



Art in Embassies

U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

Art in Embassies Exhibition: United States Embassy Montevideo

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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The Universal Language of Art and Emotions

As you walk around this historic residence in Montevideo, you will find amazing works of art hanging from the walls. Individually, they exemplify the talent, generosity, imagination, and independent spirit of the United States and Uruguay. Collectively, they become a personal invitation to a nostalgic journey. My goal with this exhibition is to share a bit of my life through these works. Think of them as reflective of a life filled with joyful memories, love, and hope.

You will find several pieces by John Clymer, whose sensitive and detailed depictions of the culture and iconic landscapes of the American West are central to this exhibition. He evokes an open and agrarian landscape, where hardscrabble cowboys are connected to the land, rural life, and small towns. I fell in love with his work during my visits to see my husband's family in Ellensburg, which lies in the heart of a thriving central Washington state cattle region.

Having adopted the state of West Virginia as my home, I am drawn to imagery of mountains and foliage. While the Appalachian Mountains differ from the West's open plains and the vertiginous peaks of the American Rockies, they never fail to inspire. Susan Feller's *Seneca Rocks #3* evokes memories of my hikes in that area, and Jesse Thornton's *Gorge Bridge* reminds me of lazy days tubing down the river beneath this magnificent structure. These works capture the feeling of joy in everyday activities.

Reginald Marsh's *Cabins in the Mountains*, Gifford Beal's *Pastoral Landscape with Cows*, and Robert Pummill's *Before Sundown* contribute to building a familiar atmosphere, as their earthy color palettes are reminiscent of both the rural United States and Uruguay. The diversity of the United States emerges from the walls as you start paying attention to the drawings, photographs, hand-dyed wool, serigraphs, and lithographs. Their old souls whisper stories across the rooms to anyone listening, generating murmuring and noises you would hear at a County Fair. Nicole Bengiveno's *Biloxi, Mississippi* captures the thrill of these fairs where agrarian communities come to celebrate, and spinning swings depict the vibrant hues of Mississippi's sky. I love the power and energy of LeRoy Neiman's *Bucking Bronc*, a vibrant reminder that life is rarely easy, so we should remember to hold tight to our roots, our families, and our communities.

As Uruguay becomes my home, I am learning to appreciate the Uruguayan lifestyle and its intangibles: being the underdog, counting on each other, and always being stronger together. *Team*, by Uruguayan artist Sisto Pascale, uses a soccer analogy to capture these feelings and the close-knit teamwork spirit that defines both the United States and Uruguay. So does Uruguayan watercolorist Alvaro Castagnet, whose *Fecha Patria* closes the loop of this exhibition with an appreciation for our shared values of freedom and independence.

Although not part of the Art in Embassies catalogue, a block print made by my daughter holds an important place in my personal art collection. *Red Bandana* honors volunteer firefighter and fellow Boston College student Welles Crowther, who lost his life on 9/11 at age twenty-four after saving the lives of many others. As someone who chose a life of service, his sacrifice is a humbling and powerful reminder of the importance of service to each other and our communities at large. Finally, I would like to thank these talented artists for allowing me to display their work, and Art in Embassies for promoting mutual understanding around the world through the universal language of art.

Ambassador Heide B. Fulton
Montevideo, Uruguay
June 2024

Artist Biographies

Gifford Beal

Painter and watercolorist Gifford Beal gained widespread recognition during the first half of the twentieth century for his gentle, warmly lit depictions of American landscapes and urban views. Born into a wealthy New York family, Beal began his artistic training as a teenager with summer courses led by distinguished American impressionist William Merritt Chase. Under Chase's tutelage, Beal mastered the impressionist technique of documenting the transient effects of light and atmosphere. His work appealed to a broad audience, and by age twenty-two, Beal was exhibiting in galleries across the country. His style and subject matter shifted throughout the years, from austere seascapes featuring monumental figures to dynamic views of New York's

freight yards. Friend and fellow painter Barry Faulkner said Beal's work showed "the eternal pleasures of work and leisure, the casual enjoyable incidents which add so much to life's richness."

