



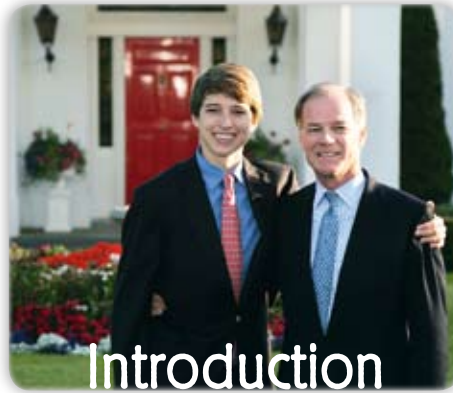
United States Embassy Dublin, Ireland

ART in Embassies Exhibition

Sol LeWitt **Wall Drawing #716**, 1993

Black wall, pencil grid, and white crayon arcs and lines

Gift of Carl Andre (PA 1953); Courtesy of the Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, Massachusetts



One of the great joys of being a U.S. Ambassador is the opportunity to showcase American treasures and talent. I have done this in Ireland by bringing government ministers and other Irish friends to see American musicians perform

in Dublin. The embassy has hosted dinners at the Residence featuring Irish-American poets, writers, and artists. Neither is difficult duty for an ambassador. But no program provides me more pleasure than the ART in Embassies Program. Thanks to ART in Embassies, I am surrounded by and am able to share with visitors great works of art by some of America's greatest artists.

The ART in Embassies Program started more than forty years ago. Its value is widely recognized and supported by major art museums in the U.S. Participating museums, galleries, artists, institutions, corporations and private collectors lend art from their American art collections for exhibition in the public rooms of a residence during an Ambassador's posting.

Among the many dilemmas and demanding tasks facing new ambassadors are the painful choices that need to be made for ART in Embassies. Art exhibitions usually focus on an artist or a theme, so I set out to choose a theme. But I soon noticed that themes reduced the number of excellent works from which one can select, so I abandoned the search for theme on the theory that I would prefer really good works not connected by a theme than lesser works connect-

ed by one. I then faced the difficult choices of which works to select. Choices such as Homer or Hopper? Stuart or Stella? Feininger or Frankenthaler? Ray or Rothko? Gorky or Gornick? These are intimidating choices that people outside of the

curatorial world do not typically make.

I am very happy with the works in this exhibition and the way they work with the Residence. Even though no central theme ties together the exhibition, there are things that connect the works. All of the art chosen is from the twentieth century, a century during which the United States became the most prolific and innovative producer of art in the world. Most of the works are less than fifty years old. All of the art is from artists who were preeminent in their field in their day and whose art appears to be aging well. Each example is excellent, uniquely American, and stands well on its own. When combined with the stunning backdrop of the Residence, this art reminds me every day what a privilege and pleasure it is to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Ireland. I hope you enjoy these American treasures as much as I do.

Ambassador Thomas C. Foley

Dublin
December 2007

Milton Avery

(1893-1965)

Milton Avery's roots lie in the conjunction of American regionalism and European and American impressionism. While Avery began as a relatively traditional painter in the 1920s, his style quickly ran counter to the social realism of the time. He combined elements of American impressionism with the simplified shapes of French artist Henri Matisse to forge a unique style that became increasingly abstract later in Avery's career.

Avery was born at Sand Bank, New York. In 1905 he began attending the Connecticut League of Art Students in Hartford, where he remained an occasional life drawing student through 1919. He moved to New York City in 1925, and in the following decades he showed work at numerous exhibitions mounted by New York galleries and American museums. Avery's preoccupation with French fauvism and German expressionism led him to develop a simplified formal idiom distinguished by clarity of line and an expressive palette. Even though his style was close to abstraction, Avery nonetheless clung to representation throughout his entire career. Classical motifs and subject matter in portraits, still lifes, and coastal landscapes were his main thematic areas and genres.

