



**United States Embassy Port Louis, Mauritius**

**ART in Embassies Exhibition**

Alfredo Arreguín **Cosmic Bats** (detail), 2003  
Oil on canvas, overall: 60 x 48 in. (152.4 x 121.9 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist, Seattle, Washington

# 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 foreign 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."

*"The ART in Embassies program reveals the rich history and cultural heritage of the United States and the communal experiences that we share with peoples of different countries, backgrounds and faiths, binding us closer together. Through its temporary exhibitions and permanent collections, the ART in Embassies program intrigues, educates, and connects – playing an ambassadorial role as important as that served by traditional diplomacy."*

— Hillary Rodham Clinton  
Former Secretary of State

# Welcome

## Welcome to my home, the Residence of the U.S. Ambassador to Mauritius.

U.S. relations with Mauritius date back to 1794 when William Macarty arrived to become the first consul of the United States. Macarty House, my current home, is named in his honor and serves as a living reminder of over 200 years of excellent relations between our two countries.

Through ART in Embassies, I had the opportunity to select works of art that will introduce you to the United States. I selected a variety of paintings that remind me of my homes, since I have lived in many places, and evoke many pleasant memories for me. The artists reflect the glorious diversity of people, who have come from different parts of the world – similar to Mauritius – and who together have given the United States such a rich culture. I hope you will enjoy these visual depictions of my beautiful country, and appreciate the talents of the generous artists who lent these works.

Most of my younger years were spent in the Southwest region of the United States, an arid environment very different from Mauritius. You may be surprised if you thought that arid regions were devoid of color. The sun, the big skies, the land, and the rock formations combine to create brilliant colors, as you can see in the works of Fran Larsen and Mark Bowles. Bats are

common all over the United States, and especially in the Southwest, but smaller than Mauritian fruit bats. The work of Alfredo Arreguín captures their nocturnal glory. Like Mauritians, most Americans came from other nations, but they did not come to an uninhabited continent. Native Americans, like those you see in the works of John Nieto, considered the land sacred and cared for it. As we seek to preserve the natural wonders of our land, we have gone back to the lessons they tried to teach us long ago.

I also spent many years in the Washington, D.C. area. Many of you may be familiar with the monuments, but may not be aware of Washington's natural beauty. The area around the city is blessed with an abundance of trees and flowers, similar to Mauritius but with different varieties. The works of Pagan Penn and Nancy Haskett capture the floral beauty well. Bertram White, who also lives in the area, captures the more muted colors of the light within the landscape.

As we say in Texas: *Mi Casa Es Su Casa*. So please come in and look around!

**Ambassador Shari Villarosa**

*Port Louis, March 2013*

# Alfredo ARREGUÍN 1935

<http://alfredoarreguin.com>

Alfredo Arreguín was born in Morelia, Michoacan, Mexico. At age nine, he became the youngest pupil at the Morelia School of Fine Art. At age thirteen he moved to Mexico City, living there for eleven years until he came to the United States in 1959. Arreguín is currently a resident of Seattle, where he earned his Bachelor and Master of Fine Arts degrees from the University of Washington.

Arreguín has a long and distinguished list of accomplishments. In 1979 he was selected to represent the United States at the 11th International Festival of Painting at Cagnes-sûr-Mer, France, where he won the Palm of the People Award. In 1980 he received a National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship. In 1988, in a competition that involved over 200 portfolios, Arreguín won the commission to design the poster for the Centennial Celebration of the State of Washington (*Washingtonia*); that same year he was invited to design the White House Easter Egg. Perhaps the climactic moment of his success came in 1994, when the Smithsonian American Art Museum acquired his triptych *Sueno (Dream: Eve Before Adam)* for the permanent collection. A year later, in 1995, Arreguín received an OHTLI Award, the highest recognition given by the Mexican government to the commitment of distinguished individuals who promote Mexican culture abroad. In 2007, his painting *The Return to Aztlan* was included in the exhibition *Framing Memory: Portraiture Now* at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, and remains in the permanent collection. Thus, Arreguín's work is now in the permanent collections of two Smithsonian Museums: The Smithsonian American Art Museum and the National Portrait Gallery.

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**Alfredo Arreguín Cosmic Bats**, 2003  
Oil on canvas, 60 x 48 in. (152.4 x 121.9 cm) >  
Courtesy of the artist, Seattle, Washington



# Mark **BOWLES** 1953

[www.markbowles.com](http://www.markbowles.com)

"I was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area and have painted all my life. My passion for interpreting what I saw brought me to my studies at the California College of Arts & Crafts. There I completed my studies with honors. In addition, I studied at the Instituto Allende in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico. It is this dedication and passion for my art that has allowed my work to grow and move forward and stay fresh. My work is presently collected and shown nationally.