Beal's work can be found in some of the nation's most prominent collections, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Art Institute of Chicago; and the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Pastoral Landscape with Cows



Year Created: 1916

Format: Watercolor on paper

Dimensions: 14 x 20 in (35,6 x 50,8 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of the Estate of Gifford Beal; Courtesy of Kraushaar Galleries, New York, New York

Title of Artwork Displayed: Cows on a Hillside



Year Created: circa 1920

Format: Watercolor on paper

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

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of the Estate of Gifford Beal; Courtesy of Kraushaar Galleries, New York, New York

Miguel Arzabe (born 1975)

Photojournalist Nicole Bengiveno’s work can be described as a blend of “sophisticated visual composition with an immediate connection to everyday people.” Covering news stories large and small, Bengiveno relies on her ability to cultivate relationships with her subjects. “You have to make a commitment to be there so they forget that you are there—so you disappear,” she said. “I feel it’s an honor when someone trusts you enough to let you into their lives.” Even when not covering a story, Bengiveno has a photographer’s eye: “I love the act of seeing,” she said. “Whenever I am outside walking, I find myself taking pictures—without a camera. I do that all the time.”

After studying art and photography at San José State University, California, Bengiveno became a staff photographer for the *San Francisco Examiner* and the *New York Daily News*. From 1998

until 2016, she photographed for the *New York Times* and was a contributor to the photojournalism blog *Lens*. Her contributions can be found in publications like *Fortune*, *US News & World Report*, and *TIME*.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Biloxi, Mississippi



Year Created: 2006

Format: Color photograph

Dimensions: 14 x 20 in. (35,6 x 50,8 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Courtesy of the *New York Times*, New York, New York

Alvaro Castagnet

Using a strong, colorful style and a striking rendering of light effects, watercolorist Alvaro Castagnet illuminates the soul of places he paints. With rapid brushstrokes that create blurred edges, his vividly painted everyday scenes contain almost abstract gestural swathes of pure color. Going beyond simply reproducing a scene, his paintings “are imbued with a mood, a mystery that engages and lures the viewer into the magic.”

From an early age, Castagnet's artistic potential was nurtured by his father, who enrolled him in the National School of Art in his hometown of Montevideo. Castagnet also attended the Fine Arts University, Montevideo, and later lived in Australia for twenty years, working to improve his watercolor technique. A member of the American Watercolor Society and National Watercolor Society, Castagnet has received many accolades, namely the Shanghai Zhujiajiao International Watercolor Biennial Award.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Fecha Patria



Year Created: 2023

Format: Watercolor

Dimensions: 29 ½ x 22 1/16 in. (75 x 56 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Montevideo, Uruguay

John Ford Clymer

Regarded as one of the foremost realistic illustrators and easel painters of the twentieth century, John Ford Clymer created a remarkable tableau of the American West, portraying the “struggles and triumphs of the indigenous people and the early explorers of the Northwest.” Clymer aimed to visually narrate the region’s entire story, achieved by crafting sensitive and meticulously detailed depictions of Indigenous and Anglo-American cultures. “Although I have painted for more than fifty years, each year becomes more exciting for me than the one before,” Clymer once said.

Clymer studied art in Canada and at the Howard Pyle School, Wilmington, Delaware, receiving instruction from American painters Harvey Dunn and N.C. Wyeth. During World War II, he was stationed in Washington State drawing for the *Marine Corps Gazette* and *Leatherneck Magazine*. Clymer was an illustrator for major American publications at the time—*Argosy*, *Woman’s Day*, and *Field & Stream*—and composed eighty covers for the *Saturday Evening Post*. After transitioning from illustration to painting, he moved to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, to research and paint throughout the Northwest region. A member of the Cowboy Artists of America, Clymer earned the National Academy of Western Art’s Prix de West Award and the National Museum of Wildlife Art’s Rungius Medal.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Barn Roof Ski Jump



