

ART IN
EMBASSIES
EXHIBITION
U.S. MISSION
TO THE OSCE

KATHLEEN MIGLIORE-NEWTON

Conversation, 2018

Oil on canvas, 40 x 30 in. (101,6 x 76,2 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Brooklyn, New York

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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 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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WELCOME

Great American poet Maya Angelou once said “in diversity, there is beauty, and there is strength.” Angelou’s words are certainly true of the United States, a country whose unofficial motto since independence has been E Pluribus Unum – out of many, one. For me, this is what America represents: a pluralistic, dynamic, and innovative place where people unite in search of opportunities for self-realization and self-expression. The artworks selected for this exhibition, so ably and professionally curated by Imtiaz Hafiz, reflect the diversity, beauty, and strength of America. The artists on display come from a variety of backgrounds, and their subjects also reflect the rich tapestry of modern American life, drawing inspiration from the African American, Native American, Latinx, and LGBTQ communities.

Art is personal, and the works in this exhibition spoke to me in a direct, personal way. The Yosemite and Monument Valley landscapes showcase two of my favorite places on my native West Coast. These works are juxtaposed with the urban dynamism and excitement of New York and Baltimore, two of my favorite cities on the East Coast. I am deeply grateful to the artists and to Art in Embassies for making this exhibition and catalog possible. I hope you enjoy them as much as I do.

Ambassador Michael Carpenter

*Vienna, Austria
November 2022*

JACK BALAS (born 1955)

Jack Balas is a figurative artist whose paintings of athletic young men are annotated and layered with numbers, illustrations, and personal anecdotes.¹ For example, in *THE WALL (LA PARED)*, the number “1588” on the boxer’s arm refers to Balas’s sequential artwork numbering system.² The text panel below recounts an incident when in which Balas crossed the United States/Mexico border into Nogales, then reentered the United States without a passport, an experience predicated on the artist’s White privilege.³ Thus, while certain details Balas inserts are often cryptic and metaphorical, his paintings also allude to current social and political themes.

Balas received Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Fine Arts degrees from Northern Illinois University, DeKalb. A 1995 recipient of an Individual Fellowship in painting from the National Endowment for the Arts, Balas is now represented in the permanent collections of the Brooklyn Museum, New York; the Denver Art Museum; the Tucson Museum of Art, Arizona; the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, Iowa; and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art.⁴

