



**ART IN
EMBASSIES
EXHIBITION**

*United States Embassy
Luanda*

ELLIS BUCKNER

Untitled (Landscape with Birds)

c. 1970

Oil on canvas

21 ¾ × 28 in. (55,2 × 71,1 cm)

Courtesy of Antony Hayton, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

WELCOME

In choosing the artwork for this exhibition, I wanted to highlight innovative mid-20th century American art movements. I am indebted to Canadian collector Tony Hayton, who loaned Art in Embassies three Florida Highwaymen landscapes for display in the Luanda Residence. The Florida Highwaymen are a group of twenty-six self-taught African American painters who painted traditional Florida landscapes. Denied entry to established galleries, they sold their artwork along the central Florida highways, from which they derived their name. Their vibrant art is a testimony to their determination and perseverance against racism and segregationist policies. The subtropical Florida landscapes remind us of the many colors, flora, inland water, and ocean views found in Angola. The Audubon print of the American pink flamingo also references the Angolan flamingo while the rugged northeastern coast oil painting provides a different coastal view from across the Atlantic.

In contrast to the folk-art quality of the Florida Highwaymen, the Roy Lichtenstein lithographs are classic pop-art images from the 1960s. Lichtenstein pioneered the use of cartoon images, Ben-Day dots, and hard-edged figures. His works also highlight celebrated the New York performing arts scene and venues. The upbeat lithographs represent to me the dynamism of the New York art scene as it broke with tradition in the latter half of the 20th century. The Jasper Johns' Flag is another mid-century iconic image that reminds us of our mission in representing the United States overseas.

It is a privilege to live with these wonderful artworks and share these American stories with the Angolan people. Great thanks to Art in Embassies for making this possible.

Ambassador Nina Maria Fite

*December 2019
Republic of Angola*



American Flamingo #87

undated

Poster

40 ½ x 27 ½ in. (102,9 x 69,9 cm)

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

JOHN JAMES AUDUBON 1785–1851

John James Audubon, a pioneering conservationist and naturalist for whom the National Audubon Society is named, was born in Les Cayes, Santo Domingo (now Haiti), but raised in France. During his childhood, near Nantes, he studied geography, fencing, and mathematics, but was most enthusiastic about exploring the outdoors and collecting and drawing birds's nests, eggs, and other curiosities. Later in life, Audubon became known for his documentation of American birds, traveling back and forth between the United States and England to secure specimens and funding. His eventual collection, *The Birds of America*, featured hand-colored engravings of over a thousand different birds.

FLORIDA HIGHWAYMEN

The Florida Highwaymen are a group of twenty-six African American self-taught painters who emerged from the Fort Pierce, Florida area in the mid-1950s. During a time of racial intolerance, segregation, and prejudice they broke against convention and the norm by creating bold, vivid, and vibrant landscapes of Florida. Denied access to galleries they took to the road to sell their art to businesses, individuals, and tourists. It has been estimated that they have created between 250,000 and 400,000 works. By fighting for their civil rights and freedom, they became a pioneering example for the American Dream.



ELLIS BUCKNER 1943–1991

Ellis Buckner was already a practicing artist when he and his brother George were introduced to founding Florida Highwaymen, Harold Newton and Alfred Hair. It was through the Highwaymen, though, that he began to paint professionally. He studied with his brother to learn more advanced painting techniques, such as vanishing points and horizon lines, and incorporate them into their works. Buckner's work kept to a more realistic color palette than most of the other Highwaymen, and placed birds in his landscapes, carefully rendering reflections in the water.

Untitled (Landscape with Birds)

c. 1970

Oil on canvas

21 ¾ × 28 in. (55,2 × 71,1 cm)

Courtesy of Antony Hayton, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada



Untitled (Rio Mar #2)

c. 1970

Oil on Masonite

17 × 20 in. (43,2 × 50,8 cm)

Courtesy of Antony Hayton,
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada



Untitled (Steamy River Sunset)

c. 1970

Oil on Upsom board

26 ½ × 38 ¾ in. (67,3 × 98,4 cm)

Courtesy of Antony Hayton, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

SAM NEWTON 1948—



From the very beginning of his painting career, Sam Newton concentrated on making quality paintings. He works slowly, paying careful attention to composition, color, and details. His works are crisp and clear, with great attention to the way a landscape looks. As an independent person, he has never seen any reason to be constrained by the dictation or identity of the Highwaymen group. Through the years, Newton has focused on Florida's environment, and his works reflect his vast knowledge of the land, skies, and waterways.



JASPER JOHNS

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART NEW YORK

JASPER JOHNS 1930–

Jasper Johns is an American painter, sculptor, and printmaker. Born in Augusta, Georgia, he began his career as a commercial artist, producing displays for New York shop windows. In 1958 he had his first successful solo exhibition. His images depict commonplace two-dimensional objects (e.g., flags, maps, targets, numbers, and letters of the alphabet) in simple colors. His banal subject matter and rejection of emotional expression departed radically from the abstract expressionism that then dominated the American art scene.

Flag

1954

Poster

31 x 39 in. (78,7 x 99,1 cm)

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

Lincoln Center 4th New York Film Festival Philharmonic Hall
1966

Offset lithograph

45 x 29 in. (114,3 x 73,7 cm)

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

Gift of Evelyn Farland



Composition III

1996

Silkscreen on paper

51 3/4 x 36 3/8 in. (131,4 x 92,4 cm)

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



Reverie
1965

Offset lithograph

35 ¼ x 30 ¼ in. (89,5 x 76,8 cm)

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

Gift of Phillip Morris Companies, Inc.

ROY LICHTENSTEIN 1923–1997

In 1961, Roy Lichtenstein, one of pop art's originators, made his first canvases based on images he found in the media. He chose generic consumer images and hackneyed cartoon panels from serial romance and war comic books because of their value as highly unconventional subject matter and because of the friction they suggested between the commonplace and fine art. His deadpan renditions and use of Ben-Day dots, long a staple technique of advertising and graphic arts, soon became his signature style. The emphasis on the "object-ness" of his subjects shifted art's focus away from the painterly, more private realm proclaimed in abstract expressionism a decade earlier toward a candid, often unflinching depiction of the fabricated reality of postwar American culture at large.



DON RESNICK 1928–2008

Don Resnick is one of a handful of significant painters who devoted their talents to portraying the American landscape. His works revealed an increasingly loose, even impulsive brushwork, and an almost watercolor-like lucidity. The resulting luminosity appeared as a creative current throughout his later works whether depicting closely tangled woods or vast open shorelines. Light is the unifying element, even in his few quiet nocturnes. Resnick studied at Hobart College in Geneva, New York; at the School for Social Research in New York City; and the Internationale Akademie für Bildende Kunst in Salzburg, Austria.

Isle au Haut

1992

Oil on canvas

48 x 60 ½ in. (121,9 x 153,7 cm)

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

Donated by David Resnick and Iwonka Piotrowska, Rockville Center, New York

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."

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