



Art in Embassies

U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

Art in Embassies Exhibition: United States Embassy Budapest

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."

www.art.state.gov

Welcome

Exploring the rich and varied art scenes in Budapest has been one of the great pleasures of our time in Hungary. We chose the art you see in the official Residence with the local artistic community in mind. The exhibition is an assemblage of masterworks by a dozen or so artists from across the United States that we hope engages in a conversation with the eloquence and abstraction of so many of today's working Hungarian artists.

Rashid Johnson's *Untitled Large Bruise (Print)* welcomes visitors with its vivid rendering, in layers of deep blue oil, of the torments of the disenfranchised, while Jackie Gendel's painting *Archers*, hanging in the dining room, features rehearsed figures and topographies that call for action. The eyes in Chris Hood's abstract fusions are witness to themes of migration and separation in the works of Luisa Rabbia, Maia Cruz Palileo, and Darren Waterston. In the reception salon, the works of Naotaka Hiro dissemble the natural world into its smallest parts and back again, across from the subtle meditations of Monique Mouton's expansive watercolor. Máté Orr's *Solanum Lycopersicum Caeruleum* incorporates Hungarian art directly into the conversation.

Throughout, the human eye plays a dual role: as a concrete image in many of the works and as a metaphor for perception and introspection throughout the exhibition. We hope the exhibition serves as a mirror of the complex picture of the society in which we all participate—whether we want to or not.

We would like to highlight the tremendous work that Art in Embassies and Embassy Budapest staff have put into this project from organizing to transport and installation. We are pleased that visitors to the United States Ambassador's Residence can experience this impressive exhibition.

Most of all, we thank the amazing artists who lent their work.

Ambassador David Pressman and Mr. Daniel Basila

Budapest, Hungary

February 2024

Artist Biographies

Jackie Gendel (born 1973)

Jackie Gendel paints brightly hued compositions that blur the distinction between figuration and abstraction. The formal complexity of her work stems from her use of serial repetition of form and sequential narrative techniques, methods she derived from her background in creating underground comics. Embracing a fluid approach, Gendel develops “scenes, characters, and situations through deliberate figuration, intuitive mark making, color, and chance procedures.”

Gendel received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Washington University in St. Louis and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. Her work is included in the collection of the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut. She has exhibited extensively throughout the United States and abroad and has received numerous residencies and awards for her work. She is currently an associate professor of painting at the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Archers



Year Created: 2015; Format: Oil on canvas; Dimensions: 70 x 72 in.

Courtesy of the artist, Providence, Rhode Island

Naotaka Hiro (born 1972)

In his multimedia practice that encompasses sculpture, painting, drawing, and film, Naotaka Hiro explores the unknowns and limitations of the human body. Extending this line of inquiry to his creative process, Hiro will frequently restrict his body while working, sometimes wrapping himself in a canvas sheet or coating his body in silicone. For his drawings, such as these untitled works, he lies directly on the paper as he marks it. As Hiro explains, “The artwork is proof of the process, representing my body’s residue, placement, and movement.”

Born in Osaka, Japan, Hiro moved to Los Angeles at age eighteen. He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of California, Los Angeles, and a Master of Fine Arts degree from the California Institute of the Arts, Santa Clarita. His work is in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, California; and the Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minnesota, among others.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Untitled (Median)



Year Completed: 2022; Format: Acrylic, pencil, grease pencil on paper; Dimensions: 45 x 34 3/4 in. Courtesy of the artist and Bortolami, New York

Title of Artwork Displayed: Untitled



Year Completed: 2016; Format: Acrylic, graphite on paper; Dimensions: 45 x 34 3/4 in. Courtesy of the artist and Bortolami, New York

Chris Hood (born 1984)

Deftly blending abstraction and figuration, Chris Hood creates layered, surreal compositions to explore, as he describes, “how a painting can be a site of many modes of viewing.” His works are densely populated with a wide variety of imagery, including cartoons, portals into landscapes, and emojis which fracture and multiply. Hood also experiments with different processes, including painting on the raw canvas’s reverse side so that the paint stains the front in muted veils of color.

