



ART IN EMBASSIES EXHIBITION UNITED STATES EMBASSY MAJURO

J u d i B e t t s **Hull**, undated

Watercolor, 16 5/8 x 24 1/2 in. (42,2 x 62,2 cm)

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

Gift of Marvin Breckinridge Patterson

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 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."

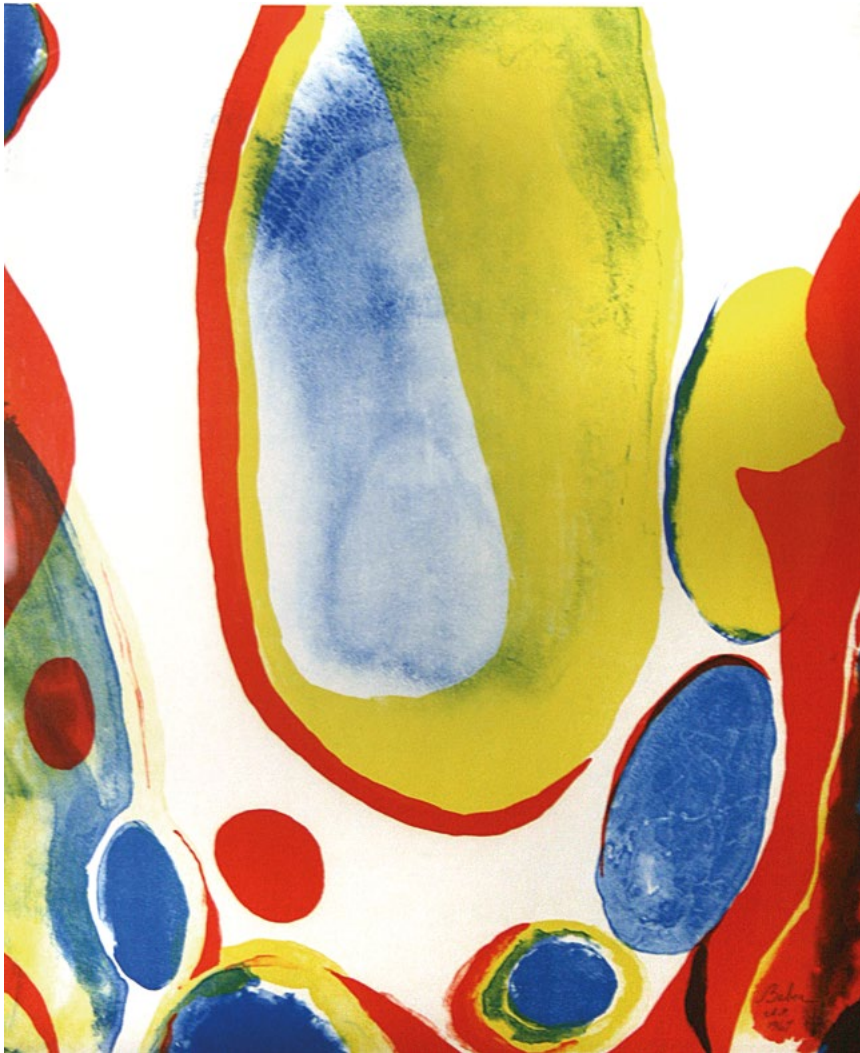
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A L I C E B A B E R

(1 9 2 8 — 1 9 8 2)

Composed of undulating, organic shapes, Alice Baber's abstract paintings and watercolors vibrate with color. To achieve this luminous effect, she applied transparent layers of diluted oil paint to her primed canvases, a time-consuming process that often required further thinning with a turpentine-soaked rag.¹ While Baber used a variety of abstract forms in her work, she preferred elongated circles, as she believed they imparted the greatest sense of motion across the composition.²

Baber began painting at the age of eight, later studying art at Indiana University in Bloomington. She also traveled worldwide, studying at the École des Beaux-Arts in Fontainebleau, France, and lived in Paris throughout the late 1950s and 1960s. From 1976 to 1978, Baber exhibited and lectured in thirteen Latin American countries under the auspices of the State Department.³ An active feminist, Baber was instrumental in organizing exhibitions of women artists when women were still struggling to gain prominence in the international art world. Baber's paintings are in museum collections throughout the world, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.; and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Sun Circuit (D), 1968

Color lithograph

29 x 24 ½ in. (73,7 x 62,2 cm)

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

Gift of the Estate of Alice Baber

JUDI BETTS

(born 1936)

Judi Betts is a painter, teacher, and author known for her transparent and mid-tone landscape, urban, and marine watercolor paintings. Betts chooses light for the composition of her paintings, diagonal warm and cool washes as the first layer of color, using either liquid resist or paint around lighter parts and white shapes. After the initial wash, she applies several glazes around the corners, then bursts of color in the whiter areas. Having dedicated her life to art, she considers herself “a painter who teaches, not a teacher who paints.”⁴

Betts received her Bachelor of Arts degree in metal and jewelry design from Indiana University, Bloomington, and a Master of Arts degree in education from Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge. She has been an art instructor for over fifty-seven years, conducting more than 430 workshops worldwide. The artist is a signature member of the American and National Watercolor Societies and a member of the National and Salmagundi Art Clubs—all in New York. She won over 100 awards throughout her art career, and her works have been featured at the National Taiwan Arts Education Center, Taipei; Walt Disney’s Epcot Center, Orlando, Florida; and the Butler Institute of American Art, Youngstown, Ohio.



