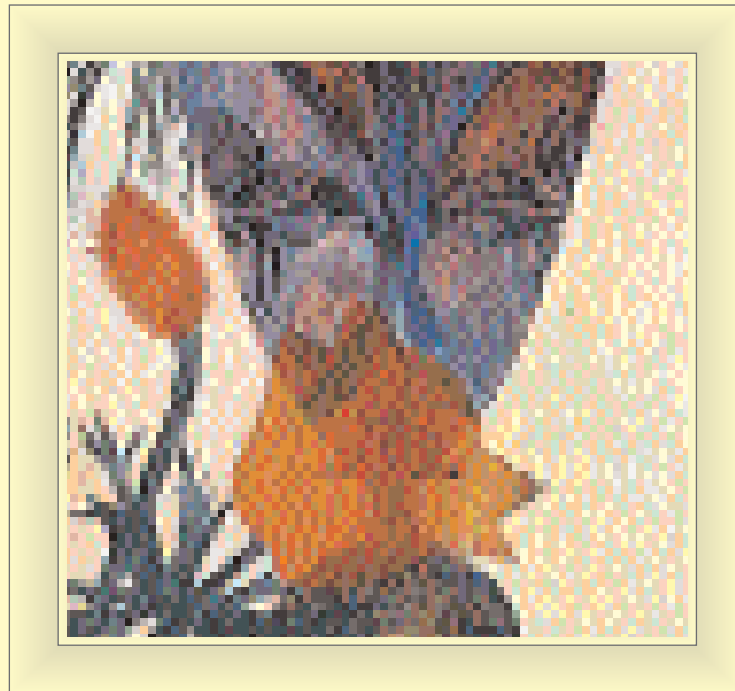
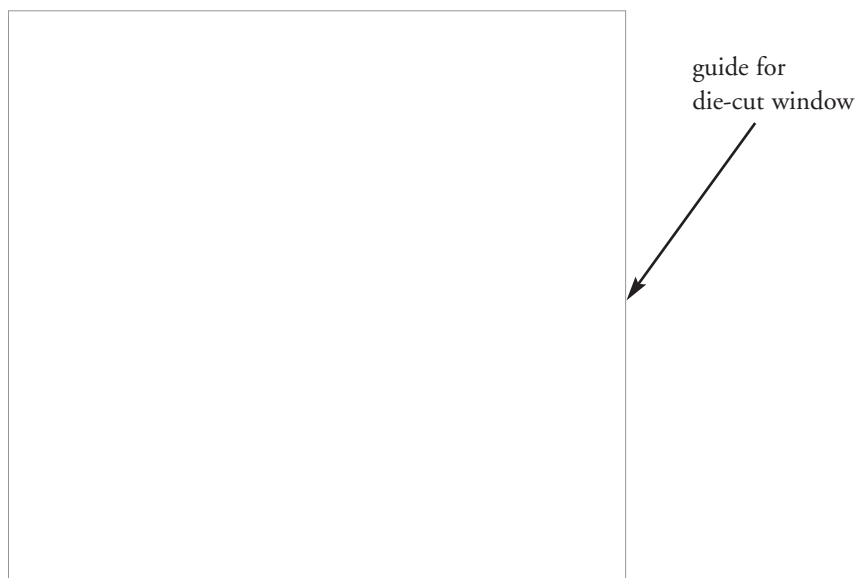


U.S. MISSION TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND
FROM HER STUDIO TO GENEVA



ART IN EMBASSIES PROGRAM



(On the cover)

Isabel Kahn, *The Covered Cup*, printed papers, paint, canvas,
1996, 30 x 60 in. (76.2 x 152.4 cm). (Detail)



Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament

Welcome to the residence of the U.S. Ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, Switzerland. Located in a splendid Art Deco building on Quai Wilson, the spacious apartment overlooks Lake Geneva and the French Alps with Mont Blanc rising majestically in the background. It is a perfect spot to share with our guests some of the best in American art. Thanks to the Art in Embassies Program, the enthusiasm and assistance of curator Diane Tepfer, and the generosity of the artists themselves, we have been able to do so.

Ann and I chose to exhibit a number of works by contemporary American women artists. We have several in our private collection, many from Ann's mother, a talented creator of ceramic sculpture.