Hood holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Georgia State University, Atlanta, and a Master of Fine Arts degree from the San Francisco Art Institute. He has exhibited extensively both within the United States and abroad. He currently works in both Los Angeles and New York.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Sisyphus Smiling



Year Completed: 2022; Format: Alkyd on canvas; Dimensions: 66 × 78 in.
Courtesy of the artist and Lyles & King, New York

Title of Artwork Displayed: Floral Portrait



Year Completed: 2021; Format: Ink on paper; Dimensions: 24 × 18 in.
Courtesy of the artist, Los Angeles, California

Title of Artwork Displayed: Floral Portrait 2



Year Completed: 2021; Format: Monotype on paper, Dimensions: 14 x 11 in.
Courtesy of the artist, Los Angeles, California

Title of Artwork Displayed: Floral Portrait 5



Year Completed: 2021; Format: Monotype on paper, Dimensions: 30 x 24 in.
Courtesy of the artist, Los Angeles, California

Title of Artwork Displayed: Floral Portrait 4



Year Completed: 2021; Format: Monotype on paper, Dimensions: 14 x 11 in.
Courtesy of the artist, Los Angeles, California

Title of Artwork Displayed: Thrumming



Year Completed: 2021; Format: Ink on paper, Dimensions: 36 x 24 in.
Courtesy of the artist, Los Angeles, California

Rashid Johnson (born 1977)

Multimedia artist Rashid Johnson has created a diverse practice that reflects his own subjectivity and broader themes of Black culture, identity, and intellectual life, often incorporating such materials as books by seminal Black authors, shea butter, and African black soap. In the midst of the distress and isolation brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, Johnson returned to his “anxious man” motif, an image he created in 2014 featuring a cartoonish face with gritted teeth and over Dimensionsd eyes. In this print, the repeated faces are partially obscured by crisscrossing, gestural strokes of varying shades of blue, evoking a mottled bruise. Johnson likens bruising to the complex and precarious nature of our current social landscape, a space that occupies both “blunt force trauma and a potential opportunity for healing.”

Johnson received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in photography from Columbia College, Chicago, and studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His first feature-length film, an adaptation of Richard Wright’s *Native Son*, earned him the NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Directing in a Television Movie in 2020. His work is in the collections of such institutions as the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and the Museum of Modern Art, all in New York; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Untitled Large Bruise (Print)



Year Completed: 2022; Format: Silkscreen resist with hand applied pigment;
Dimensions: 60 x 51 1/2 in. Courtesy of the artist, Brooklyn, New York

Monique Mouton (born 1984)

“The thing I find interesting about art in general, painting specifically, is that it’s such a direct and subjective action. Even if you remove yourself from it, it’s still a mark of your intent or idea. It will show signs of my hands, how I moved it around the space, where I painted, where I rubbed it in.”

Monique Mouton is known for her spare, large-scale paintings with soft figuration executed in thin washes of translucent color. Working on irregularly cut sheets of paper, she often amplifies the transitional spaces of her compositions, such as those between the paper and the frame. Mouton completed her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at Emily Carr Institute in Vancouver, Canada, and her Master of Fine Arts degree at the Milton Avery Graduate School at Bard College in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York. Her work is in the collection of the Davis Museum, Wellesley College, Massachusetts.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Secrets



Year Completed: 2017; Format: Watercolor, soft pastel and acrylic on paper;
Dimensions: 72 x 63 x 2 1/2 in. Courtesy of the artist and Bridget Donahue, New York

Máté Orr (born 1985)

A Veszprém, Hungary, native, Máté Orr creates dreamlike compositions that are densely populated by humans and animals. His canvases frequently feature an amalgamation of styles, including hyperrealist figures, flat patterning, and spraypainted details. His work draws

inspiration from diverse sources, such as Hungarian folklore, surrealism, and the Dutch Golden Age still lifes. Orr graduated from the Hungarian University of Fine Arts, Budapest, and his work has been the subject of numerous solo and group exhibitions in his native Hungary as well internationally.

Title of Artwork Displayed: *Solanum Lycopersicum Caeruleum*



Year Completed: 2022; Format: Oil and acrylic on wood; Dimensions: 6 1/2 × 9 7/16 in.
 Courtesy of Várfok Gallery, Budapest, Hungary

Maia Cruz Palileo (born 1979)

Maia Cruz Palileo's paintings, installations, sculptures, and drawings navigate themes of migration and the permeable concept of home. Influenced by the oral history of their family's arrival in the United States from the Philippines, as well as the colonial relationship between the two countries, Palileo infuses these narratives using memory and imagination. "Sourcing subject matter through various photographic archives, their paintings recontextualize the stories, portraits, and images to resuscitate these figures from the exploitative gaze of the ethnographic image."

Palileo received a Master of Fine Arts degree in sculpture from Brooklyn College, New York, and a Bachelor of Art degree in studio art from Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts. Their work is in the collections of the San Jose Museum of Art, California; the Nasher Museum of Art at Duke University, Durham, North Carolina; the Speed Museum, Louisville, Kentucky; and the Fredriksen Collection at the National Museum of Oslo, Norway. Palileo was a 2018 recipient of the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant.