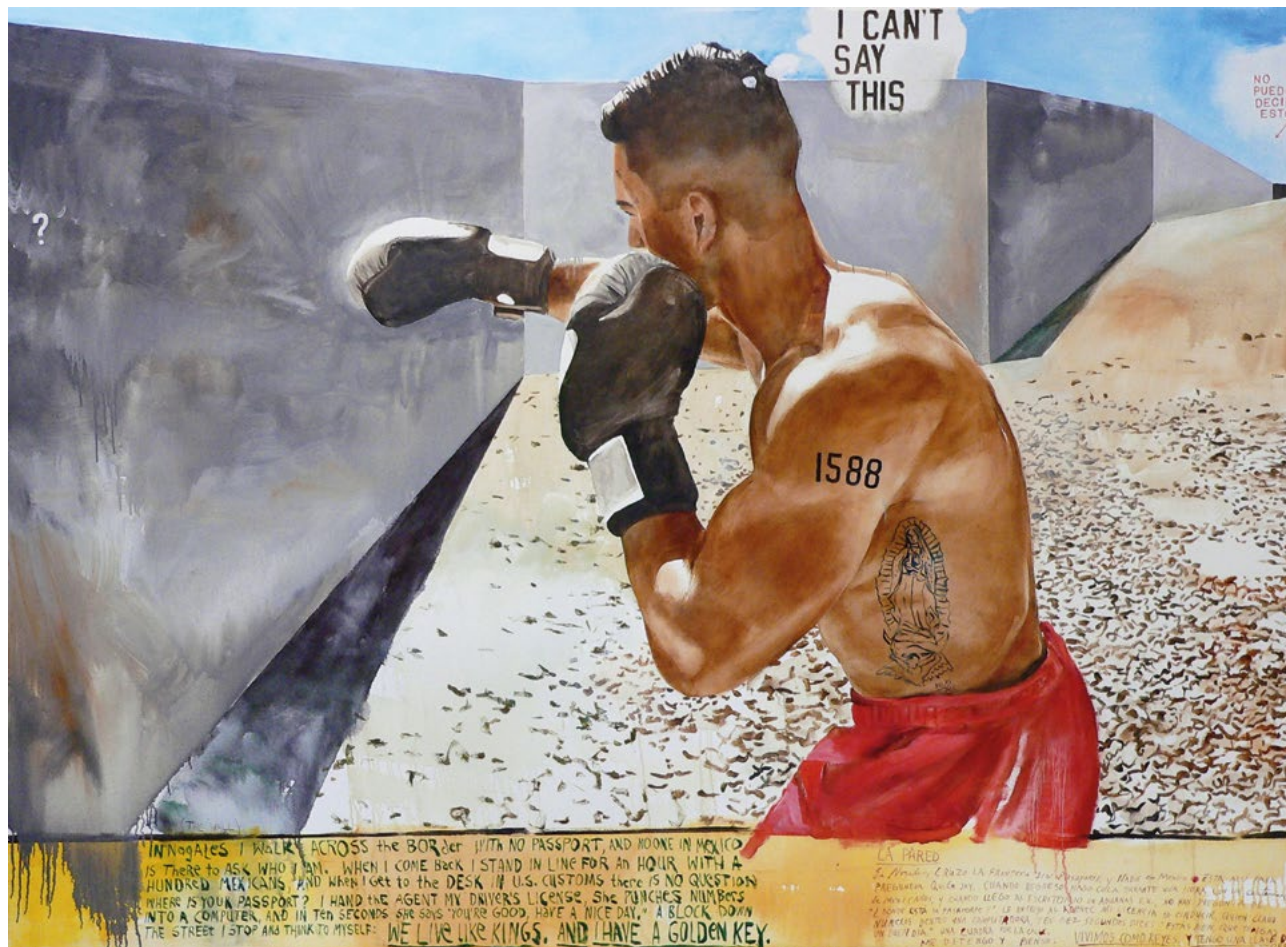


Figure 1: THE WALL (LA PARED), NOGALES (NO PUEDO DECIR ESTO) (#1588), 2018
Oil, enamel, and ink on canvas, 64 x 88 in. (162,6 x 223,5 cm). Courtesy of the artist and ClampArt, New York, New York

MARCIA BURTT (born 1941)

For over forty years, Marcia Burtt has specialized in painting light-filled landscapes outdoors. Describing her *plein air* practice, Burtt explains, “Standing in nature...is the high point of any outdoor painting experience. Looking itself becomes a kind of communion that isn’t about making a product but rather about trying to join with and describe the visible world.”⁵ Notably, Burtt prefers acrylics to oils, as their thinness and quick drying time allow her to continually assess and rework her canvas as she paints.⁶ While she primarily focuses on sunny coastal scenes of California, *Snow Blanket*, *Yosemite Falls* depicts a close-up view of the National Park’s rocky waterfall in winter.

Burtt received a bachelor’s degree from the University of California at Berkeley and a master’s degree from the University of Montana, Missoula. She is a member of several artist conservation groups, including the Southern California Artists Painting for the Environment, a group that helps raise money for non-profit environmental organizations.⁷ Her works are in the collections of the Haggin Museum, Stockton, California; the University of Montana, Missoula; and the Yosemite Museum, Yosemite Valley, California.⁸



