



Art in Embassies

U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

Art in Embassies Exhibition: United States Embassy Malé

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 and scope 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

Welcome to the home of the American Ambassador to the Republic of Maldives. I am grateful to the U.S. State Department's Office of Art in Embassies for helping me bring works of notable American artists to the Maldives. From the New England seascapes of nineteenth-century painter William Trost Richards to the iconic twentieth-century works by pop artists Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol, this exhibition reflects the depth, optimism, and originality of American art.

Many of the works in this exhibition reflect my lifelong connection to the sea. Having grown up in San Francisco less than half a mile from the Pacific Ocean, I have always been drawn to its power and beauty—a love that I know is shared by the people of the Maldives. Paintings by Gifford Beal, Frederick McDuff, and Andrew Winter remind us of the beauty and joy of our oceans and seas—endlessly bountiful—and the responsibility we share for their future.

The breadth of styles and media in this exhibition speak to the rich variety of American art. For these works, I cannot think of a more fitting stop on their diplomatic journey than the Maldives, a country with its own rich cultural and artistic heritage. I hope the art will spark curiosity, wonder, and delight, and highlight the connections between our two countries.

Ambassador Hugo Yon
Malé, Maldives

Artists' Biographies

R. Gordon Arneson (1916-1992)

Title of Artwork Displayed: Ecostasis II



Format: Oil on Masonite

Dimensions: 26 x 30 in (66 x 76,2 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of the Estate of Nancy Long Arneson

R. Gordon Arneson was a prominent painter, military officer, and senior government official. Working primarily in acrylics, he held a dozen solo shows, including at the Foreign Service Club and the National Arboretum. In 1945, while serving as a lieutenant in the U.S. Army, Arneson

was appointed secretary to the Interim Committee on Atomic Energy. This specialized committee, convened by Secretary of War Henry Stimson, advised on matters that concerned the atomic bomb and the future development of atomic energy. Later, Arneson served at the U.S. State Department as a special assistant, first to the Under Secretary of State and then to the Secretary of State, where he oversaw matters related to atomic energy during the Truman and Eisenhower administrations. In 1954, he served as Deputy Science Adviser to the U.S. State Department. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree from North Dakota State College in 1938.

Alice Baber (1928-1982)

Title of Artwork Displayed: Lavender Crossing with Orange



Year Created: 1969

Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 33 ¾ x 33 ¾ in. (85,7 x 85,7 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of Sachs Gallery

Title of Artwork Displayed: Green Swing



Year Created: 1969

Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 39 ½ x 65 ½ in. (100,3 x 166,4 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of Sachs Gallery

Title of Artwork Displayed: The Path of the Sun Leads to the Piper



Year Created: 1978

Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 91 ½ x 49 ½ in. (232,4 x 125,7 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of Sachs Gallery

Composed of undulating, organic shapes, Alice Baber's abstract paintings and watercolors vibrate with color. To achieve this luminous effect, she applied transparent layers of diluted oil paint to her primed canvases, a time-consuming process that often required further thinning with a turpentine-soaked rag. While Baber used a variety of abstract forms in her work, she favored elongated circles, which she believed best conveyed motion across the composition.

Baber began painting at the age of eight and later studied art at Indiana University, Bloomington. She also traveled extensively, exhibiting and lecturing in thirteen Latin American countries under the auspices of the U.S. State Department. Her legacy is honored through the Baber Midwest Modern Art Collection of the Greater Lafayette Museum of Art in Indiana and the Alice Baber Memorial Art Library in East Hampton, Long Island, New York. Her paintings are in major museum collections throughout the world.

Gifford Beal (1879-1956)

Title of Artwork Displayed: Fishing Boats & Lighthouses



Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 24 ¼ × 41 ½ in. (61,6 × 105,4 cm)

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

Title of Artwork Displayed: Boats on the Pier



Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 33 ¼ x 41 ¼ in. (84,5 x 104,8 cm)

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

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 in New York, 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 capturing the transient effects of light and atmosphere. His work appealed to a broad audience, and by the age of twenty-two, Beal was exhibiting nationally. His style and subject matter shifted throughout his career, from austere seascapes featuring monumental figures to dynamic views of New York's freight yards. His 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.

