



Art in Embassies

U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

Art in Embassies Exhibition: United States Embassy in London

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

As the United States Ambassador to the Court of Saint James, I have the great privilege of representing President Biden in the United Kingdom. My historic Residence, Winfield House, provides an incredible setting for our efforts to strengthen ties between the United States and the United Kingdom, and to engage and negotiate on behalf of the American people. When the State Department's Office of Art in Embassies reached out to curate artworks for this beautiful residence, I immediately envisaged a vibrant exhibition of American and British art that honors the enduring special relationship between our nations. As an Ambassador, I am keenly aware of the power of cultural diplomacy and the arts to connect people. President Biden says that the arts and humanities are essential to the nation's well-being and democracy. President Obama's view is that art transcends borders. I wholeheartedly agree with them both.

The exhibition at Winfield House reflects my affection for bold, energetic, modern, and contemporary artwork, and my lifelong passion for art and culture. My husband Ralph and I have loved modern art since before we were married, and Winfield House is an incredible showcase for art that resonates with us. The de Koonings in the foyer are a loan arranged by a dear now-departed friend—the paintings stand as a poignant reminder of our friendship. The incredible Mark Bradford work in the dining room is on loan from the artist himself.

Two featured artists, Hans Hofmann and Josef Albers, were not only renowned painters but were also influential educators. Hofmann, a leading figure in abstract expressionism, painted along Henri Matisse in Paris and founded his own art school in the United States. Albers, who led Yale's design department, continues to influence with his unconventional use of materials and colors.

The exhibition also includes works by exceptional women painters Cecily Brown and Helen Frankenthaler. As pioneering women who have made their mark in the art world, their paintings remind me—as only the second woman Ambassador to the U.K. in fifty years—to support all aspects of diversity.

I am immensely grateful to the many people who helped bring this special exhibition together: the Eastman Family, Mark Bradford, Cecily Brown, George Condo, Sean Scully, Hauser & Wirth, the Matthew Marks Gallery, the Miles McEnery Gallery, the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, the Willem de Kooning Foundation, the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation, the Ellsworth Kelly Foundation, and the Hans Hofmann Trust. A special thank you to Art and Embassies Curator Claire D’Alba for her expert guidance and curation.

I hope that each visitor to Winfield House will make their own memories amid these incredible artworks, and revel in the joy that art brings into our lives.

Ambassador Jane Hartley

London, England

February 2024

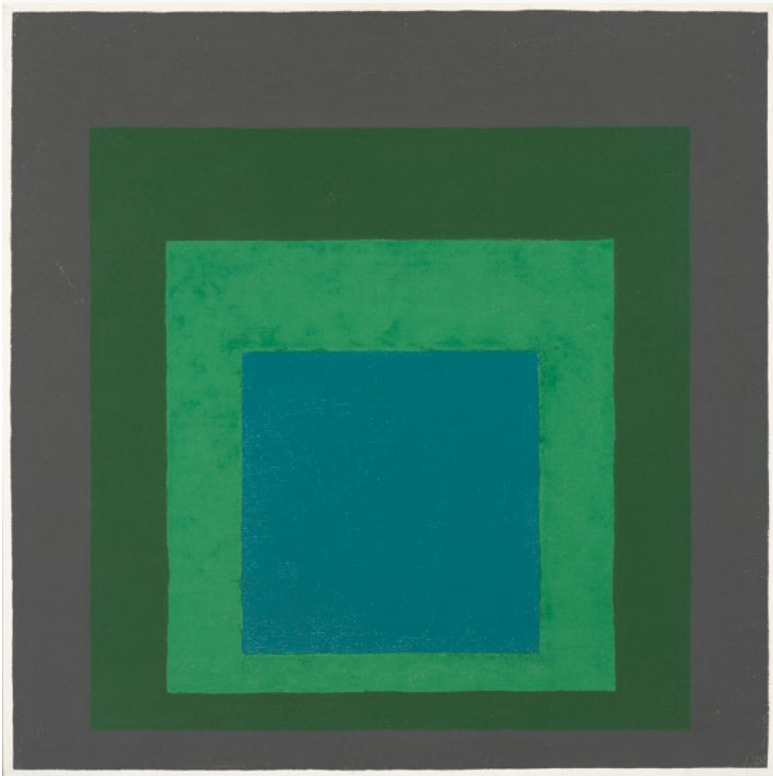
Artist Biographies

Josef Albers (1888-1976)

Artist, writer, and educator Josef Albers worked with glass, photography, printmaking, and other modes of expression, but he was most well-known for his role in developing color theory in the twentieth century. Albers’ iconic series, *Homage to the Square*, featured simple, flat colored squares concentrically placed on the canvas. “Simultaneous contrast is not just a curious optical phenomenon—it is the very heart of painting.” Albers said. *His Interaction of Color* (1963) remains one of the most innovative texts on color theory and contemporary art.