Hull, undated. Watercolor, 16 5/8 x 24 1/2 in. (42,2 x 62,2 cm)
Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of Marvin Breckinridge Patterson

E A R L B I S S

(1 9 4 7 - 1 9 9 8)

An enrolled member of the Crow Nation, the Apsáalooke, Earl Biss found inspiration for his work in tribal legends and the landscapes of the American Southwest.⁵ His paintings, executed in a high-keyed palette and loose brushwork, often featured horsemen from the Indigenous peoples of the Great Plains among the Rocky Mountains and other sweeping settings. Biss saw himself as a conduit for spiritual energy, honing a quick, improvisatory method to free his mind of preconceived notions and ideas.⁶ His dynamic, rhythmic compositions challenged conventional depictions of Native Americans as static remnants of the past.

Biss was born in Renton, Washington, and raised by his grandmother on the Crow Reservation in southern Montana. He studied at the Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in the 1960s. At IAIA, he formed a group of like-minded young artists who sought to express a strong Native American point of view through the ideas and methods of contemporary art.⁷ He completed his studies at the San Francisco Art Institute and later studied art in France and the Netherlands. His work has been acquired by the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, D.C.; the Thomas Gilcrease Institute of American History and Art, Tulsa, Oklahoma; and the Smithsonian Buffalo Bill Center of the West, Cody, Wyoming.

Kiowas in Crow Country, undated
Serigraph, 39 ½ x 29 in. (100,3 x 73,7 cm)
Courtesy of Wilma and Stuart Bernstein,
Washington, D.C., and Suellen and
Melvyn J. Estrin, Bethesda, Maryland



FRANÇOISE GILOT

(born 1921)

Although widely known as the romantic partner and muse of Pablo Picasso, Françoise Gilot was an established artist when she met the then-sixty-one-year-old Cubist pioneer in 1943. Gilot has insisted that, despite their decade-long relationship, she always maintained her artistic independence: “In art subjectivity is everything; I accepted what [he] did, but that did not mean I wanted to do the same.”⁸ Throughout her career, Gilot has worked with both the abstract and figurative, developing a distinct language of form that reveals an enduring preoccupation with both the personal and universal forces of nature, time, space, and mythology.⁹ A self-defined “color painter,” Gilot liberally uses vibrant hues to evoke emotion in her works.¹⁰

Gilot studied painting at the Académie Julian and the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. In 1964, she penned a memoir, *Life With Picasso*, providing both an unsparing account of the artist’s relationship and an intimate report of the avant garde in Paris during and after the German occupation.¹¹ Over a million copies were sold, and the book was reissued in 2016. In 2010, she was made Officier de la Légion d’Honneur, the highest honor awarded in the arts by the French government. Her work can be found in such public collections as the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Musée d’Art Moderne, Paris; and the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington, D.C.



Birds in the Forest, 1974

Lithograph, 30 ¼ x 22 ¾ in.

(76,8 x 57,8 cm). Collection of Art
in Embassies, Washington, D.C.;

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Philip Berman

ALI LAUNER

(born 1971)

*"[T]he greatest influence on my work is Mother Nature herself: lizard skins; the colors, textures, and shapes of rocks; the bold Southwest sky—and the bones of desert animals."*¹²

Ali Launer affixes stones, silver, and glass seed beads to the skulls of animals (or, in the case, a foam form), thus creating elaborate, geometric designs. Most of the forms she adorns are emblematic of the American Southwest region where she lives, such as the bison, bull, and ram. She also uses rare African impala, oryx, and kudu skulls because of their distinct shape and elegance.¹³

Launer began working with beads at the age of twelve in her home state of New York. She relocated to Boston to attend Newbury College and study interior design, which inspired a passion for color and the use of texture in her beadwork. Her work has been exhibited across the Southwest and at the Amsterdam Whitney Gallery in New York, and she has been featured in *Vogue*, *In Style*, and *Mountain Living* magazines.



Barbary Lion, 2019

Foam lion head, hand-beaded centerpieces, faceted turquoise tones, faceted lapis stones, faceted pink dyed quartz stones, faceted apatite stones, gold mesh fabric, sterling silver beads, glass seed beads, and blue leather, 12 x 6 x 10 in. (30, 5 x 15,2 x 25,4 cm)
Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.