Title of Artwork Displayed: The Drummer



Year Completed: 2022; Format: Gouache on paper; Dimensions: 11 x 7 1/2 in.
Courtesy of the artist and Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago

Title of Artwork Displayed: One Clear Night



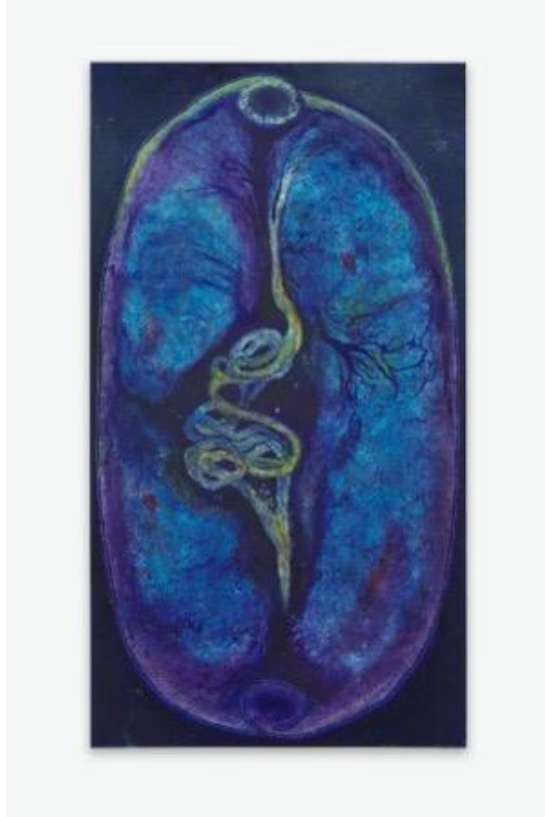
Year Completed: 2022. Gouache on paper; Dimensions: 7 1/2 x 5 1/2 in.
Courtesy of the artist and Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago

Luisa Rabbia (born 1970)

In her expansive, large-scale paintings, Luisa Rabbia alludes to interconnected natural processes through boldly colored, organic forms. Rabbia's physical and intuitive method is embodied in the richly textured surfaces of her canvases that bear rhythmically scraped paint, stratified pencil marks, and fingerprints. As Rabbia notes, her deliberate mark making references "both time and the responsibility that comes with every single action." *Poles*, which shows a vast cellular-like structure bifurcated by a twisted vein, reflects the loneliness and isolation Rabbia experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular the forced separation from her family in Italy.

Rabbia was born in Turin, Italy, and lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. She received a Master of Fine Arts degree from the Accademia Albertina di Belle Arti in Turin. Her work is in the collection of the Westmont Ridley-Tree Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, California, and the Art, Design, & Architecture Museum at the University of California Santa Barbara.

Title of Artwork Displayed: *Poles*



Year Completed: 2020; Format: Oil on canvas; Dimensions: 94 x 51 in.
Courtesy of the artist and Peter Blum Gallery, New York

Darren Waterston (born 1965)

Intermingling abstraction and precise detail, Darren Waterston's surreal compositions illustrate the artist's fascination with natural science, philosophical beliefs, and landscape. "I look to the act of painting to find a way to materialize what is unseeable—to take a feeling, our dreams, even our collective loss, into something that says yes, I recognize that, I know what that is," he says. To create his dreamlike canvases, Waterston meticulously builds up layers of color, giving the surface a distinctive luster and creating depth of field.

Waterston received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles. His paintings can be found in numerous permanent collections, including the Honolulu Museum of Art, Hawaii; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; the New York Public Library; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; and the Seattle Art Museum, Washington.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Tree of Life



Year Completed: 2015; Format: Oil on wood panel; Dimensions: 48 x 40 in.
Courtesy of the artist and DC Moore Gallery, New York

Title of Artwork Displayed: Berge



Year Completed: 2017; Format: Oil on wood panel; Dimensions: 48 x 48 in.
Courtesy of the artist and DC Moore Gallery, New York

Acknowledgements

Washington, D.C.

Claire D'Alba, Curator
Carolyn Yates, Curatorial Assistant
Ashlee Forbes, Registrar
Tabitha Brackens, Editor
Megan Pannone, Editor
Tori See, Editor
Amanda Brooks, Imaging Manager
Sara Herbst, Graphic Designer

Budapest, Hungary

Krisztina Csontos, House Manager
Agnes Krechnyak, Procurement Supervisor
Thomas Luce, Facilities Manager
Monika Vali, Cultural Specialist
Daniel Vero, Shipping Supervisor