My work is ever changing, ever challenging, and always a passionate delight. It is always my intention to address the canvas directly, honestly, and boldly. My heart is always pushing my work to find new language in expressing what I see and how I feel about it. The result, therefore, is not just an intellectual exercise for me, it is being involved in the 'Now' ... always open for change and challenge ... always evolving.

Exploring color, composition, the quality and attitude of a line, as well as various materials will always fascinate and be tools for me. It is my goal to draw the viewer into my space and let them become involved in their own personal journey and discovery of the work. The ultimate reward for me is to communicate something new to the viewer even if for just a moment in time. Painting is my commitment, my passion, and my fulfillment."

— Mark Bowles



**Mark Bowles**

**A Slight Change of Season**, undated

Acrylic on canvas,

56 1/2 x 44 in. (143.5 x 111.8 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Mark Sublette

Medicine Man Gallery Tucson, Arizona

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**Mark Bowles Fields**, undated >

Acrylic on canvas, 37 x 37 in. (94 x 94 cm)

Courtesy of the artist and Mark Sublette Medicine Man Gallery Tucson, Arizona



# Nancy HASKETT 1948

"My painting is rooted in my visual life with nature. I grew up in the small town of Washington Grove, Maryland, playing under huge oaks and nearby tangled woods. My early memories of patterns of light under trees are contrasted with the open brilliance of the sky and sea on Cape Cod, where we spent our summers. My time alone in the natural world is a constant source for my life as an artist.

I've also been influenced by the work of expressionist and visionary artists of the past. Twentieth century figures like [Wassily] Kandinsky and Arshile Gorky have been a source of inspiration, as well as deeply individual artists of earlier times, like William Blake and Samuel Palmer. I am attracted not so much by the style of their work as I am by their passion for what lies beneath the surfaces they portray."

— Nancy Haskett

Nancy Haskett received her Bachelor of Arts degree in studio art from The George Washington University in 1970, and her Master of Fine Arts degree from the same institution in 1987. Over the years she has lived in a variety of places, including Santa Fe, New Mexico; Denver, Colorado; Detroit, Michigan; Lawrence, Kansas; and Kansas City, Missouri; as well as New Orleans, Louisiana. She currently teaches drawing at Montgomery College in Rockville, Maryland, and continues her twenty-five year long tenure as part of the education staff at The Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C. She has participated in many group shows along the way, as well as a number of solo exhibitions, the latest of which took place in conjunction with The Mousetrap Concert Series in her hometown of Washington Grove, Maryland.



Nancy Haskett **Hydrangea I**, 2004  
Acrylic on canvas, 26 x 23 in. (66 x 58.4 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist, Washington Grove, Maryland



Nancy Haskett **Hydrangea II**, 2004  
Acrylic on canvas, 26 x 23 in. (66 x 58.4 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist, Washington Grove, Maryland

# Fran LARSEN 1937

[http://framlarsen.com/artists/Fran\\_Larsen](http://framlarsen.com/artists/Fran_Larsen)

Born in Chicago, Illinois, Fran Larsen grew up in the resort community of South Haven, Michigan, on the south end of Lake Michigan. As a child she learned about the construction of the land from an uncle who was a glacial geologist. She also drew at an early age, mentored in part by her grandmother who praised and posted her drawings.

Graduating magna cum laude with her Bachelor of Arts degree from Michigan State University, East Lansing, Larsen went on to study art at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts and at Hope College, Holland, Michigan. At the height of a successful art career in Michigan, in 1980, Larsen followed the sun to New Mexico with her then-husband, abstractionist Hal Larsen. Their son Ted Larsen is also a painter and sculptor.

Larsen says that her paintings are metaphors for her reaction to New Mexico's geological grandeur and vibrant cultures. "I am inspired by the way the environment makes me feel," she says. "So, while I reference actual buildings and landscapes, my paintings are what I call 'self talk.' They are intensely personal dialogues between my perceptions and conception, between colors I see and colors that express my bliss."

"Paintings are not windows onto the world, they are reflections of who you are," she explains. "That's why I started carving and painting my frames more than twenty years ago – the frame is an extension of my cockeyed optimism in this magical place." Inspired by travels to Mexico and by the carved and painted vigas she saw in Santa Fe's St. Francis Auditorium, Larsen designs and paints each frame to complement the painting. "The frame also reasserts that the painting is an object as opposed to a representation," she says. Larsen is a highly successful artist, teacher, and international juror.



