



## Art in Embassies

U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

# Art in Embassies Exhibition: United States Embassy Antananarivo

## 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."

[www.art.state.gov](http://www.art.state.gov)

## Welcome

Welcome to Villa Philadelphia, the Residence of the United States Ambassador to Madagascar. I am honored to share our Art in Embassies exhibition, which features contemporary artists who have captured the unique and stunning biodiversity of my home state of California and created works evocative of the natural world here in Madagascar. Each piece reflects the landscape I grew up in, connecting the viewer to the natural beauty of Madagascar that I have had the honor of discovering.

California's incredible biodiversity stems from its varied landscapes, ranging from deserts to forests and mountains to coastline. This geographic diversity creates habitats for a wide variety of life forms. About forty percent of California's estimated 5,500 plant species are endemic—unique to the state and not found anywhere else on Earth. From mountains to deserts to the Pacific Ocean, its terrain contributes to a rich ecology and places it among the world's thirty-six biodiversity hotspots. Madagascar, too, has developed its own distinct ecosystems, from rainforests to spiny forests to its surrounding waters—such as the Indian Ocean and Mozambique Channel—making it a vital hotspot for global biodiversity. Approximately ninety-five percent of Madagascar's reptiles, eighty-nine percent of its plant life, and ninety-two percent of its mammals exist nowhere else on Earth.

I chose two works by photographer Aubrey Garwood, which beautifully capture the grandeur and simplicity of Joshua Tree National Park. These landscapes are evocative of Madagascar's Spiny Forest, characterized by a dry, thorny environment dominated by spiny plants, including several species of baobab trees, and home to a diverse array of fauna like endemic lemurs, tortoises, and birds.

Carolyn Lord's spectacular watercolors, *Nipomo Mustard* and *Shell Beach*, capture the gentle beauty of coastal California, with rolling hills that stretch down to the ocean. For me, they evoke memories of the Guadalupe-Nipomo sand dunes, the largest intact coastal dune ecosystem on Earth, which provides refuge for endangered species like snowy plovers and northern elephant seals. Madagascar's coastline is varied, featuring a narrow, steep eastern coast with a lagoon system and a more indented western coast with sheltered harbors. The island's geography creates distinct coastal environments for endangered mangroves,

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threatened tortoise populations, whale sharks, dolphins, and the breeding waters for humpback whales.

Victoria Marquez combined handmade paper, fibers, and painting to create her three-dimensional *Rockstraw #7*, an almost living piece that seems to have the wind blowing through the grass. This piece epitomizes Marquez's belief that there is a familiar bond shared across the natural world. *Rockstraw #7* brings us closer to the wild spaces and is reminiscent of Madagascar's remote highlands.

*Love by the Moon* by Anne Marie Price is a dreamy piece, full of moons over the ocean. It brings to mind the southern hemisphere sky, standing at the far south end of Madagascar and looking toward Antarctica, where the only things in sight are the waves, the moon, and the stars.

I have been a fan of Lori Sanstrom's work for the San Diego Zoo for many years, so I was delighted to have one of her pieces, *Honu*, in this exhibition. Her joyful depiction of the turtle—denoting good luck and longevity—is what I wish for Madagascar's thirteen turtle and tortoise species. However, many of these species are critically endangered, facing extinction due to illegal collection and habitat loss.

I would like to express my appreciation to Art in Embassies and to the artists who generously loaned their works. I would also like to thank the members of the Embassy team who helped with the installation, exhibition, and creation of this publication. I hope you enjoy the selections!

Ambassador Claire A. Pierangelo  
Antananarivo, Madagascar

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## Artists' Biographies

### Aubrey Garwood

Aubrey Garwood's photography is influenced by a childhood full of hikes and trips to national parks. "Travel has always fueled me beyond a mere leisure pursuit. I feel the most fulfilled when exploring a new place with [a] camera in hand. Making images enables me to better understand myself and the world around me... I love photography because it allows me to capture ephemeral moments in a still image that can be revisited time and again," she says. "I explore the theme of connection in my work and how we as humans relate to one another and nature. With every piece I make, I hope to help viewers feel the beauty of our interconnectedness and through that insight, become more compassionate with themselves, others, and our world."

Garwood earned a bachelor's degree in art and design from Townson University in Maryland and has worked for National Geographic and Discovery Inc. Her photographs have been exhibited throughout venues in Virginia, Maryland, and Washington, D.C., including at the United States Botanic Garden.

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**Title of Artwork Displayed: A Joshua Tree at Sunset, Joshua Tree National Park, California**



Year Created: 2018

Format: Photo print

Dimensions: 16 x 20 in (40,6 x 50,8 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Myersville, Maryland

**Title of Artwork Displayed: Sunset at Keys View, Joshua Tree National Park, California**



Year Created: 2018

Format: Photo print

Dimensions: 16 x 20 in (40,6 x 50,8 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Myersville, Maryland

## **Carolyn Lord (born 1956)**

Watercolor specialist Carolyn Lord paints California's architecture, landscapes, and gardens using bold color and strong design. Both works in this exhibition were painted in her studio based on smaller works she painted *en plein air*. *Nipomo Mustard* shows Nipomo, a coastal California plain bordered by eastern hills and the Pacific Ocean to the west. The grey morning cloud cover "softens the sense of light and shadow while amplifying the colors of the naturalized vegetation in the arroyo and the blue-greens of the distant field of row crops." *Shell Beach Opalescence* depicts rock formations at Shell Beach, characteristic of central California. "In the immediate foreground, the edge of the cliff is in full sun, and from this vantage point, the viewer looks down to the little cove that is dwarfed by the monumental rocks."