Albers first studied at the Bauhaus, Weimar, Germany, where he designed stained glass, furniture, and objects and later taught as a professor. After immigrating to the United States, he became head of the painting program at Black Mountain College, North Carolina, and then chairperson of the department of design at the Yale University School of Art, New Haven, Connecticut. In 1971, Albers was the first living artist to have a retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Study for Homage to the Square: Long Ago



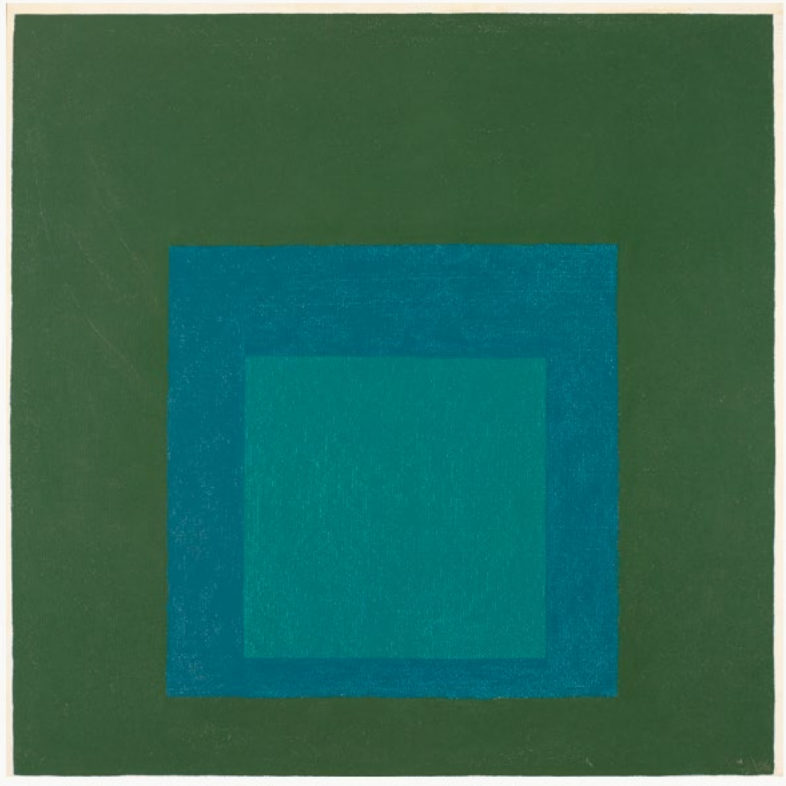
Year created: 1962

Format: Oil on Masonite

Dimensions: 24 × 24 in. (61 × 61 cm)

Courtesy of the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation, Bethany, Connecticut. © 2023 The Josef and Anni Albers Foundation/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; Photo: Tim Nighswander/Imaging4Art

Title of Artwork Displayed: Study for Homage to the Square



Year created: 1964

Format: Oil on Masonite

Dimensions: 24 × 24 in. (61 × 61 cm)

Courtesy of the Josef and Anni Albers Foundation, Bethany, Connecticut. © 2023 The Josef and Anni Albers Foundation/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York; Photo: Tim Nighswander/Imaging4Art

Mark Bradford (born 1961)

“Art materials are always personal. We make them personal. But they are also connected to something else. In my case, it’s community.”

Mark Bradford is renowned for his large-scale, intricately layered paintings, meticulously crafted from paper salvaged from urban landscapes, particularly in his native South Los Angeles. While Bradford’s paintings are predominantly abstract, his materials—such as maps,

advertisements, and billboards—embody the histories that have shaped communities of color, such as the AIDS crisis, systemic displacement, and civil unrest. To create his stratified compositions, Bradford strategically excavates sections of canvas in an intricate and time-consuming process of shredding, gouging, wetting, and sanding that transforms and expands the boundaries of traditional painting.