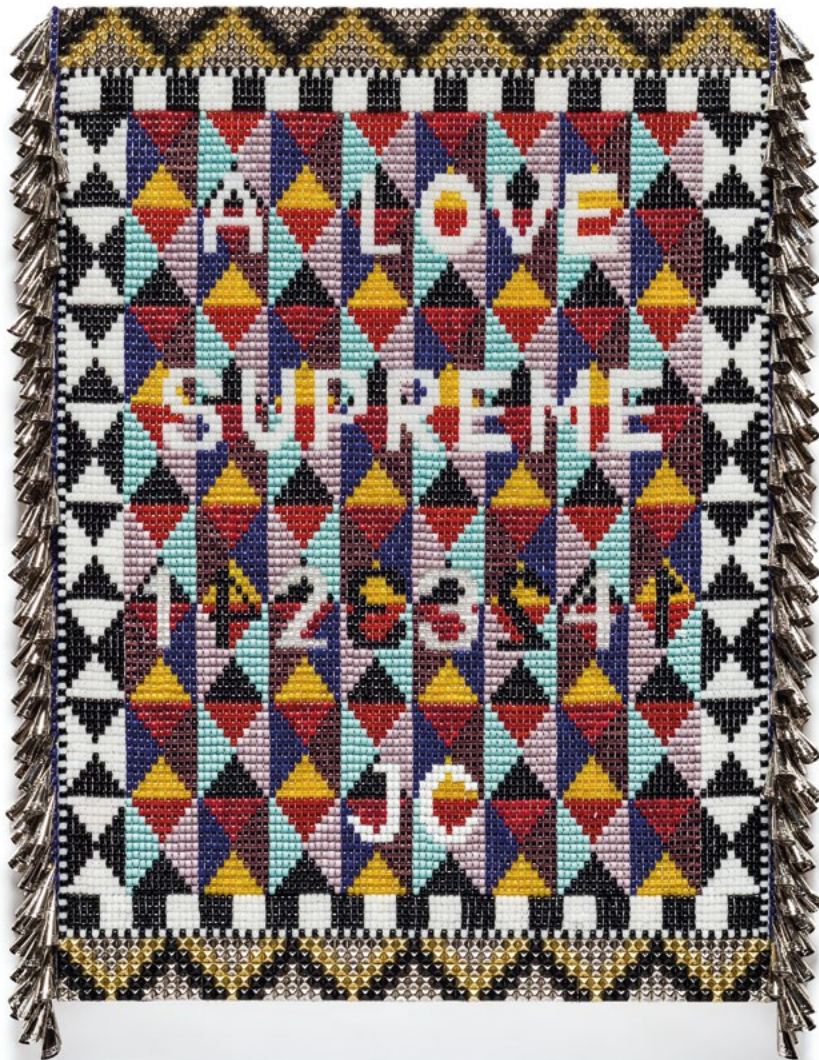
Figure 2: **Snow Blanket, Yosemite Falls, 2001**
Acrylic on canvas, 60 x 40 in. (152,4 x 101,6 cm)
Courtesy of David Fox and Kathy Wosika,
Fresno, California

JEFFREY GIBSON (born 1972)

In his ever-evolving practice, multidisciplinary artist Jeffrey Gibson challenges established conceptions of Native American art and identity, melding facets of popular culture, music, queer iconography, and Western contemporary art with indigenous materials and symbolism.⁹ This combination of seemingly disparate aesthetic and thematic elements in Gibson's art mirrors his personal history. Of Choctaw and Cherokee heritage, Gibson has lived in numerous cities around the world, constantly observing and absorbing different forms of cultural expression. This creative fusion is vividly apparent in *A LOVE SUPREME*. Adorned with metal jingles, the intricately beaded panel recalls Native American powwow regalia,¹⁰ while the title pays homage to John Coltrane's jazz album.

Gibson received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a master's degree from the Royal College of Art, London. He is the recipient of numerous grants and awards, including the MacArthur Fellowship in 2019. His work can be found in the collections of such institutions as the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas; the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the High Museum of Art, Atlanta; and the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C.¹¹

Figure 4:
A LOVE SUPREME, 2017
*Glass beads, artificial sinew,
metal studs, tin jingles, and
acrylic felt over wood panel,
40 x 30 in. (101,6 x 76,2 cm)*
*Collection of Julie and
Bennett Roberts: Courtesy of
the artist and Roberts Projects,
Los Angeles, California*



ERIN HANSON (born 1981)

After years of experimenting with different styles and mediums, Erin Hanson was inspired to dedicate herself solely to landscape painting when she began rock climbing at Red Rock Canyon, Las Vegas.¹² Hanson regularly explores the outdoors for inspiration, backpacking and hiking through areas such as the Colorado Plateau; Zion National Park, Utah; and Canyon de Chelly National Monument, Arizona. For the past decade, she has honed a technique she calls “open impressionism,” a method that involves applying thick paint strokes without layering, emphasizing brilliant color and texture.¹³ *Pale Horizon* captures the dark red earth and dramatic buttes of Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park, Arizona, against a sunset sky.¹⁴

Hanson attended the University of California, Berkeley, where she obtained an undergraduate degree in bioengineering. Her works are in the collections of the Hilbert Museum of California Art, Orange; the Mattatuck Museum, Waterbury, Connecticut; the City of St. George Art Museum, Utah; and the La Salle University Art Museum, Philadelphia.¹⁵



Figure 5:
Pale Horizon, 2012
Oil on canvas
40 x 30 in. (101,6 x 76,2 cm)
Courtesy of the artist,
McMinnville, Oregon

GRACE HARTIGAN (1922–2008)