Nita Engle (1925-2019)

Title of Artwork Displayed: Mountain Cove



Format: Screenprint

Dimensions: 32 ½ x 22 ½ in. (82,6 x 57,2 cm)

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

A prolific watercolorist, Nita Engle painted expressionistic landscapes inspired by her studio in Michigan, her extensive global travels, and her love of nature. *Mountain Cove* depicts a harbor in Alaska, a location Engle chose for its startling verticality and dense arrangement of trees. Engle experimented with unconventional techniques to enrich her compositions, including pouring and spraying paint, using a palette knife, and temporarily adding materials like gravel and sand to create texture. “Beautiful things happen with watercolor. No matter if it gets out of hand and does things I hadn’t intended, it doesn’t matter,” she explained.

Born in Negaunee, Michigan, Engle studied at Northern Michigan University and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. A member of the American Watercolor Society, Engle received numerous accolades, including being featured on the cover of *American Artist* as its ‘Artist of the Year.’

Susan Goldsmith (born 1955)

Title of Artwork Displayed: Kohaku



Format: Silver leaf with pigment print, acrylic paint, iridescent watercolors, and resin on panel

Dimensions: 25 × 54 in. (63,5 × 137,2 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Courtesy of the artist

Susan Goldsmith's art focuses on the natural world, from sturdy tree branches to flying birds and gliding koi fish—as seen in *Kohaku*. After photographing her subjects, Goldsmith digitally edits her images before transferring them to canvas or wood panels. She builds layers of resin, translucent paint, gold or silver leaf, and oil pastel so that the composition gleams with light and movement. “As you walk by one of my paintings, you will see the colors change... Similar to how colors change based on the different times of day or how the wind modifies the effect of sunlight on leaves and branches,” she says.

Goldsmith earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Fine Arts degrees in painting, printmaking, and drawing from the California College of the Arts, Oakland, and pursued additional studies at the Otis College of Art and Design, Los Angeles. Her work has been exhibited at Gallery Henoch, New York, and the National Museum of Wildlife Art, Jackson, Wyoming, and she teaches at the Academy of Art University, San Francisco.

Artist: Roy Lichtenstein (1923-1997)

Title of Artwork Displayed: Composition III



Year Created: 1996

Format: Silkscreen

Dimensions: 51 ¾ x 36 3/8 in. (55 x 45 cm)

Courtesy of the Foundation of Art and Preservation in Embassies, Washington, D.C., Gift of the artist

Roy Lichtenstein was an innovative twentieth-century painter, printmaker, sculptor, and leading figure of the pop art movement. His imaginative paintings were derived from comic strips and cartoons. Imitating the newspaper printing process, Lichtenstein rendered each figure with his trademark Benday dots—a dot-screen technique adapted from commercial printing—to create texture and color gradations. The artist “gravitated toward what he would characterize as the ‘dumbest’ or ‘worst’ visual item he could find and then went on to alter or improve it.” This act of paraphrasing “became a paramount feature of Lichtenstein’s art.”

Influenced by museum and concert trips with his family in New York, the young Lichtenstein developed early interests in both visual art and music, studying painting alongside the clarinet and piano. After serving in the infantry during World War II, where he sketched battle scenes, he graduated with Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Fine Arts degrees from Ohio State University, Columbus. He later pursued abstract art and expanded his practice to include other media like polychromatic ceramics, aluminum, serigraphs, and mural installations.