Lord attended Principia College in Elsah, Illinois, and has had many artistic collaborations throughout her career. Her works have been exhibited by the National Watercolor Society, the California Watercolor Association, and the Philadelphia Watercolor Society, among others.

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**Title of Artwork Displayed: Nipomo Mustard**



Year Created: 2011

Format: Watercolor on paper

Dimensions: 15 x 22 in. (38,1 x 55,9 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, California

**Title of Artwork Displayed: Shell Beach Opalescence**



Year Created: 2018

Format: Watercolor on paper

Dimensions: 22 x 30 in. (55,9 x 76,2cm)

Courtesy of the artist, California

## Victoria Marquez

“In the rhythm of nature, there is connectivity. My artwork displays multicolored varieties of earth and plants that mix together with lines of energy, vines, leaves, rocks, patterns, movement, melody, and balance. I feel the wild and hopeful struggle of teeming nature is a vision representing all humanity and our struggle to exist on earth. Connected in reality, we, as do the plants and animals, continue to grow and succeed in the cycle of our life and death—mixing, forming, moving, blending.”

Victoria Marquez has experimented with various media throughout her career, culminating in mixed media. In *Rockstraw #7*, “handmade paper absorbs the watercolors. Acrylic medium binds the paper onto the canvas layer after layer. Amazing fiber and texture accentuate the illusion of the movement of living... Joy takes color to dance with form and balance.”

Marquez graduated from the California College of Arts and Crafts, Oakland, currently known as the California College of the Arts, and her work has been exhibited in California, Mexico, and Spain.

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**Title of Artwork Displayed: Rockstraw #7**



Year Created: 2018

Format: Mixed media on canvas

Dimensions: 40 x 30 x 1 ½ in. (101,6 x 76,2 x 3,8 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Fallbrook, California

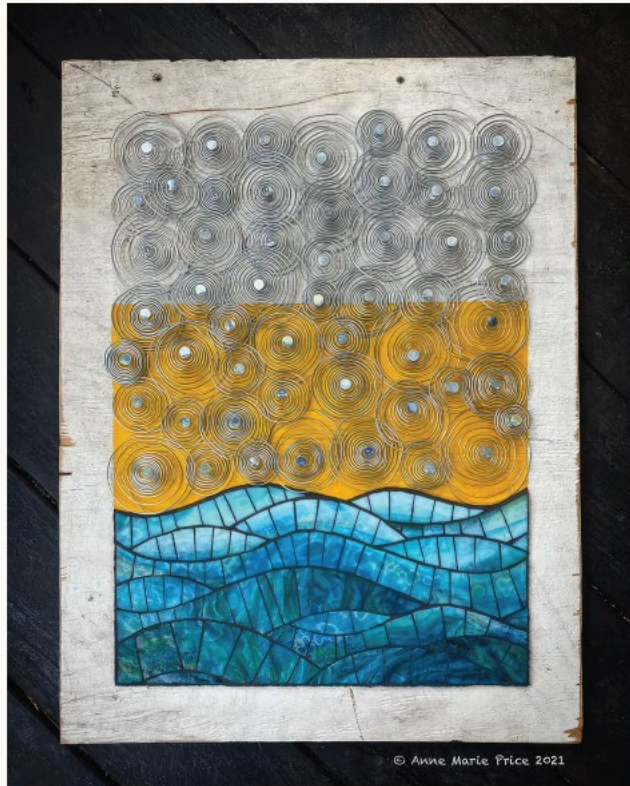
## **Anne Marie Price**

Anne Marie Price uses mosaic art to find peace, purpose, and a way to say her truth out loud with tiny pieces. *Love by the Moon* is titled after the saying, live by the sun, love by the moon. “My interpretation of ‘live by the sun’ in this part of the saying symbolizes your reality...your everyday life...your job...your duties...responsibilities, where ‘love by the moon’ is your heart’s desire...your passions...your time for dreams and dreaming. I created many moons that fill the sky completely to symbolize an abundance of love, passion, [and] dreams in whatever it is that we cherish and pursue personally and its equal importance to the sun part of this expression and our existence.”

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Price is well-known for her mosaic art on the beaches of Southern California and surfboards. Her *Like Sun and Waves I Rise*, the first mosaic surfboard dedicated to women surfers, won the People's Choice Award. Her works have been exhibited widely across California and in Chicago, Illinois; Orlando, Florida; Madison, Wisconsin; and Charlotte, North Carolina.

**Title of Artwork Displayed: Love by the Moon**



Format: Stained glass, wire, nails, and acrylic paint on upcycled wood

Dimensions: 23 ½ x 18 in. (59,7 x 45,7 cm)

Courtesy of the artist, Forest Falls, California

## Lori Sandström

Lori Sandström's art is inspired by her work at the San Diego Zoo and years of world travel.

"Turtles, and the symbolism various cultures have associated with them, have fascinated me from my teenage years on," she says. "As I was designing *Honu*, my intention was to embed symbols that reflect my own cultural experiences in the Hawaiian Islands, Asia, and Africa. In

Feng Shui, turtle images attract wealth, peace, prosperity, power, and good luck. The turtle's long lifecycle symbolizes immortality, [so the work includes] infinity and yin-yang symbols...In the painting of *Honu*, I applied color blends to the canvas using a wide brush, then with small round tip bushes, I overlayed small and large dots."

Sandström received a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in graphic design with minors in painting and photography from the University of Hawaii. Her artwork is displayed at the San Diego Zoo and San Diego Zoo Safari Park, and at various local art shows. She paints in her home studio in Oceanside, California, where she also works on graphic design projects, commissions, and teaching art.

**Title of Artwork Displayed: Honu**



Year Created: 2017

Format: Limited edition gicle'e print on canvas

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

Collection of Art in Embassies, Washington, D.C.; Gift of the estate of Russell Cowles

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