Prolific as a painter, graphic artist, and ceramist, Avery received numerous awards from American art institutions before he died in 1965, although he only really became famous posthumously. Now he is acclaimed as one of the most influential American twentieth-century artists.

www.milton-avery.com

Milton Avery **Green Stockings**, 1964

Oil on canvas

50 x 42 in. (127 x 106,7 cm)

Courtesy of the Milton Avery Trust, New York, New York



Gifford Beal

(1879-1956)

Gifford Beal was born in 1879 in New York, where he spent most of his life and career. Even as a young man, he was drawn to art, taking classes as a teenager and later studying for many summers with William Merritt Chase, who founded the nation's first summer school for art in Shinnecock Hills, Long Island. After graduation from college, Beal studied at the Art Students League in New York. Early in his career he was recognized as an up-and-coming artist, and in 1908 he was invited to be an associate of the National Academy of Design. In 1914 he became a full member, the same year he was also elected president of the Art Students League, a position he held until 1929. His first solo exhibition was at Kraushaar Galleries in New York in the 1920s, which began a lifelong association with that dealer.

Beal's early work was extremely popular in both subject matter – leisure activities in charming settings – and in method – sparkling color and light carried by quick impressionist brushstrokes. Gradually, he moved away from the impressionist style learned from William Merritt Chase and adopted the broadly realistic style he used to depict the rugged life that he observed during his many summers on the New England coast. Muted tones, strong, thick brushstrokes, and simplified compositions characterize his mid-career works. By 1940 Beal's subject matter shifted to theater and circus scenes, which he portrayed with the radiant color and light effects that had distinguished his early works.

Late in his career, Beal's developed a more forceful and expressive style. He drew his subjects from exotic travels and life in New York City. In 1950 Beal wrote in a letter to art collector Duncan Phillips, "I am too old to do modern work. But I think I can at least keep it fresh and young looking..."

www.phillipscollection.org

Adapted from Eye, VSB/AZ



Gifford Beal **Fishermen, Early Morning**, 1930
Oil on canvas
20 x 36 in. (50,8 x 91,4 cm)
Courtesy of Kraushaar Galleries, Inc., New York, New York

Helen Frankenthaler

(born 1928)

Helen Frankenthaler, a widely acclaimed member of the New York School and a leading figure of second-generation abstract expressionism, is a prominent American artist. Born in New York in 1928, Frankenthaler attended the Dalton School, where she studied with the Zapotecan Mexican painter Rufino Tamayo. After attending Bennington College in Vermont, she returned to New York City to establish herself among the avant-garde. In 1950 she met the formalist art critic Clement Greenberg, who proved instrumental in acquainting Frankenthaler with leading figures in the New York art world such as artists Jackson Pollock and Willem de Kooning. Like them, she was interested in transforming elements of nature into abstract shapes and color.

During the 1950s, Frankenthaler defined her personal style, moving away from abstract expressionism to develop a new technique: pouring thinned pigment onto unprimed canvas. This way of painting, asserting the primacy of color through fusing color and ground, led to a new style in art: color field painting. Frankenthaler's *Mountains and Sea* (1952) signified a turning point in the artist's career – in her large works she began to use this stain technique, pouring turpentine-thinned layers of paint over large unprimed canvases, with effects reminiscent of watercolor. For a number of her contemporaries, primary among them the artists of the Washington color school, soak-staining replaced the thickly painted, gestural strokes of action painting. This pouring technique created abstract fields, or shapes, of color, simplifications of scenes in nature, and achieved a dynamic lyricism that claims the picture space.

Frankenthaler's stained paintings, based on real or imaginary landscapes, epitomize her art. In 1958 Frankenthaler married painter and critic Robert Motherwell, from whom she was later divorced. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s she continued to explore the use of large abstract forms and rich color in her canvases; but in this later work, Frankenthaler began to "flood" her canvases with color rather than staining them, a result of the artist's switch from oil to acrylic paint. She also experimented with other materials, producing steel sculptures, ceramic works, woodcuts, color prints, and illustrated books. In addition to teaching at New York, Harvard, Princeton, and Yale Universities, Frankenthaler has had numerous one-person exhibitions, including retrospectives at New York's Whitney Museum of American Art (1969) and Museum of Modern Art (1989).

www.phillipscollection.org

Helen Frankenthaler **Freefall**, 1993

Hand-dyed paper and woodcut
78 ½ x 60 ½ in. (199,4 x 153,7 cm)
Courtesy of the artist, Darien, Connecticut



Edward Hopper

(1882-1967)

Edward Hopper was one of the foremost American realists of the twentieth century. In etchings, watercolors, and oil paintings, he portrayed ordinary places – drugstores, apartment houses, and small towns. Both commonplace and mysterious, these haunting images led many to praise him as the most American of painters.