Year Created: circa 1950

Format: Oil on canvas/board

Dimensions: 33 ½ x 26 ½ in. (85,1 x 67,3 cm)

Courtesy of the Clymer Museum of Art, Ellensburg, Washington

Title of Artwork Displayed: Pals (Girl with Dog)



Year Created: 1930

Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 24 x 24 in. (61 x 61 cm)

Courtesy of the Clymer Museum of Art, Ellensburg, Washington

Title of Artwork Displayed: Cascade (The Water Ouzel)



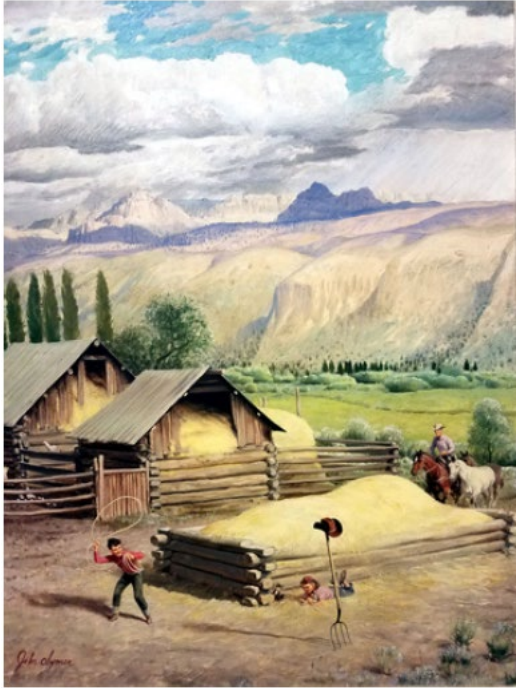
Year Created: 1964

Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 60 x 47 in. (152,4 x 119,4 cm)

Courtesy of the Clymer Museum of Art, Ellensburg, Washington

Title of Artwork Displayed: Roping Lesson



Year Created: 1954

Format: Oil on canvas/board

Dimensions: 30 x 24 in. (76,2 x 61 cm)

Courtesy of the Clymer Museum of Art, Ellensburg, Washington

Title of Artwork Displayed: High on the Ridge



Year Created: 1963

Format: Oil on board

Dimensions: 19 x 29 in. (48,3 x 73,7 cm)

Courtesy of the Clymer Museum of Art, Ellensburg, Washington

Title of Artwork Displayed: Sacagawea at the Big Waters



Year Created: undated

Format: Signed print

Dimensions: 16 x 32 in. (40,6 x 81,3 cm)

Courtesy of the Clymer Museum of Art, Ellensburg, Washington

Susan Feller

Self-taught artist, curator, and freelance writer Susan Feller specializes in rugmaking techniques, including hooked, punched, needle felted, and dimensional collage. Incorporating bright colors to depict America's natural beauty, her textiles explore traditional crafts and ecological issues, specifically how humankind's depletion of resources impacts the landscape around them. *Seneca Rocks #3* represents the geologic landmark in the West Virginia

mountains. Feller selected the upholstery material, layered the fabric, embroidered, and stitched rock, tree, and leaf motifs. *Progress in the Mountains* shows how technological developments—namely transportation, wind turbines, commercial poultry farming, logging and reforestation, and coal-powered energy generation—have changed the environment over time. The vertical runner is composed of an off-bolt wool fabric that is hand-dyed and hooked through a linen backing. “I feel like an author of a long novel while creating this piece. Each section became a small story that linked to all the other stories,” she said.

