyons, mesas, and lookouts in pursuit of inspiration for his work. Wade's paintings always have dynamic compositions, are boldly hued and painted with confident (sometimes impasto) brushwork. His work is created in a style that is uniquely his own and time exemplifies the spirit of the American Southwest.

Wade was born into a family of artists and art dealers in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He is primarily self-taught, however his grandmother, Juan Dell, a highly regarded western bronze sculptor known as the "First Lady of Western Bronze," left an indelible mark on his artistic sensibilities.



**Chimayo**, undated

Oil on canvas, 24 x 36 in. (61 x 91,4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Manitou Gallery, 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."

Fine art photographer Bret Webster has a passion for capturing the desert in fresh and beautiful ways inspired, in part, by his background in science. His work focuses on the landscapes and skies of the Colorado Plateau and national parks of the American West, though he has traveled the world documenting everything he sees, from Japan to Oman. Webster's photographs have been recognized in a number of publications, including *National Geographic* magazine.



**Arches Symmetry**, undated  
Archival photograph, 30 x 62 in. (76,2 x 157,5 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist, Park City, Utah



**The Great Gallery**, undated  
Archival photograph, 30 x 40 in. (76,2 x 101,6 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist, Park City, Utah

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