Frederick Hale McDuff (1931-2011)

Title of Artwork Displayed: Deep Blue Sea



Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 25 ½ x 30 in. (64,8 x 76,2 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of the Venable Neslage Galleries

Frederick Hale McDuff was a self-taught painter inspired by leisure scenes found in French impressionist works. McDuff analyzed the chemical composition of paints used by those artists and modified contemporary storebought oil paints to resemble the materials available during the period. His representational paintings, with light-filled, loose brushwork, depict figures in Victorian clothing and introduced viewers to “a world devoid of harshness, a serene place of gracious living.”

McDuff was born in Birmingham, Alabama, and studied painting at the Art Students League, New York, on the G.I. Bill. He later moved to Washington, D.C., where he continued to develop his craft and exhibit his work.

Susan Pear Meisel (born 1947)

Title of Artwork Displayed: Fisherman's Wharf



Format: Lithograph

Dimensions: 17 x 20 in. (43,2 x 50,8 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of Sidney Meisel

For over fifty years, Susan Pear Meisel has created lively scenes of landmarks in San Francisco, New York, and other major cities. Her “use of ink and lines create a playful layering within the

composition.” Whether a print or silkscreen, “the inked hues carry their tonalities to the surface of the paper. The layering of multiple colors builds up a ground pattern that engages with one another in a vibrancy of color.”

Meisel studied at the Art Students League, the School of Visual Arts, and the Parsons School of Design, all in New York. Her works are in the collections of the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, Connecticut; the Erie Art Museum, Pennsylvania; and the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

William Trost Richards (1833-1905)

Title of Artwork Displayed: Breakers Along the Coast



Year Created: 1897

Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 32 ¼ x 44 in. (81,9 x 111,8 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of Dr. Everette James

William Trost Richards was a prominent nineteenth-century artist best known for his meticulously detailed landscape paintings and watercolors. Richards held deep reverence for nature, spending hours outdoors observing atmospheric changes in light and color. He devoted the final decades of his career almost exclusively to painting seascapes, traveling between Newport, Rhode Island, and the rocky coasts of southwestern England for inspiration. As seen in *Breakers Along the Coast*, Richards sought to capture the dramatic motion and fluidity of ocean waves near the shore.

Born in Philadelphia, Richards worked as a draftsman and designer of ornamental metalwork before pursuing painting. As one of the earliest contributors to the annual exhibitions of the American Society of Painters in Water Color, he helped advance watercolor as a fine art medium in the United States. His works can be found in numerous public collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; and the Saint Louis Art Museum, Missouri.

Michael Robbins (born 1949)

Title of Artwork Displayed: Jim Brown, Portrait of a Fullback



Year Created: 1975

Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 54 x 36 ¼ in. (137,2 x 92,1 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.

New York-based painter and printmaker Michael Robbins concentrates on the elements of motion and how they relate to atmosphere, light, and color, seeking to highlight “moments of realization [one has] in the passage through the physical world.” In *Jim Brown, Portrait of a Fullback*, Robbins depicts the renowned American football player for the Cleveland Browns running across the field. He captures Brown’s speed by portraying his body at a dramatic, tilted angle, with the entire composition executed in frenetic, blurred brushwork.

Robbins graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, New York. His paintings, drawings, and prints have been exhibited extensively in the United States and abroad and are in the collections of such institutions as the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., and the Brooklyn Museum, New York.

Tom Slaughter (1955-2014)

Title of Artwork Displayed: Summer 1992



Year Created: 1993

Format: Multi colored screen print

Dimensions: 27 ½ x 19 ½ in. (39,9 x 49,5 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of the Foundation for Art and Preservation in Embassies

Title of Artwork Displayed: Summer 1992



Year Created: 1993

Format: Multi colored screen print

Dimensions: 27 ½ x 19 ½ in. (39,9 x 49,5 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of the Foundation for Art and Preservation in Embassies