Bradford earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Fine Arts degrees from the California Institute of the Arts (CalArts), Valencia. In 2015, Bradford founded Art + Practice, a nonprofit organization that oversees public programs and exhibitions while also providing support for transition-age youths in foster care in Los Angeles. He has exhibited extensively and received numerous awards and honors, including his appointment to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 2019 and a MacArthur Fellowship Award in 2009.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Lazy Parades



Year Created: 2017

Format: Mixed media on canvas

Dimensions: 53 × 35 in. (134,6 × 88,9 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Los Angeles, California

Cecily Brown (born 1969)

Cecily Brown, a British-born artist, paints at the intersection of figuration and abstraction, infusing her canvases with intimations of body parts and bold, gestural brushstrokes inspired by

abstract expressionism. While her early works were overtly representational and often highly eroticized, her recent works have evolved towards more enigmatic scenes. Of this style she has cultivated, Brown states, “One of the main things I would like my work to do is to reveal itself slowly, continuously, and for you to never feel that you’re really finished looking at something.”

Brown graduated from Slade School of Fine Art, London, the United Kingdom, before moving to New York, where she currently lives and works. Her work has been the subject of solo exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich, Germany; and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C. Her paintings are in the collections of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.; and Museum of Fine Arts Boston, Massachusetts.

Title of Artwork Displayed: The garden of forgetfulness



Year Created: 2016

Format: Oil on linen

Dimensions: 31 × 43 in. (78,7 × 109,2 cm)

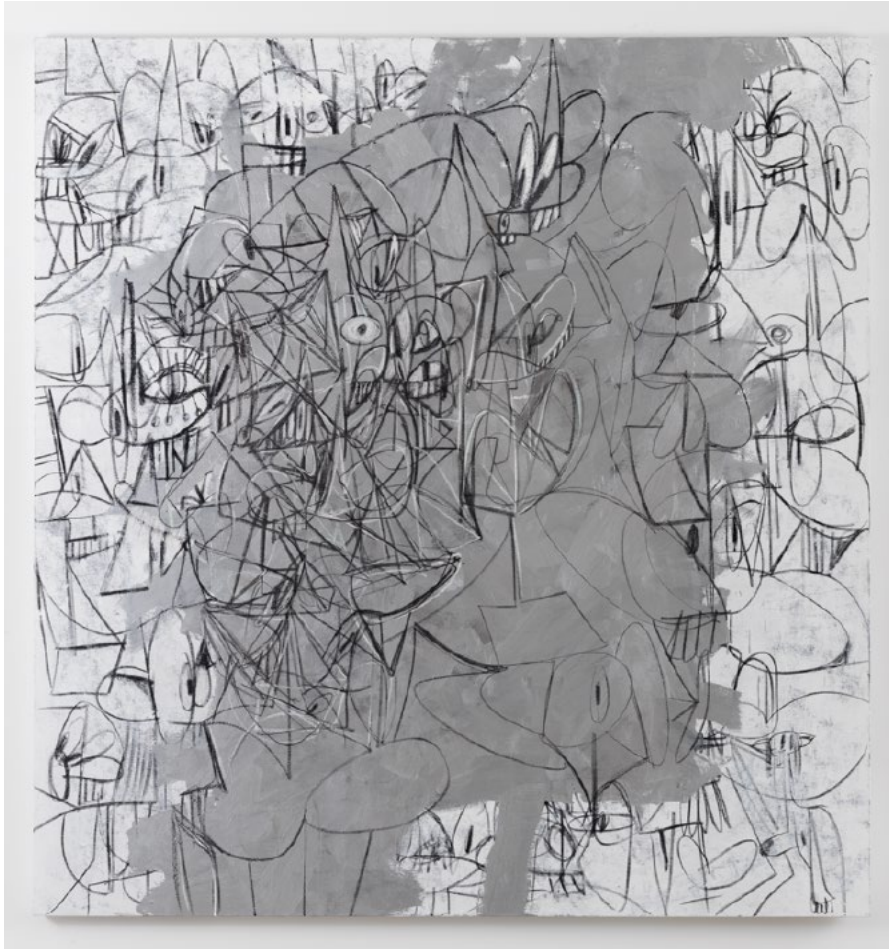
Courtesy of the artist, New York, New York

George Condo (born 1957)

American artist George Condo was born in Concord, New Hampshire, in 1957. He attended the University of Massachusetts, in Lowell, where he studied Music Theory and Art History. George Condo's art can be viewed as a multilayered experience that brings the viewer in touch with a psychological exploration of human nature. Through a process of transformation that involves art historical language and an actualization of their philosophical content, George Condo's paintings open a window onto the world in which we live. In *Silver Mass*, Condo investigates the concept of abstract painting, combining figurative elements in an elaborate process of layering, erasure, and reconstruction that fractures the subject's form.