The inspiration for this collection has sprung from Ann's upbringing among many talented and creative women. It is a tribute to them and to all women artists who continue to create and expand the horizons of art in America.

The process of choosing the pieces, often meeting the artists or their representatives, awaiting their arrival, then installing them, and finally being able to share them with our guests has been a most rewarding experience. We are grateful for the opportunity to live with these expressions of the creative human spirit, and each day that passes, they have become close friends.

We hope you will enjoy this collection and that it will give you an appreciation of the enormous range of talent and imagination that exists in America, making it such a vibrant and exciting society.

Ambassador Robert T. Grey
and Ann Guilford-Grey

Geneva, Switzerland
Autumn 2000

Curator's Statement

It has been an adventure to visit artist studios and share progress reports with Ann Grey as we jointly put together this special exhibition. The adventure has continued as I read Ann's drafts of the personalized biographies. Ambassador and Mrs. Grey's observations come from the vantage point not only of visiting artists in their studios and attending their gallery openings, but living with *From Her Studio to Geneva* and introducing it to the many visitors to the official residence. As curator, I offer a few remarks on the historical background behind the exhibition.

The most striking quality linking the diverse selection of art on exhibition in Geneva by contemporary American women artists is the use of nontraditional materials. The media range from copper and poetry in Lesley Dill's *Copper Poem Figure*, to silk organza with newspaper collage and embroidery, in Marian Schoettle's veil-like *The Newspaper Dress with Ornamental Sleeves*, to aluminum in Rebecca Kamen's Kami sculpture, to printed papers in Isabel Kahn's *The Covered Cup*, to glazed terra-cotta, metal screws, and painted wood in Margaret Guilford's *Ceramic*

Wall Puzzle. The use of materials so varied in texture gives this exhibition a very tactile quality. This aesthetic is so pervasive in the Grey's exhibition that even the traditional oil on canvas paintings by Diana Postel, acrylic on linen painting by Su Kwak, and cast bronze sculpture by Ruth Satterlee Cook appear palpable.

Historically, women often participated from the sidelines or rather, the home front, in the early twentieth century experiments in abstraction. The groundbreaking achievements toward pure abstraction made by family-bound European and American female artists such as Sonia Delaunay (1885-1974), Sophie Tauber Arp (1889-1943), and Marguerite Zorach (1887-1968) received much less notice during their lifetimes than that of their full-time artist husbands. By the 1970s many, many women including Miriam Schapiro and Faith Ringgold proudly and boldly celebrated their status as the "other," and showcased domestic and other formerly "minor arts" such as embroidery, appliqué, costume, and quilting in their art. Other women artists, including Eva Hesse and Nancy Spero, have experimented with a plethora of unusual or eccentric materials, techniques, and subject matter. The artists in *From Her Studio to Geneva* pay homage to their foremothers by forefronting these formerly non-traditional media.

Diane Tepfer, Ph.D.
Curator
December 2000

Art in Embassies Program

Welcome to the Art in Embassies Program (AIEP), a unique blend of art and diplomacy, politics and culture. Regardless of medium, style or subject matter, art transcends barriers of language and provides the means for AIEP to achieve its mission: to promote national pride and the distinct cultural identity of America's art and its artists.

Modestly conceived in 1964, this "Public Diplomacy" initiative has evolved into a sophisticated program that manages and exhibits more than 3,500 original works of art on loan for display in the public rooms of U.S. Embassy Residences and diplomatic missions worldwide. AIEP exhibitions depict the diversity and individuality of expression that American artists have the freedom to convey, and have become a source of pride to U.S. ambassadors as they assist in multi-functional outreach to educational, cultural, business and diplomatic communities.



The AIEP web site, <http://aiep.state.gov>, features exhibition catalogs as country web pages, and hyperlinks with participating embassies, lenders, artists, museums and galleries. Advances in interactive technology have opened lines of communication throughout the world to all those with web capability, and with research confirming the educational value of the arts, what better emissaries than our artists to celebrate the stories of our nation, its customs, and its people?

We thank our AIEP partners from the diverse communities and regions of the United States and we welcome the White House Millennium Council, as it joins with AIEP to sponsor new education outreach initiatives. These "partnerships" continue to be our greatest strength and make it possible to provide excellent and distinctive examples of our nation's cultural and artistic heritage.