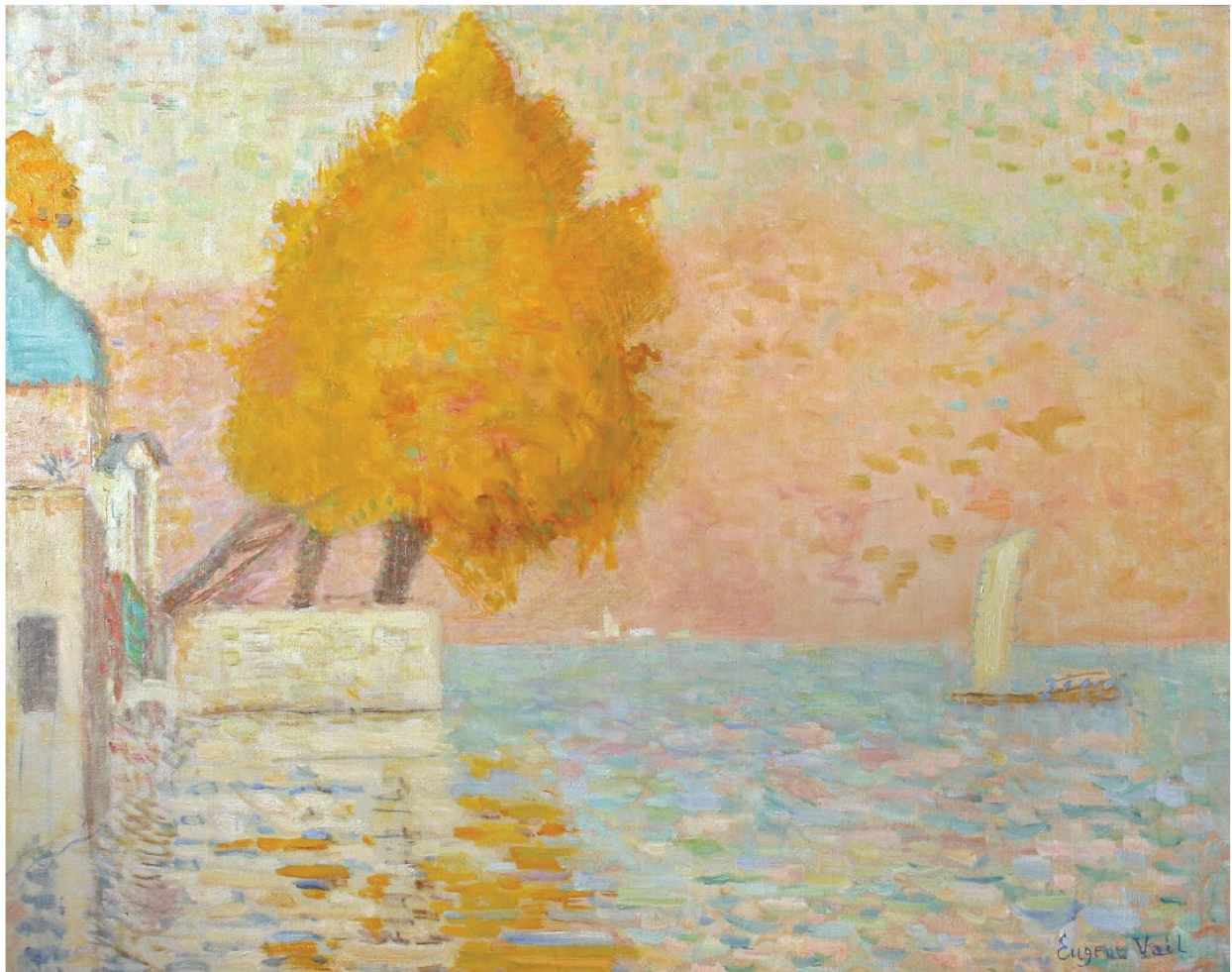
“Icons...these are my alphabet. I draw them over and over until they are part of my language. Sunglasses, bikes, hats, boats, buildings...they are all just part of an excuse to make images.”