Feller graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Among other professional endeavors, she serves on the board of directors for the Tamarack Foundation for the Arts in Charlestown, West Virginia. Her work has been exhibited at the Wisconsin Museum of Quilts & Fiber Arts, Cedarburg; the Brookfield Craft Center, Connecticut; and the Farnsworth Art Museum, Rockland, Maine.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Seneca Rocks #3



Year Created: 2019

Format: Rug hooking, applique, embroidery, paint on canvas

Dimensions: 16 x 21 in. (40,6 x 30,5 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Augusta, West Virginia

Title of Artwork Displayed: Progress in the Mountains



Year Created: 2017

Format: Rug hooking, hand-dyed wool fabric

Dimensions: 82 ¼ x 27 ¼ in. (208,9 x 69,2 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Augusta, West Virginia

Reginald Marsh

Painter, illustrator, and printmaker Reginald Marsh was renowned for his lively depictions of burlesque shows, throngs of crowds at Coney Island, and bustling ship harbors. Rendered in egg tempera, oils, ink, and watercolor, Marsh's busy, muddy scenes are infused with social realism. Although primarily known for his paintings of New York City, Marsh also documented his extensive travels throughout the United States and abroad. The artist would return to his

favorite spots, capturing immediate impressions in his sketchbook and taking preparatory photos.

Born in Paris to artist parents, Marsh and his family immigrated to New Jersey when he was two years old. He graduated from Yale Art School, New Haven, Connecticut, and provided illustrations to many publications, including the *New Yorker*, *Harper's Bazaar*, *Esquire*, and *Life*. His work is in the collections of such museums as the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; the Metropolitan Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Museum of Modern Art, all in New York; and the Art Institute of Chicago, among many others.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Cabins in the Mountains



Year Created: undated

Format: Watercolor

Dimensions: 27 x 33 1/8 in. (68,6 x 84,1 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of William Benton

Merritt Mauzey

Self-stylized artist, children’s book author-illustrator, and art teacher Merritt Mauzey documented rural life in twentieth-century Texas, primarily through his lithographs of Depression-era dryland cotton farmers. An associate of the Dallas Nine—a group of painters, printmakers, and sculptors active in Texas during the 1930s and 1940s who were inspired by the Southwest—Mauzey bought a lithographic press to print his own work and that of his colleagues. A curator from the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Pennsylvania, described his artwork as “the translation of cotton into art.”

The youngest of nine in a Texas sharecropper family, Mauzey started out as a cotton sharecropper and later as a clerk at a cotton exporting firm. He first studied drawing through a correspondence course offered by the Fine Art Institute of Omaha, Nebraska, and later enrolled in evening art classes at a local technical high school. After exhibiting his oil paintings at the Texas Centennial Exposition of 1936, Mauzey eventually pursued lithography and taught himself the art of printmaking. In 1946, he was the first Texan to receive the John Simon Guggenheim Award.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Plainsman's Dream



Year Created: undated

Format: Lithograph

Dimensions: 140 1/2 x 12 in. (36,8 x 30,5 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of Merritt Mauzey

LeRoy Neiman

LeRoy Neiman's artwork merged "a Pop Art sensibility with impressionist brushwork and vibrant color." He was known for painting numerous public figures, especially as one of the sports realm's most renowned artists. Rapidly executing his canvas paintings by quickly applying paint, Neiman presented life's epic, dramatic moments. "I do not depart from the colors borrowed from life. But I use color to emphasize the scent, the spirit, and the feeling of the thing I've experienced," he said.

An artist skilled in drawing and selling artworks, Neiman first created posters for local merchants to advertise their store sales. After painting stage sets for shows by the American Red Cross during his stint with the U.S. Army, he used his G.I. Bill to attend the Saint Paul School of Art—now the Minnesota Museum of American Art, Saint Paul—and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he later taught drawing and fashion illustration. Neiman was the official artist of the Olympiad through five Olympics, often painting or sketching on live television. In 1986, he established the LeRoy Neiman Foundation to fund programs supporting and advancing art education.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Bucking Bronc



Year Created: 1977

Format: Serigraph

Dimensions: 42 ½ x 41 in. (108 x 104,1 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Philip Berman

Sisto Pascale

Sisto Pascale is a Uruguayan artist with a passion for community engagement in the arts. This sentiment is reflected in *Team*, a drawing which was part of a solo exhibition at the Soccer Museum in the Centenario Stadium, Montevideo. Declared to be of national interest by Uruguay's president Tabaré Vázquez, the exhibition was a tribute to Uruguay's national soccer team and its coach, Óscar Washington Tabaré. In *Team*, Uruguay's captain, Diego Lugano, motivates his teammates before the last game at the World Cup. Although no photo exists of this event, *Team* is a creation of what would have taken place during the huddle.