Often labeled a second-generation abstract expressionist, Grace Hartigan was a painter whose nuanced and diverse oeuvre defies easy categorization. Born in Newark, New Jersey, Hartigan moved to New York City after World War II, where she formed alliances with such established artists as Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning. She quickly gained critical success, but never adopted a signature style, often alternating between gestural abstraction and figural representation.¹⁶ In 1960, Hartigan moved to Baltimore with her husband, effectively exiting the New York art scene for the rest of her career. However, she continued to paint consistently, drawing inspiration from everyday objects, art historical references, and popular culture.¹⁷ For example, the brightly colored *Baltimore Gown Shop* illustrates the artist's longtime affinity for window displays.¹⁸ Executed in heavy, sinuous lines, the crowded composition of overlapping, garishly dressed mannequins embodies what Hartigan deemed, as her preferred subject matter, the "vulgar and the vital in American life."¹⁹

Hartigan was the only woman artist represented in the Museum of Modern Art's (MoMA), New York, seminal exhibitions *12 Americans* (1956) and *The New American Painting*, which toured Europe in 1958-1959.²⁰ After moving to Baltimore, she served as a teacher at and director of the Hoffberger Graduate School of Painting, Maryland Institute College of Art, until her death. Her works are in such collections as the MoMA, the Guggenheim Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Metropolitan Museum, all in New York, as well as the Art Institute of Chicago.



Figure 6: **Baltimore Gown Shop**, 1976

Oil on canvas, 79 x 92 in. (200,7 x 233,7 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of anonymous donor

KATHLEEN MIGLIORE-NEWTON (born 1942)

Kathleen Migliore-Newton is a painter whose work celebrates the humanity found in New York City. “Living in New York City, I am attracted to the faces and movement of its occupants as I walk the streets of this vibrant urban environment,” she says.²¹ Using candid photographs of people on the street as source material, Migliore-Newton minimizes contextual details to focus on the expressions, features, and gestures of her subjects.²²

Migliore-Newton received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in painting and printmaking from Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York. She has exhibited her work widely across the New York metropolitan region.



Figure 7: **Conversation**, 2018
Oil on canvas, 40 x 30 in. (101,6 x 76,2 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Brooklyn, New York



Figure 8: **Summer in the City**, 2002
Oil on linen, 56 x 44 in. (142,2 x 111,8 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Brooklyn, New York

ANDY WARHOL (1928–1987)

Growing up in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Andy Warhol took free art classes at what is now the Carnegie Museum of Art. Hollywood movies enraptured him as well—he received his first camera when he was nine years old and developed the pictures himself in his basement.

Warhol went on to earn a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Carnegie Institute of Technology. Soon after graduating, Warhol moved to New York City to pursue a career as a commercial artist. Debuting in *Glamour* magazine, his illustrations became some of the most successful of the 1950s, with a whimsical style that belied their frequent sources: traced photographs and imagery.

Fascinated by consumer culture, the media, and fame, Warhol himself became one of the most important artists of the twentieth century, creating the prototype of the artist as a social celebrity, successful business person, and mass producer. He derived his subject matter from popular culture and established himself as a prime mover in the pop art movement with his painting series Campbell's Soup Cans.. Using cultural icons such as Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, Warhol celebrated the transience of taste and fame.



Figure 9: **After the Party**, 1979
Silkscreen, 28 ½ x 37 ¼ in. (72,4 x 94,6 cm)
Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of Bob Colacello

KEHINDE WILEY (born 1977)

Kehinde Wiley is a painter best known for his visually sumptuous, sensitive depictions of contemporary Black and Brown people. Using the pictorial language of classical portraiture, Wiley reframes a genre historically reserved for elite, White subjects, thereby subverting traditional views of power and reimagining long-held conventions. While many of Wiley's paintings are monumental in scale, *Romaine II* is a comparably small study the artist completed after establishing a studio in Beijing.²³ Like other works from this period, Wiley presents a synthesis of cultural identities, portraying the young African American sitter dressed in his own clothing against a web of decorative, floral motifs derived from Chinese porcelain and textiles patterns.²⁴

Wiley holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from San Francisco Art Institute and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. In 2018, former U.S. President Barack Obama selected Wiley as the first African American artist to paint an official U.S. Presidential portrait for the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, Washington D.C. His works are in the collections of such institutions as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Brooklyn Museum, New York; the Detroit Institute of Arts; the Milwaukee Art Museum; and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.²⁵



Figure 10: **Romaine II (Study)**, 2006
Oil on paper, 31 x 21 ½ in. (78,7 x 54,6 cm)
Collection of Julie and Bennett Roberts:
Courtesy of the artist and Roberts Projects,
Los Angeles, California

ENDNOTES

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