



Art in Embassies

U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

Art in Embassies Exhibition: United States Embassy The Hague

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

When I left my home in San Francisco to travel to The Hague, I left behind walls filled with the portraits of those whom I admired deeply. Having these inspirational figures overlooking me had always given me a sense of clarity. My goal with the displayed art in the Residence was to hopefully provide a ray of sunshine to visitors and to remind everyone of their internal strength and moral compass. I also felt it important that the art reflect the 248-year unbroken friendship between the United States and The Netherlands.

From my window in San Francisco, I was fortunate to witness the beauty of the Golden Gate Bridge. It is such an iconic image of a city I love so very much, and I was elated to find it so beautifully captured in the picture taken by Carol Highsmith. You will also find displayed portraits of U.S. Presidents with Dutch heritage, cousins Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Teddy Roosevelt. I have also included portraits of Harriet Tubman and Harriet Beecher Stowe, two women who passionately fought for their deeply held beliefs inequality and justice. Finally, the photograph of the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. giving his “I Have a Dream” speech stands as a loving reminder that one person, filled with courage and clarity, can shift a nation towards a path of light and truth.

It was also critical for me to find voices of justice and kindness in the Netherlands. Therefore, I included portraits of Erik Hazelhoff Roelfzema, a Dutch resistance fighter, and Tina Strobos, a Dutch rescuer, both active during World War II. They each showed that compassion for our fellow human beings and the bravery to stand up to hate are traits that persist even in the darkest of times.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Art in Embassies for their dedication in compiling this exhibition and catalog. I am hopeful that you will find the same inspiration as I do within this exhibition and in the quote attributed to Sojourner Truth that I had inscribed above the mantle in the Residence: “Life is a hard battle anyway. If we laugh and sing as we fight the good fight of freedom, it makes it all go easier. I will not allow my life’s light to be determined by the darkness around me.”

Ambassador Shefali Razdan Duggal

The Hague, the Netherlands
April 2024

Artist Biographies

Alonzo Chappel (1828—1887)

Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811—1896) was an American author and abolitionist. She achieved international acclaim in 1851 with the publication of her best-selling book, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which highlighted the evils of slavery. Reflecting on the moral impetus behind writing the text, she said, "I wrote what I did because, as a woman, as a mother, I was oppressed and broken-hearted with the sorrows and injustices I saw."

Title of Artwork Displayed: Portrait of Harriet Beecher Stowe



Year created: 1872

Format: Digital reproduction of engraving

Dimensions: 20 × 15in. (50,8 × 38,1cm)

Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.

Elias Goldensky (1868—1943)

Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882—1945) served as the thirty-second president of the United States and guided the country through the formidable challenges of the Great Depression and

World War II. Known for his stirring speeches, he famously declared during his Inauguration Address, “The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.” Like his distant cousin Theodore, he was a descendant of Dutch merchants in New York. He developed a deep bond with the Dutch House of Orange during his presidency, furthering a friendship that has existed between the United States and the Netherlands since 1782.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Franklin Delano Roosevelt



Year Created: 1933

Format: Digital reproduction of engraving from photograph

Dimensions: 20 × 15 3/4in. (50,8 × 40cm)

Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

Carol Highsmith (born 1946)

Built between 1933 and 1937, the Golden Gate Bridge connects San Francisco to Marin County. It is one of the most universally recognized symbols of the Bay Area and California. The bridge spans almost two miles across the Golden Gate, the narrow strait where San Francisco Bay opens to meet the Pacific Ocean. Its iconic red hue was proposed by consulting architect Irving Morrow, who stated, "The Golden Gate Bridge is one of the greatest monuments of all time...What has been thus played up in form should not be let down in color."

Title of Artwork Displayed: Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco, California



Year Created: Late 20th century

Format: Digital print from color transparency

Dimensions: 20 × 15 3/4 in. (50,8 × 40 cm)

Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

United Press International

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (1929—1968) was an American Baptist minister and a pivotal leader of the U.S. civil rights movement. A gifted orator, his historic speech during the March on Washington in 1963 became a cornerstone for the movement's fight for justice and equality. Speaking from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, King famously declared, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character."

Title of Artwork Displayed: Martin Luther King Delivering His Address, Washington, D.C.



Year Created: 1963

Format: Digital reproduction of black and white photograph

Dimensions: 20 × 28 1/4 in. (50,8 × 71,8 cm)

Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

Pach Brothers

Theodore Roosevelt Jr. (1858—1919) served as the twenty-sixth president of the United States. He led Congress and the American public toward progressive reforms and reserved vast tracts of lands for public use. His father was a descendant of the original group of Dutch merchants who transformed New York harbor into a thriving port. Forcefully rejecting an idle existence, he proclaimed, “It is hard to fail, but it is worse never to have tried to succeed.”

Title of Artwork Displayed: Portrait of Theodore Roosevelt



Year Created: circa 1913

Format: Digital reproduction of black and white photograph

Dimensions: 20 × 15 3/4 in. (50,8 × 40 cm)

Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.

Benjamin Powelson (1823—1885)

After escaping enslavement in 1849, Harriet Tubman (1822—1913) guided hundreds of African Americans to freedom along the network of secret escape routes known as the Underground Railroad. She also served as a spy, a nurse, and a cook for the Union Forces during the Civil War. In 1896, speaking at a women's suffrage convention, she said "I was the conductor of the Underground Railroad for eight years, and I can say what most conductors can't say—I never ran my train off the track, and I never lost a passenger."

Title of Artwork Displayed: Portrait of Harriet Tubman



Year Created: 1868 or 1869

Format: Digital reproduction of black and white photograph

Dimensions: 20 × 12 in. (50,8 × 30,5 cm)

Courtesy of the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C.

Photographer Unknown

At the age of twenty, Dr. Tina Strobos (1920—2012) became an active member of the Dutch underground resistance during World War II. She helped save the lives of more than one hundred Jews by giving them refuge on the upper floor of her Amsterdam rowhouse. When asked why she had taken these risks, she replied, “It [was] the right thing to do.” In 1989, Strobos was recognized as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem, Israel's official memorial to the victims of the Holocaust.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Postwar studio portrait of Dutch rescuer Tina Strobos



Format: Digital reproduction of color photograph

Dimensions: 20 × 15 1/2 in. (50,8 × 39,4 cm)

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Washington D.C., courtesy of Rescuers: Portraits of Moral Courage in the Holocaust

Photographer Unknown

Erik Hazelhoff Roelfzema (1917—2007) was a Dutch resistance fighter and Royal Air Force pilot during World War II. Celebrated as one of the Netherlands' greatest military heroes, he penned a book, *Soldaat van Oranje* (Soldier of Orange), chronicling his experiences in the war. This memoir was later made into a film.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Portrait of Erik Hazelhoff Roelfzema



Format: Digital reproduction of black and white photograph

Dimensions: 20 × 15 3/4in. (50,8 × 40cm)

Courtesy of the Verzets Resistance Museum, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

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