Fran Larsen **La Tierra Roja**, undated  
Acrylic on panel, 32 x 42 in. (81.3 x 106.7 cm)  
Courtesy of the artist and Manitou Galleries, Santa Fe, New Mexico

# John W. NIETO 1936

[www.bluecoyotegallery.com/JohnNietoOriginalArtworkandPaintings.htm](http://www.bluecoyotegallery.com/JohnNietoOriginalArtworkandPaintings.htm)

John Nieto is considered one of America's most well known and dynamic contemporary artists. Born in Denver, he traces his ancestry, a mix of Native American and Spanish, to the seventeenth century in New Mexico. While growing up in Roswell, New Mexico, Nieto made the decision very early in life to become an artist, claiming he never thought of doing anything else for a living.

After graduating from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in fine art in 1959, Nieto went on a "vision quest" to Paris to seek direction for his art. While in Paris he became impressed with the fauvist techniques of vivid color and bold outlines, which he incorporated into his style. However, he did not find his significant subject matter until he returned home to New Mexico. During a visit to his eighty-six year old grandmother's, she asked him "Johnny, will you paint about my people?" Recalls Nieto, "That is when I started painting Native American themes. It was like being born again."

Nieto's precision of form, combined with broad strokes and intense colors create a distinctive style that has won legions of collectors and admirers worldwide. His work was displayed in the Reagan White House and is currently hanging in the Reagan Library. In 1994 he received the prestigious New Mexican Governors Award for Achievement in the Arts. His art was used for the official poster of the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City.

In 2002 Nieto suffered a stroke and was nearly comatose for two and a half years. In July of 2005 he was admitted to the Southwest Medical Center in Dallas for congestive heart failure. The treatment for his heart failure helped facilitate a miraculous recovery that cured all his stroke symptoms as well. His recovery made national headlines and within days Nieto was painting again. Today he lives in Rockwall, Texas, with his wife and two of his three sons. "I'm in a trance when I paint. It's like being a drummer – you don't look at the drums, you just know intuitively where they are."



**John W. Nieto Plains Princess**, undated  
Acrylic on canvas, 40 x 44 in. (101.6 x 111.8 cm). Courtesy of the artist and Ventana Fine Art, Santa Fe, New Mexico



John W. Nieto **Two Arapaho**, undated  
Acrylic on canvas, 30 x 40 in. (76.2 x 101.6 cm). Courtesy of the artist and Ventana Fine Art, Santa Fe, New Mexico

# Pakan **PENN** 1952

Pakan Penn, a Cambodian-born resident of the Washington, D.C. area, is one of a select group of American artists emerging from the Cambodian Diaspora. His work draws on scenes of his homeland and on his ethnic origins, reflecting his extensive travels and his interior accommodation to life as an exile. It includes impressionistic, realistic, and abstract paintings and portraiture. Penn's signature floral and landscape oil paintings feature the interplay of color and sunlight at various times of the day and in many different settings.

— Pakan Penn



**Pakan Penn Azalea Dream, undated**

Oil on canvas, 48 x 48 in. (121.9 x 121.9 cm). Courtesy of the artist, Arlington, Virginia



**Pakan Penn Wild Poppies, 2002**

Oil on canvas, 48 x 48 in. (121.9 x 121.9 cm). Courtesy of a private collection

# J. Bertram White 1975

[www.bertrandfp.com](http://www.bertrandfp.com)

J. Bertram White began his artistic career in his early twenties with a love for structure, architecture, and photography. While living in Maryland, he completed his undergraduate degree in design and advertising at Howard University in Washington, D.C. Today, Bertram is an award winning abstract artist using a variety of media to create what he terms "a different look at reality."

Particularly known for his bold abstracts, White has won several second place and honorable mention awards in group shows and festivals. He has also had great success in juried exhibitions and with private commissions.

Of his work White has said: "The thing I like about painting is that it captures life ... that one moment, that one remarkable story. I am mesmerized by the textures, light patterns, colors, and voices of the land and sky. I love both the dramatic and bold changes in life, as well as the sheer undeniable strength of the weather and seasons, and from that how light manipulates the contrasting values, hues, and tones of its recipient. As an artist I seek new ways to share my vision."

J. Bertram White **Untitled**, 2010 >

Watercolor on paper, 22 ½ x 18 ½ in. (57.2 x 47 cm)  
Gift of the artist to ART in Embassies, Washington, D.C.



*J. Peterson White 2010*

# Acknowledgments

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