Hopper's career blossomed during the 1920s, when critics were calling for a distinctly American art. By the 1930s he was hailed as one of the great American Scene painters, along with Grant Wood and Thomas Hart Benton. Hopper insisted, however, that his work was primarily an expression of his personal feelings rather than an attempt to portray a national experience.

Hopper was born in Nyack, New York. As a child he enjoyed the solitary pleasures of reading and drawing. After high school he studied illustration and then fine arts, attending the New York School of Art from 1903 to 1906. His teachers there were Kenneth Hayes Miller, William Merritt Chase, and Robert Henri, the latter a realist painter who urged students to depict all aspects of urban life. Early in his career, Hopper had to rely on the sale of his etchings and illustrations for income. But at age forty-two, he achieved success with an exhibition of watercolors portraying New England towns and was able to devote the rest of his career to painting.

Early on Hopper established the style and subject matter that brought him fame. He enjoyed exploring New England by car, and his paintings of motels, gas stations, and hotel lobbies evoked the moods and places of a tourist's experience. Frequently he painted people alone or isolated from one another in introspective scenes that seemed to find modern life bleak and lonely. Sunlight also fascinated Hopper, and he used it masterfully to set mood. An avid theatergoer, he often created a suspenseful silence in his paintings, as if the curtain had just risen on a drama.

www.nga.gov

[This is an excerpt from the interactive companion to the videodisc *American Art* from the National Gallery of Art.]



Edward Hopper **Gloucester Harbor**, 1912

Oil on canvas

26 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 38 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (66,5 x 96,8 cm)

Courtesy of the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York; Josephine N. Hopper Bequest 70.1204

Sol LeWitt

(1928-2007)

Sol LeWitt was born in Hartford, Connecticut, to Russian immigrant parents on September 9, 1928. He completed a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at Syracuse University in 1949, and then served in the United States Army in Korea and Japan during the Korean War. In 1953 LeWitt moved to New York, where he took classes at the Cartoonists and Illustrators School and did production work for *Seventeen* magazine. LeWitt subsequently worked in graphic design in the office of award-winning architect I. M. Pei from 1955 to 1956.

Known for his modular white cube sculpture, geometric drawings, and abstract design wall paintings, LeWitt is regarded as a founder of both minimal and conceptual art. Inspired by Russian constructivism and Eadweard Muybridge's sequential photographs of animals and people in motion, LeWitt incorporated seriality in his work to imply the passage of time or narrative. As a conceptual artist, his goal was to explore the formulas with which structures are created, and to focus on abstract philosophical theories. In 1962 LeWitt created his first relief sculpture, and from 1964, executed the cubed works for which he is best known.

Beginning in 1968, LeWitt created wall drawings consisting of geometric pencil lines drawn directly on the walls. By the 1980s, this form of expression evolved to include geometric forms and stars drawn with colored pencil as well as solid areas of ink-washed color and eventually, in 1996, acrylic paint. Teams of assistants were required to create the works, like LeWitt's wall drawing for the 1988 Venice Biennale which engulfed the Italian Pavilion's interior.

In 1980 LeWitt left New York for a quieter life in Spoleto, Italy, where he lived until moving to Chester, Connecticut, in the late 1980s – the place that became his primary residence. Comprehensive LeWitt retrospectives have been organized by the Museum of Modern Art in New York (1978) and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (2000), and his work is held by numerous public and private collections.

www.guggenheimcollection.org • AskArt.com



Sol LeWitt Wall Drawing #716, 1993

Black wall, pencil grid, and white crayon arcs and lines

Gift of Carl Andre (PA 1953); Courtesy of the Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, Massachusetts

Mark Rothko

(1903-1970)

Mark Rothko was born Marcus Rothkowitz on September 25, 1903, in Dvinsk, Russia (now Latvia). In 1913 he left Russia and settled with the rest of his family in Portland, Oregon. Rothko attended Yale University in New Haven, Connecticut, on a scholarship from 1921 to 1923. That year he left Yale without receiving a degree and moved to New York City. In 1925 he studied under Max Weber at the Art Students League. He participated in his first group exhibition at the Opportunity Galleries, New York, in 1928. During the early 1930s Rothko became a close friend of artists Milton Avery and Adolph Gottlieb. His first solo show took place at the Portland Art Museum in 1933.