His work is featured in the permanent collections of major museums including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, the Tate Modern, and the Centre Pompidou. Recently, his work has been the subject of institutional exhibitions in Berlin, Washington DC, Shanghai, and Monte Carlo, and will be the subject of a major retrospective at the Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris in 2025.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Silver Mass



Year Created: 2013

Format: Metallic paint, acrylic, charcoal, and pastel on linen

Dimensions: 80 × 76 in. (203,2 × 193 cm)

Courtesy of the artist. © 2022 George Condo / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Willem de Kooning (1904—1997)

Considered one of the most influential artists of the twentieth century, Willem de Kooning was a prominent abstract expressionist painter best known for his longstanding exploration of the fragmented female form, depicted with vigorous and dynamic brushwork. Throughout the course of his seven-decade career, he displayed remarkable versatility, transitioning between various figurative and abstract styles while experimenting. In the 1980s, de Kooning developed

a highly pared-down style characterized by flat, calligraphic-like brushstrokes set against subtly toned, lightly colored backgrounds that resulted in markedly distilled compositions, as illustrated in these two untitled works.

Born in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, de Kooning moved to the United States at age twenty-two, traveling as a stowaway on a British freighter. He initially worked as a house painter until he became with the Works Progress Administration Federal Art Project, where he contributed to the mural and easel divisions. His first solo exhibition in 1948 established his reputation as a major artist. He was honored with several major retrospectives, including two at the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Title of Artwork Displayed: <no title>



Year Created: 1983

Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 80 × 70 in. (203.2 × 177.8 cm)

Courtesy of The Willem de Kooning Foundation, New York, New York. © 2022 The Willem de Kooning Foundation/ Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Title of Artwork Displayed: Untitled XXXVII



Year Created: 1983

Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 80 × 70 in. (203.2 × 177.8 cm)

Courtesy of The Willem de Kooning Foundation, New York, New York. © 2022 The Willem de Kooning Foundation/ Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Helen Frankenthaler (1928-2011)

Helen Frankenthaler was a pioneering female artist in the male-dominated sphere of mid-twentieth-century abstract painting. She is best known for her “soak-stain” process, which

entailed pouring thinned paint onto an unprimed canvas to create fields of translucent color. Often, these paintings referenced figuration and landscape, expanding the strict nonfigurative boundaries of abstract expressionism. In addition to her paintings, Frankenthaler made ceramics and steel sculptures and maintained an experimental printmaking practice.

Born in New York, Frankenthaler studied at Bennington College, Vermont, and later exhibited alongside abstract expressionists in New York. During her lifetime, she was honored with multiple retrospectives and awards, including the National Medal of Arts in 2001.

Frankenthaler's work figures in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; and the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Ocean Drive West #2



Year Created: 1974

Format: Acrylic on canvas

Dimensions: 69 3/4 × 29 in. (177,2 × 73,7 cm)

Courtesy of the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, New York, New York © 2022 Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York Title of Artwork

Displayed: <no title>

Title of Artwork Displayed: Saturday's Colors



Year Created: 1995

Format: Acrylic on paper

Dimensions: 60 × 95 3/4 in. (152,4 × 243,2 cm)

Courtesy of Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, New York, New York © 2022 Helen Frankenthaler Foundation, Inc. / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

Hans Hofmann (1880-1966)

"Space is alive; space is dynamic . . . space vibrates and resounds with color, light and form in the rhythm of life."

Hans Hofmann, celebrated alongside Josef Albers, is considered one of the most influential teachers of modern art and abstraction of the postwar era in the United States. One of his most renowned theories, "push-pull," explores how forms can appear to advance and recede in dynamic equilibrium through perceptual effects of color and shape. A prolific painter himself, Hofmann utilized his profound understanding of artistic principles to experiment with bold color combinations and formal technical contrasts.

Born in Weißenburg, Germany, and raised in Munich, Hofmann spent a decade studying in Paris before World War I, where he became interested in Cubism and Fauvism. After moving to the United States in 1932, he taught at the University of California, Berkeley, and the Art Students League, New York. Later, he established his own school with locations in Manhattan and Provincetown, Massachusetts. His work is in the collections of many institutions including The Art Institute of Chicago; the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, DC; the Tate Modern, London, the United Kingdom; and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Title of Artwork Penombres du Soir



Year Created: 1961

Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 48 × 60 in. (121,9 × 152,4 cm)

Courtesy of the Hofmann Trust and Miles McEnery Gallery, New York, New York

Ellsworth Kelly (1923-2015)

Ellsworth Kelly is best known for his abstract paintings and sculptures characterized by deeply saturated colors and drastically simplified forms. His work marked a significant departure from the gestural, surface-oriented paintings of abstract expressionism, paving a path for a more diverse, expansive canon of nonfigural art in the United States. "I'm interested in the space between the viewer and the surface of the painting—the forms and the way they work in their surroundings. I'm interested in how they react to a room," he said. Despite being highly distilled, Kelly's forms are rooted in his observations of nature, from the curve of a leaf to the shadow cast on the ground.

