



UNITED STATES EMBASSY GEORGETOWN, GUYANA ART IN EMBASSIES EXHIBITION

## 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 1963, 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>.

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## LIGHTING THE SOUL

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Welcome to the American Ambassador's Residence in Georgetown, Guyana, and to an exhibition of American art from the U.S. State Department's ART in Embassies Program. The eight artists in *Lighting the Soul* share a belief that art is a transformative journey across time and place. Though widely different in approach, each artist anchors his or her aesthetic vision in autobiography and from there, layers a universal message of commitment, resilience, and hope.

Jacob Lawrence, a master chronicler of African-American history and life, is represented by *Supermarket Flora*, a quiet interior scene that celebrates the beauty in the everyday. Equally bold in color is Chevelle Makeba Moore Jones' *Choose Wisely*, in which she turns elements of a still life into a kaleidoscopic image of the mind at work. In *Survivor Spirits* and *Team Play*, Joyce Owens explores the ongoing contributions of African-Americans to our shared humanity, while in Peggy Blood's *Georgia Morning* and *Goodbye Sweet Dreams*, swirls of dark and bright tones capture the atmospheric veil of memory.

The sense of tranquility in Chez's *Boat Scene* and *Jazz Player* belies their passionate dedication to two fallen friends. Both Leroy Neiman and Michael Robbins mine sports as a dynamic metaphor of determination. In Neiman's *Bucking Bronc*, rider and mount seem to leap from the picture frame in an explosion of color, while the spectators are reduced to the distant background. In *Jim Brown, Portrait of a Fullback*, Robbins opts to isolate the figure running in a verdant field rather than a stadium. By contrast, Joyce Wellman uses the language of geometric abstraction to convey the rich, emotional tapestry of our collective experience.

We invite you to enjoy this exhibition and hope it will foster a dialogue between the United States and Guyana. Our deep appreciation goes to the artists who generously lent their works and also to the many professionals who made this exhibition possible.

**Sarah Tanguy, Curator**  
ART in Embassies Program

Washington • May 2009

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## JOYCE WELLMAN (born 1949)

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"Art is the fuel that carries me on an adventure to discover the mysteries of the universal and the individual self. Because art is both seen and felt it has the power to engage the body, mind and spirit. Guided by the universal intuition and random chance, the grammar, emotion and passion of my art become knowable and meaningful, and inform me, and I hope others, about ourselves and our world."

A native New Yorker, Joyce Wellman moved to Washington, D.C. in 1981. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in education from the Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, and a Master of Arts degree from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Since the late 1970s, her prints, drawings, and paintings have been regularly exhibited throughout the United States as well as in Kenya, and have received critical review in art publications nationally and internationally. They can also be found in several public and private collections.

### **SiGN WAVE**, 1998

*Acrylic on wood*

*36 x 72 in. (91,4 x 182,9 cm)*

*Courtesy of the artist, Washington, D.C.*

Wellman's recent work continues to be process-driven. "The works thematically have become more non-objective, yet remain cryptically symbolic, even emotional. I use abstract geometry as a means to connect the viewers with simplicity and therefore to the spiritual in art. My vocabulary still explores textures, mark making, mixed media and referential symbols, but introduces a new palette, which allows me to apply many layers of vibrant, transparent color to the geometric and mathematically inspired content and canvas – a layering that is symbolic of the multi-faceted nature of human existence."

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





**BALANCE MASTER I, 2006**  
*Acrylic and mixed media on paper*  
38 x 28 in. (96,5 x 71,1 cm)  
*Courtesy of the artist, Washington, D.C.*

**BALANCE MASTER II, 2006**  
*Acrylic and mixed media on paper*  
28 x 38 in. (71,1 x 96,5 cm)  
*Courtesy of the artist, Washington, D.C.*