CAMILLE PATHA

(born 1938)

Throughout her six-decade career, Camille Patha has always gravitated toward intense, eye-catching color. In the 1960s, she began painting in the gestural, nonrepresentational style popularized by abstract expressionists. However, she has remained independent of any particular artistic school, oscillating between the figurative and the abstract,¹⁴ and experimenting with different themes and techniques. Patha emphasizes the role of emotional intimacy in her work, stating that each piece is a “focus of light through [her] inner persona.”¹⁵

Seattle-born Patha received both a Bachelor of Arts degree and Master of Fine Arts degree from the University of Washington. She has been the subject of two retrospectives in Washington, at the Bellevue Art Museum (1979) and the Tacoma Art Museum (2017). She has exhibited extensively throughout the Pacific Northwest and Canada.

Juicier the Berry, 2011. Oil on board, 24 × 48 in. (61 × 121,9 cm)
Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of the artist, Normandy Park, Washington



SYNTHIA SAINT JAMES

(born 1949)

Synthia Saint James is a self-taught artist known for her paintings and prints that honor diverse racial and ethnic identities, particularly those of the African diaspora. Her figures are composed of simplified, geometric forms and bright, highly saturated colors. Inspired by the vibrant marketplaces of Martinique, Saint James challenged herself to paint groups of people without facial features, emphasizing posture and clothing styles to identify their cultural heritage.¹⁶ Saint James also credits her family for her creative ambition, explaining, “I believe a lot of my color and themes comes from my DNA.”¹⁷

Born in Los Angeles, Saint James sold her first painting at the age of twenty. Since then, her work has been featured on more than fifty book covers, including those by celebrated authors Alice Walker and Terry McMillan. Since 1990, Saint James has completed commissions for major corporations, nonprofit organizations, 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 also commissioned the artist to create the first Kwanzaa Stamp, released in 1997.

Legacy, undated
Serigraph, 32 5/8 x 26 in. (82,2 x 66 cm)
Collection of Art in Embassies,
Washington, D.C.; Gift of the artist



- ¹ Sylvia Moore, "Alice Baber," *Woman's Art Journal*, Spring-Summer 1982, 42.
- ² "Oral history interview with Alice Baber, 1973 May 24," Archives of American Art, accessed April 17, 2021, <https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/interviews/oral-history-interview-alice-baber-12443#transcript>.
- ³ "Alice Baber, 54, Artist Of Lyrical Abstractions," *The New York Times*, October 7, 1982, <https://www.nytimes.com/1982/10/07/obituaries/alice-baber-54-artist-of-lyrical-abstractions.html>.
- ⁴ "Internationally Renowned Watercolor Artist Leads Workshops at LSU School of Interior Design," LSU College of Art + Design, March 28, 2016, <https://design.lsu.edu/internationally-renowned-watercolor-artist-leads-workshops-lsu-school-interior-design/>.
- ⁵ "Earl Biss Master Oil Painter (1947-1998)," Earl Biss, accessed May 5, 2021, <https://www.earlbiss.com/bio>.
- ⁶ Andrew Tavers, "New biography and retrospective exhibition celebrate artist Earl Biss," *The Aspen Times*, January 10, 2019, <https://www.aspentimes.com/entertainment/new-biography-and-retrospective-exhibition-celebrate-artist-earl-biss/>.
- ⁷ Susannah Gardiner, "How T.C. Cannon and His Contemporaries Changed Native American Art," *Smithsonian Magazine*, April 17, 2019, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/how-tc-cannon-and-his-contemporaries-changed-native-american-art-180971969/>.
- ⁸ Emma Brockes, "It was not a sentimental love': Françoise Gilot on her years with Picasso," *The Guardian*, June 10, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2016/jun/10/francoise-gilot-artist-love-picasso>.
- ⁹ "Françoise Gilot Biography," Sotheby's, <https://www.sothebys.com/en/artists/francoise-gilot>.
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- ¹¹ Wendy Goodman, "Life With Françoise Gilot," *Curbed*, October 9, 2020, <https://www.curbed.com/2020/10/inside-artist-francoise-gilots-apartment-and-art-studio.html>.
- ¹² Susan Viebrock, "Slate Gray Gallery," *Telluride Inside*, December 29, 2019, <https://www.tellurideinside.com/2019/12/slate-gray-gallery-launer-schilling-opening-with-art-walk-1-2-20.html>.
- ¹³ "About," Ali Launer, accessed May 6, 2021, <https://www.alilauner.com/about.php>.
- ¹⁴ "A Punch of Color: Fifty Years of Painting by Camille Patha," University of Washington Press, accessed May 5, 2021, <https://uwapress.uw.edu/book/9780924335402/a-punch-of-color/>.
- ¹⁵ Camille Patha, "Bio," accessed May 5, 2021, <https://www.camillepatha.com/bio/>.
- ¹⁶ "Meet the Artist: Synthia Saint James," Framebridge, accessed May 5, 2021, <https://www.framebridge.com/blog/meet-the-artist-synthia-saint-james>.
- ¹⁷ Melanie Eversley, "Synthia Saint James Talks Her Love of Color and Healing Through Art," NBC News, October 29, 2017, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/nbcblk/synthia-saint-james-talks-her-love-color-healing-through-art-n815026>.

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