The Art in Embassies Program is proud to lead this global effort to support the artistic accomplishments of the people of the United States. I trust that your experience has been both educational and memorable.

Gwen Berlin
Director, Art in Embassies Program

Lesley Dill



Copper Poem Figure, acrylic on copper, 1996, 54.25 x 10.75 x 2 in. (137.8 x 27.3 x 5.1 cm),
lent by the artist and the George Adams Gallery, New York, New York.

A gift of Emily Dickinson poems in 1990, was the catalyst for Ms. Dill to incorporate text into her work. Each piece is embellished with poetry, linguistic metaphors, and visible speech. Dickinson's works "are basically blood to me." A multi-media artist, Ms. Dill bases her work on the body, having been influenced by the sculpture of Giacometti and Nancy Spero.

The materials that she uses are silk, wood, rice paper, muslin, horsehair, wire, and copper. The surface is often altered "to make it look old and lived, somehow." Ms. Dill has often been quoted about language and the urge to communicate. "Even if you don't understand it, language is a manifestation of the human need to reach out and across."

It [language] is "given shape by the body and not the brain. Words are a kind of spiritual armor.... I feel language clothes us and protects us and comes out of us and is all over us.... The protecting skin of words dresses the soul with inspirations of vulnerability, fear, and hope. As clothing cloaks or reveals, so does language, which can selectively present or obscure."

Our own experience and that of others, is that while studying the work, the viewer often speaks the words aloud. By speaking the text, it becomes more than a visual and intellectual appreciation of the piece; it becomes a physical and more complete experience. The viewer is truly engaged.*

* Unless otherwise noted, the statement accompanying a work of art was written by the artist.



The Newspaper Dress with Ornamental Sleeves, silk organza with newspaper collage and embroidery, 1999, 45 x 72 in. (114.3 x 182.9 cm), lent by the artist, Esopus, New York.

A textile and three-dimensional artist with extensive and impressive credentials both in the United States and in the major cultural centers of Europe, Marian Schoettle lends a theatrical sensitivity to her creations. Her biography gives evidence to a keen interest in “art and design as agents for social change,” and much of her work is collaborative and interactive as seen in the installations by the Tropisme Group in Amsterdam and the Czech Republic. A graduate of Colgate University, Ms. Schoettle has received awards for her work, which is also included in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, the Textile Museum of the Netherlands, Tilburg, and the Municipal Museum of The Hague.

“The dress represents the social interface in which we cloak ourselves in the status of being abreast of the news,” according to the artist. We trust that you will be as captivated as we are by *Newspaper Dress*. Because of the transparent quality of the work, one could say that it is a very timely piece as “transparency” is the “buzz word” to which many of today’s corporations and governments give lip service. How appropriate that the dress be in the residence of the U.S. Permanent Representative to the Conference on Arms Control. Often referred to as “she,” the dress is suspended from the ceiling. Whenever the dress is moved by occasional air currents, it takes on a human presence.

Diana Postel



Waiting, oil on canvas, undated, 52 x 44 in. (132.1 x 111.8 cm),
lent by the artist, Katonah, New York.

We first discovered the Chicago-born artist while I was at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, and Ann was acting with the Art & Work Ensemble (AWE) in New York City. The group performed at Synchronicity Space, a Soho art gallery and theatre. We enjoyed becoming acquainted with the work of different artists over time.

One artist, whose work stayed with us for a long time, was Diana Postel. Her paintings are both vibrant and insouciant, and almost always evoke a smile, perhaps because of the bold use of colors, the placement of objects, or the attitude of the subjects. Her work has been exhibited in the United States and Russia, and is in private collections throughout the U.S. and Europe. It is a wish come true that not just one, but two, of Ms. Postel's paintings are included in this exhibition.

Ms. Postel recalls that *Waiting* “grew as a story began to unfold in my mind of a mail-order bride, who was waiting at a bus station somewhere in the Southwest, for her future husband to pick her up.”

About her painting entitled *Peonies*, the artist explains that “as with all my still-lives, I work from objects I arrange to create a composition which will present interesting and provocative relationships of shapes and color . . . This, in turn, will create a world of light and space which, if successful, will evoke in each viewer feelings, sensations, and even memories from one's own unique life experiences.”