Tom Slaughter was a painter and illustrator best known for his vibrant, playful style characterized by bright, primary colors and bold lines. His works typically depict objects and

scenes from his life in New York and on coastal Long Island. He studied art history at Connecticut College in New London, and his work is in the collections of such institutions as the Museum of Modern Art and the Whitney Museum of American Art, both in New York; and the British Museum, London. The *Summer 1992* prints belong to a series *Slaughter* created to commemorate his seasonal visits to southern Ontario with his wife and children.

Eugène Vail (born 1964)

Title of Artwork Displayed: The Tree at the Village Carlotta



Year Created: circa 1901

Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 37 ½ x 45 in. (95,3 x 114,3 cm)

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

Painter Eugène Vail was celebrated for his impressionistic village and winter sports scenes. He layered vigorous brushwork with uniform, short rectangular strokes that reverberate with motion across his images. Initially painting in the tradition of the academic French Salon, Vail shifted to a looser, freer approach and lightened his palette after observing the autumn colors in Venice.

Vail later studied at the Art Students League of New York and the École des Beaux-Arts, Paris. He pursued an independent art career at Pont Aven and Concarneau, both in Brittany, France, where he began painting peasants and fishermen. A member of the Society of American Artists in New York, he was made a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor in 1894.

Andy Warhol (1928-1987)

Title of Artwork Displayed: Flowers



Year Created: 1970

Format: Screenprint

Dimensions: 36 ¾ x 37 in. (93,3 x 94 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of the Foundation for Art and Preservation in Embassies

Arguably a legend in the pop art movement, Andy Warhol produced experimental works that reflected cultural trends and American postwar advertising, while challenging traditional notions of fine art and creativity. Warhol is iconic for his whimsical, multicolored iconography of consumer products such as Campbell's Soup, as well as his flowers series and portraits of American celebrities, including Marilyn Monroe and Elizabeth Taylor. In his photo-silkscreens, Warhol repeatedly printed a grainy black image on a colorful canvas, sometimes organizing the work in a series of rows, grids, or pairs—a process he adapted to resemble an assembly line system. Although he famously reported to ARTNews in 1963 that “the reason I’m painting this way is that I want to be a machine,” every canvas that Warhol silkscreened or printed was one of a kind, resulting from creative decisions related to composition, color, and format.

A native of Pittsburgh, young Warhol would paint and draw with the art supplies gifted by his mother and attended free art classes at the Carnegie Museum of Art. After his death, Warhol's estate became the Andy Warhol Foundation, and in 1994, the Andy Warhol Museum opened in Pittsburgh, dedicated to his life and work.

Dan Williams

Title of Artwork Displayed: Good Morning



Format: Mixed media

Dimensions: 79 x 46 in. (200,7 x 116,8 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Courtesy of the artist

Dan Williams traveled extensively across Africa in the 1960s, which considerably influenced his early art, inspiring vibrant works that reflect the people and markets he encountered. Upon his

return to New York, he supported himself by working as a private chef and painted in his spare time. In later years, Williams shifted his creative focus toward writing.

Andrew Winter (1892-1958)

Title of Artwork Displayed: Gulls at Monhegan



Year Created: 1936

Format: Oil on canvas

Dimensions: 24 x 34 in. (61 x 86,4 cm)

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of the General Services Agency

Painter Andrew Winter is best known for his dramatic seascapes of the rugged Maine coast, especially Monhegan Island, a rocky outpost that has attracted artists to its shores since the mid-nineteenth century. While most artists visit during the summer months, Winter sought to depict the power and stark elemental beauty of the ocean near Monhegan across all seasons.

He frequently rowed around the island's shores in the harshest weather to capture scenes of winter lobstering, as shown in the snowy cliffs and tumultuous waves of *Gulls at Monhegan*.

Winter became a citizen of the United States in 1921 and enrolled that same year at the National Academy of Design, New York. During his lifetime, he exhibited at the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.; the Memorial Art Gallery, Rochester, New York; and the Cranbrook Academy, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.