Pascale emigrated to the United States at age five, but returned to Montevideo seventeen years later to set up his first workshop and teach art. Along with a Certificate of Merit from the Corcoran School of Art, Washington, D.C., he earned an associate's degree in fine arts from the Maryland College of Art and Design—now the School of Art & Design at Montgomery College, Takoma Park. His works have been exhibited in numerous institutions, namely the Uruguayan Embassy, Washington, D.C., and the Carnival Museum, Montevideo.

Title of Artwork Displayed: *Team*



Year Created: 2016

Format: Charcoal and conte drawing

Dimensions: 18 ½ x 26 ½ in. (47 x 67,3 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Montevideo, Uruguay

Robert Pummill

Robert Pummill's work pays homage to cowboy life, Texas Hill Country, and Indigenous Peoples—in essence, a “colorful cavalcade of longhorns, horses, and heroes.” Pummill classifies himself as an “impressionist representationalist,” meaning that he focuses on the atmosphere of the landscape and subject. “Most of the new Western artists paint contemporary subjects, and they'll use a photo for inspiration. I came from the old illustrator group: I studied portraiture on the way up so if I need a figure, I just draw that figure. I know how people sit on horses, how their body attitude tells you what they're thinking, what they're doing. I just draw it,” he said.

Raised in southern Ohio, Pummill received his early artistic training through correspondence at the Art Instruction School and the Famous Artists School. While specializing in avionics for the U.S. Air Force, he was stationed in Great Falls, Montana, where he was inspired by its sweeping vistas. Pummill attended night classes at the Art Center School of Design, Los Angeles, while working by day as a commercial illustrator for aerospace firm TRW. After becoming a full-time painter, he was inducted into the Cowboy Artists of America in 1988. His artwork has been featured in *Southwest Art Magazine*.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Before Sundown



Year Created: undated

Format: Lithograph

Dimensions: 31 x 38 ¾ in. (78,7 x 98,4 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of Robert Pummill

Jesse Thornton

Self-taught photographer Jesse Thornton possesses a distinct talent for immortalizing the immense landscapes of the American West and the natural beauty of the Appalachian Mountains in every season. In *Gorge Bridge*, a rainbow spreads across the New River Gorge in West Virginia; the sunset's orange glow is enhanced by the Saharan dust wafting across North America. "I like to create images that are enthralling and ethereal, as if they were plucked straight from Middle Earth. Closer to home I can master the landscapes and light with ample opportunity to study them...While persistence and planning are key—oftentimes, it's nothing more than plain, dumb luck and happenstance of being in the right place at the right time. Ultimately, being there is my reason for doing this," Thornton says.

A native of Point Pleasant, West Virginia, Thornton currently resides along the Ohio River in Huntington. Growing up with the genetic disorder cystic fibrosis, he learned to appreciate the world around him and started traveling around the United States, the source of many of his photographs. His work can be found in many West Virginia institutions, such as the Beckley Art Center.

Title of Artwork Displayed: Gorge Bridge



Year Created: 2020

Format: Photograph

Dimensions: 24 x 36 in. (61 x 91,4 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Huntington, West Virginia

Acknowledgements

Washington, D.C.

- Claire D'Alba, Curator
 - Morgan Fox, Curatorial Assistant
-

- Danielle Giampietro, Registrar
- Tabitha Brackens, Editor
- Megan Pannone, Editor
- Tori See, Editor
- Amanda Brooks, Imaging Manager and Photographer
- Sara Herbst, Graphic Designer

Gaborone, Botswana

- Kerri Spindler-Ranta, Public Affairs Officer
 - Lauren Holt, Deputy Public Affairs Officer
 - Pablo Castro, Strategic Communications Specialist
 - Cecilia Fraga, Translator
 - Lucia Arbelbide, Cultural Specialist
-