Diana Postel



Peonies, oil on canvas, undated, 51 x 38 in. (129.5 x 96.5 cm),
lent by the artist, Katonah, New York.



The Covered Cup, printed papers, paint, canvas, 1996, 30 x 60 in.
(76.2 x 152.4 cm), lent by the artist, Seattle, Washington.

A Seattle-based artist, Ms. Kahn develops each body of work from both focused investigation and personal interpretation. Selecting wild as well as cultivated plants growing in the Washington landscape, she studies the form and habits of the plants, with particular attention to their growth cycles. Literary references are avidly investigated and often-surprising parallels are found.

The Palestinian anemone or *Anemone Coronaria* punctuates the painting. It is a fragile flower whose gnarled roots represent the tenacity of life and whose beautiful intensely colored bloom signifies the transience of conscious time spent in the world. The brilliant flower reoccurs annually in even the most severe conditions. Its common name, “Windflower,” refers to this poetic airborne passage. Tales of the Palestinian anemone are derived from the ancient Greek legend of Venus and Adonis. Drops of tears or blood, when spilled in grief like those of Venus for Adonis, yield red flowers from the earth.

Growing prolifically and wild in the Middle East, the artist says that “the prominent appearance of such a fragile flower in this hotbed of international activity suggest the constancy of nature, the perennial rhythms of the natural world in comparison to the shifting power of nations. We have much to learn from the beautiful anemone. Civilizations flower alternately, lasting briefly in the larger scope of time. Our ultimate connection is with the natural world where our future survival depends upon our tenacious roots and a respectful relationship with the earth.”

We were drawn to this work because of its intricacy and sense of mystery. It was as if being allowed a glimpse into a secret garden. Painted in six panels of varying sizes, *The Covered Cup* is not framed, but instead its painted canvas wraps around the edges. Seen from a slight distance, it appears to be a partially folded screen, adding to its exotic charm.



Kami Series, oil and acrylic on aluminum and wood, 1989, 36 x 36 x 1.5 in.
(91.4 x 91.4 x 3.8 cm), lent by the artist, McLean, Virginia.

Ms. Kamen has her Master of Fine Arts degree in sculpture from the Rhode Island School of Design. As well as being a multimedia artist, she is Professor of Art at the Northern Virginia Community College in Alexandria, and is a recent recipient of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Professional Fellowship Grant.

One of her most fascinating projects was *A Bridge Between Cultures (1987-1994)*, a seven-year collaboration between Ms. Kamen and Chinese sculptor Zhao Shu Tong, which demonstrated “the role of art as a common language, enhancing understanding of diverse cultures.” The artist notes that “I have long been interested in Asian concepts of beauty and spirituality as expressed by natural phenomena such as clouds, rocks, and water. Some of my works deal with the Japanese concept of Kami, wherein the vital life force energy is believed to reside in natural objects.”

The two Kamen pieces in our exhibition are very strong in design and choice of materials. Both draw the eye and anchor the space where they are installed. We enjoy watching the subtle changes of light reflected in the aluminum and painted surfaces as the day progresses into evening. At night, artificial light brings out the deeper hues and contrasts.

Rebecca Kamen



Rockscape Altarpiece #2, oil and acrylic on aluminum and wood, 1991, 60 x 36 x 1.5 in.
(152.4 x 91.4 x 3.8 cm), lent by the artist, McLean, Virginia.

Su Kwak



Divided Light # 18, acrylic on linen, 1996, 36 x 48 in. (91.4 x 121.9 cm),
lent by the artist, Bethesda, Maryland.

A landscape abstractionist, Korean-born Su Kwak has been mentioned in the same breath with classic Northern Romantic thinking which dictated that the artist was to master “a religion of his own, to express an original view of the infinite,” the infinite being the equivalent of nature. The contrast of light and dark is readily evident in her paintings.

For the artist, light represents spiritual strength to be sought amidst the darkness of life’s hardships. Inspired by nature and childhood memories of rural Korea, Kwak wishes to capture and reveal contradictory emotions, while ultimately offering the viewer hope.

We love the way this luminous painting reflects the light and changing moods of the lake, sky, and mountains as we see them every day.

Ruth Satterlee Cook (1907-1965)



First Baby, edition of six, cast bronze, 1965, 7 x 4 x 1.75 in.
(18 x 10 x 4.4 cm), private collection.