Kelly began exploring abstraction while stationed in France after World War II. He previously studied figurative drawing and painting at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and Pratt Institute, Brooklyn, New York. He held his first solo exhibition at Galerie Arnaud in Paris. Throughout his seven-decade career, Kelly experimented with different forms of abstraction, such as monochromatic paintings and shaped canvases, often blurring the distinction between painting and sculpture, as illustrated in *Blue Curve*. He was the recipient of numerous awards, including the National Medal of Arts. Kelly's work can be found in many public collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Metropolitan Museum, New York, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Guggenheim Museum, New York.

Title of Artwork Blue Curve



Year Created: 2009

Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 80 × 59 3/4 in. (203,2 × 151,8 cm)

Courtesy of Jack Shear and Matthew Marks Gallery

Sean Scully (born 1945)

Sean Scully has spent almost five decades making abstract paintings that explore color, texture, and light. His expansive canvases depict simple geometric shapes organized into various configurations. Evoking landscapes and architecture, these vivid compositions are often informed by personal experiences, such as the artist's travels. In their use of precise, grid-like structures, Scully's works offer a sense of balance and compression; yet the overall image is

fleeting and hazy, rather than fixed, owing to the artist's vibrant brushstrokes, which blur the boundaries between forms.

Scully was born in Dublin, Ireland, and grew up in London. He began painting in the late 1960s and received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Newcastle University, Tyne, the United Kingdom. He moved to New York in 1975. His work is in the permanent collections of numerous institutions, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., and Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, Spain.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Landline Blue Wind



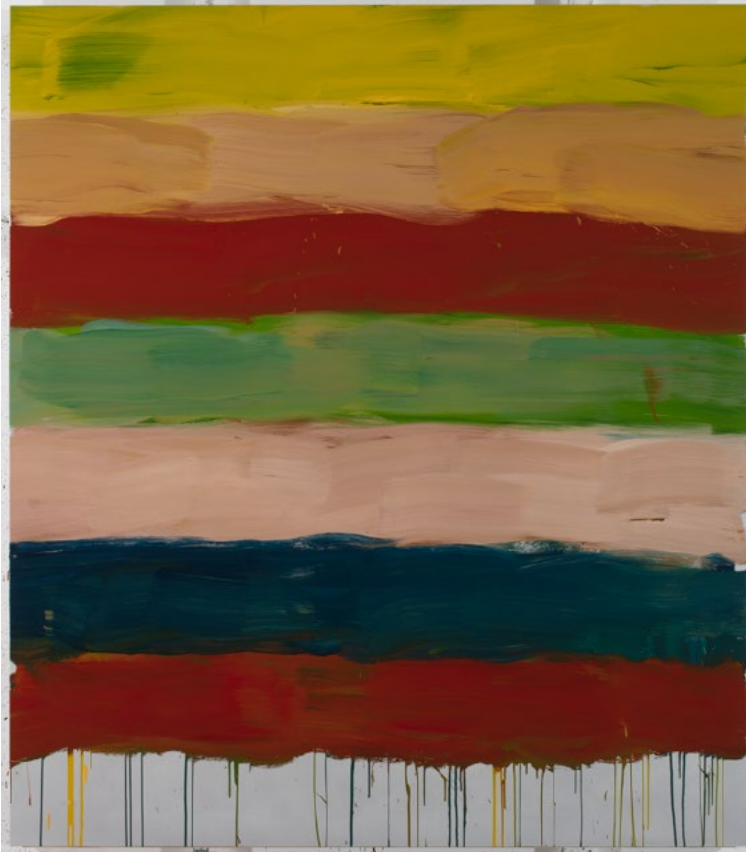
Year Created: 2016

Format: Oil on aluminum

Dimensions: 85 × 75 in. (215,9 × 190,5 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Tappan, New York

Title of Artwork Displayed: Landline Day



Year Created: 2018

Format: Oil on aluminum

Dimensions: 85 × 75 in. (215,9 × 190,5 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Tappan, New York

Acknowledgements

Washington, D.C.

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