Rothko's first solo exhibition in New York City was held at the Contemporary Arts Gallery in 1933. In 1935 he was a founding member of the Ten, a group of artists sympathetic to abstraction and expressionism. He executed easel paintings for the WPA Federal Art Project from 1936 to 1937. In the early 1940s he worked closely with Adolph Gottlieb, developing a painting style with mythological content, simple flat shapes, and imagery inspired by primitive art. By mid-decade, his work incorporated surrealist techniques and images. In 1945 Peggy Guggenheim gave Rothko a solo show at Art of This Century gallery in New York.

In 1947 and 1949 Rothko taught at the California School of Fine Arts, San Francisco, where Clyfford Still was a fellow instructor. With William Baziotis, David Hare, and Robert Motherwell, Rothko founded the short-lived Subjects of the Artist school in New York in 1948. The late 1940s and early 1950s saw the emergence of Rothko's mature style, in which frontal, luminous rectangles seem to hover on the canvas surface. The artist began his first commission, monumental paintings for the Four Seasons Restaurant in New York in 1958. Three years later, the Museum of Modern Art, New York, gave Rothko an important solo exhibition. He completed murals for Harvard University in 1962, and in 1964 accepted a mural commission for an inter-denominational chapel in Houston, Texas. Rothko took his own life on February 25, 1970, in his New York studio. The Rothko Chapel in Houston was dedicated one year later.

www.guggenheimcollection.org



Mark Rothko **Untitled**, 1947

Oil on canvas

38 7/8 x 33 in. (98,7 x 83,8 cm)

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Gift of the Mark Rothko Foundation, Inc. 1986.43.15



Mark Rothko **Untitled**, 1947

Oil on canvas

37 ⁷/₈ x 20 ⁷/₈ in. (96,2 x 53 cm)

National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.; Gift of the Mark Rothko Foundation, Inc. 1986.43.16

The ART in Embassies Program

The ART in Embassies Program (ART) is a unique blend of art, diplomacy, and culture. Regardless of the medium, style, or subject matter, art transcends barriers of language and provides the means for the program to promote dialogue through the international language of art that leads to mutual respect and understanding between diverse cultures.

Modestly conceived in 1964, ART has evolved into a sophisticated program that curates exhibitions, managing and exhibiting more than 3,500 original works of loaned art by U.S. citizens. The work is displayed in the public rooms of some 180 U.S. embassy residences and diplomatic missions worldwide. These exhibitions, with their diverse themes and content, represent one of the most important principles of our democracy: freedom of expression. The art is a great source of pride to U.S. ambassadors, assisting them in multi-functional outreach to the host country's educational, cultural, business, and diplomatic communities.

Works of art exhibited through the program encompass a variety of media and styles, ranging from eighteenth century colonial portraiture to contemporary multi-media installations. They are obtained through the generosity of lending sources that include U.S. museums, galleries, artists, institutions, corporations, and private collections. In viewing the exhibitions, the thousands of guests who visit U.S. embassy residences each year have the opportunity to learn about our nation – its history, customs, values, and aspirations – by experiencing firsthand the international lines of communication known to us all as art.

The ART in Embassies Program is proud to lead this international effort to present the artistic accomplishments of the people of the United States. We invite you to visit the ART web site, <http://aiep.state.gov>, which features on-line versions of all exhibitions worldwide.

Acknowledgments

Washington

Anne Johnson, Director, ART in Embassies Program
Virginia Shore, Curator
Claire D'Alba, Assistant Curator
Theresa Beall, Registrar
Marcia Mayo, Publications Editor
Sally Mansfield, Associate Publications Editor
Amanda Brooks, Imaging Manager

Dublin

Melissa Danforth, Special Assistant to Ambassador Foley
Chris O'Connor, General Services Officer
Gil Serrao, Facilities Manager
Bryan Murphy, Logistics Chief
Joseph O'Connor, Electrician
Brian Fitzmaurice, Residence Manager

Vienna

Nathalie Mayer, Graphic Designer



Published by the ART in Embassies Program
U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C.
December 2007