A native of California and a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley, Mrs. Cook later moved to Michigan where she and her husband, Richard, raised their family. She was the first President of the Founders Society of the Flint Institute of Arts, and was a frequent prize-winner for her terra-cotta sculptures, a number of which reflected the mother and child theme.

Originally a three-foot high terra-cotta sculpture, *First Baby* won the popular prize in the 25th Annual Flint Artists Show in 1955. This bronze statue was created after the artist's mastectomy, when she no longer had the strength to work in clay. It is a lovely memory of a lovely lady and artist. Wherever we have served, *First Baby* has always been widely admired.

Margarete Guilford (1906-1983)



Ceramic Wall Puzzle, glazed terra-cotta, metal screws, and painted wood, n.d.,
50 x 10 in. (127 x 26 cm), private collection.

We are very happy to be able to include a piece by Ann's mother, who for several years was a pupil of Svea Kline, an associate of the renowned Swedish sculptor, Carl Milles. An independent spirit, who defined herself as "German by heritage, Norwegian by birth, and American by choice," Margarete loved to experiment with all manner of materials. Whether working with fibers, textiles, clay, alabaster, whatever came to hand, she had a particular sensitivity for design and texture. It is this spirit of adventure in the creative arts that we wish to celebrate.

White House Millennium Council

President and Mrs. Clinton created the White House Millennium Council in 1997 to give every American an opportunity to mark the millennium in meaningful activities that celebrate our democracy, strengthen communities, and leave lasting “gifts to the future.” Guided by the national theme, “Honor the Past — Imagine the Future,” the Millennium Council works with federal agencies, state and local governments, and private sector organizations to develop collaborative projects and public/private partnerships.



The White House Millennium Council and the U.S. Department of State Art in Embassies Program celebrate America’s artists for their creativity and generosity to U.S. Embassy Residences and diplomatic missions.

Art in Embassies Program (AIEP) Education Initiatives

ArtReach provides host country citizens with an opportunity to better understand the stories of America, and who we are as a people through the AIEP thematic art exhibitions displayed in the public rooms of U.S. Embassy Residences and diplomatic missions abroad. Bilingual exhibition catalogs will serve as the textbooks for this educational tour through the cultural history of the United States, as well as country home pages on AIEP’s new web site. Ambassadors will be provided with recommended resources and suggested activities through which to realize the full potential of this innovative “Public Diplomacy” outreach initiative. Pilot programs begin in the year 2000.

Beacons & Bridges is an interactive education program designed to promote web-based exchanges between U.S. and host country students. Separated by geography, these young people will learn to communicate electronically, using the Art in Embassies Program (AIEP) thematic art exhibitions as a means to initiate online discussions. The initial theme will center around their respective cultures and the role that culture plays in foreign policy. Once instituted, the online Beacons & Bridges relationship between the two schools can expand to include a variety of topics selected to reinforce or supplement standard curricula.

<http://aiep.state.gov> The Art in Embassies Program state-of-the-art web site provides AIEP with the tools necessary to function as an interactive global museum. Exhibition catalogs are featured as individual country home pages that will guide foreign and domestic audiences as they explore the artistic heritage of the United States. Web capability permits “hyperlinks” with participating U.S. ambassadors, artists, museums, and galleries. We encourage you to log on regularly as information and exhibitions are continually posted and updated.

This exhibition and catalog have been made possible through the efforts of the following people:

Gwen Berlin, *Director, Art in Embassies Program*

Diane Tepfer, *Curator*

Steven Dykstra, *Registrar*

Marcia Mayo, *Catalog Editor*

Wendy Lubetkin, *Information Specialist,*

U.S. Mission, Geneva

Martin Da Costa, *Transportation Specialist,*

U.S. Mission, Geneva

Marc Kuchen, *Photographer, Geneva*

Isabelle Riedo, *Harsch Transports Company, Geneva*

Printed by the Department of State Multi-Media Services
at the Regional Printing Center, Manila.

This catalog was partially funded by the



FRIENDS OF ART AND PRESERVATION IN EMBASSIES

a private, non-profit, educational foundation
formed in 1986 to assist the U.S. Department of State
in its various programs designed to
exhibit and preserve fine and decorative art
in U.S. embassy residences abroad.



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Washington, District of Columbia
Geneva, Switzerland