

Response to ABC 7 Questions on U.S. Department of State's Art in Embassies Program May 2014

What's the scope of the Arts in Embassies program over FY2012-14, how much money has been spent, how many artists/works of art have been commissioned as part of the program?

For the past fifty-one years, the U.S. Department of State's Office of Art in Embassies (AIE) has played a leading role in promoting America's cultural diplomacy with temporary loaned art exhibitions of American art for Ambassadors' residences and permanent art collections for new U.S. embassies and consulates, as well as artist exchanges worldwide.

The mission of promoting cultural exchange through the visual arts and artist exchanges generates cross-cultural explorations and encourages U.S. relations with local communities, emphasizing the shared bonds between the U.S. and the host governments. These exhibitions provide international audiences with a sense of the quality, scope, and diversity of both countries' art and culture.

These exhibitions and permanent collections 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.

Now with exhibitions and collections at over 200 posts worldwide and due to the generosity of the artists, museums, galleries, universities, collectors, and corporate collections, AIE has over 20,000 partners. Each year our partners graciously loan approximately 2,800 works of art valued between \$100-400 million for the representational spaces in the Department's Chief of Mission Residences.

Funding for the purchase of art for most new U.S. embassy and consulate projects is included as part of the project budget, allocated at 0.5% of the value of the construction contract. This percentage is in line with GSA's Art in Architecture Policies and Procedures as well as other state government guidelines. There are occasionally additional requirements for public art mandated by city or municipal planning authorities.

The value of the art on loan to AIE ranges between \$100 to 400 million annually and the FY'12 –FY'14 acquisitions averages \$2.33 million annually.

You mentioned on the phone about this program being funded as .5% of the total construction budget for new embassies. Do you have the specific amounts for the construction budgets as to the embassies currently under construction that we can figure out that number from or do you have a dollar figure per embassy?

The current art budget for the capital projects is 0.5 percent of the construction value. By comparison, GSA funding allocation for the Art in Architecture Program is at least 0.5 percent of the building project's total Estimated Construction Costs. The federal and state standard for art for all government buildings ranges between .5 to 1 percent, for example the Chicago Percent for Art Ordinance is 1.33% of the cost of constructing or renovating municipal buildings and public spaces.

Is AIE funded as a line item in each project or is there a financial statement year to year that is produced that you could send me so we could better understand the program's finances?

As stated previously, the Art in Embassies art acquisitions are funded with construction project funds (.05% of the construction budget) from the Department of State's Embassy Security Construction and Maintenance appropriation. Please find the link to the Department of State's budget request for any additional information: <http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/rls/statecbj/>.

Is the Art in Embassies acquisitions program only for new Embassies or for those that are being renovated as well?

AIE oversees art acquisitions for new embassies, consulates and annexes as well as for major renovations of existing facilities.

Do you know the number of Chicago artists that have been a part of the program?

Since 2000 over 166 artists, dealers, universities, collectors and museums from the Chicago area have partnered with the program.

Why does the State Department feel that this program is a good use of taxpayer dollars?

A June 1, 1962, report to the President by Senator Moynihan and the Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Office Space included the following:

"The committee is also of the opinion that the Federal Government, no less than other public and private organizations concerned with the construction of new buildings, should take advantage of the increasingly fruitful collaboration between architecture and the fine arts...fine art should be incorporated in the designs, with emphasis on the work of living American artists."

AIE art acquisitions program creates a positive economic impact for the multiple individuals and small businesses involved in every purchase. According to a national study jointly released by the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis and the National Endowment for the Arts on December 5th, 2013, the government estimates in 2011 that \$504 billion of the U.S. Gross Domestic Production, totaling 3.2 percent for the year, was attributable to arts and culture. In comparison, the estimated value of the U.S. travel and tourism industry was 2.8 percent of GDP.

Following the federal standard, AIE art exhibitions, collections and artist exchanges are a form of cultural diplomacy, forging international bridges and transcending national and cultural boundaries. AIE plays a significant role within the world of cultural diplomacy and is a linchpin of public diplomacy.

In addition to supporting American and host country artists, AIE provides economic opportunities for artists, framers, truck drivers, art installers, freight forwarders, pilots, and crane operators, all of whom play integral roles in realizing an art project.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, in 2011, the production of arts and cultural goods and services employed 2 million workers in the United States and generated \$289.5 billion in employee compensation in the form of wages, salaries, and supplements.

"Art and culture is a significant part of the U.S. economy. Not just its contributions of ideas and creativity to the innovation economy, but also as an important part of the labor force and our country's GDP," said Joan Shigekawa, senior deputy chairwoman of the National Endowment for the Arts.

AIE is actively contributing to STEAM, an expansion of STEM, the acronym for the fields of study within science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. The STEM approach was developed in response to the studies confirming the U.S. is losing competitive ground with other first world nations. STEAM integrates art and design into STEM and is thought to be an important catalyst to innovation in new technologies, discoveries and advancements. The STEAM movement is attributed to the Rhode Island School of Design's (RISD).

AIE has recently partnered with RISD on the first phase of a multiyear partnership. This collaborative project has been designed to promote cross-cultural exchange, and to recognize and nurture the talents of the next generation of professional artists. Ultimately, the collaboration will yield a large-scale outdoor work of art for the U.S. Embassy building currently in the design phase for Rabat, Morocco.

Why does the State Department pay to acquire this art permanently instead of getting it on loan at what would likely be considerably less cost?

Art in Embassies exhibitions are made up of both loaned and purchased art. The industry standard for art loans ranges from several weeks to six months at most. Art in Embassies loans last for two-three years, which is a significant

request in the art field. Many artists/museums have strict requirements to protect their art. Due to heavy traffic and the functional nature of State Department facilities, there is a limited pool of museum, galleries, and artists who will agree to an extended loan. The vast majority of works provided for loan to Chief of Mission Residences are small-scale pieces, appropriate for a residential exhibition. The embassies and consulates are industrial office buildings and require larger scale art. It would not be possible to organize loaned art in a sufficient quantity or adequate size for all new Embassy and Consulate projects. In addition, embassies and consulates do not meet the facility requirements of most art lenders, due to the significant visitor traffic that can put the loaned art at risk.

There are approximately 2,800 works of art on loan to the representational spaces of the Chief of Mission Residences from our partners (artists, galleries, museums, collectors and corporate collections) whose total value ranges between \$100 million to \$400 million at any given time.

The costs of outgoing and return shipping, handling, installation, labor, and personnel costs for loaned exhibitions of art that would be required for embassies and consulates would vastly exceed the cost of a single, permanent, large scale installation for each new building. The two-three year long-term loaned

pieces would have to rotate every two-three years, repeatedly incurring the extensive costs of administering large scale loaned exhibitions.

Art has long been a critical feature of civic buildings. From the sculpted frieze of the Parthenon in ancient Athens to the painted frescoes of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, government-sponsored art helps to convey our nation's values and identity. The incorporation of contemporary art within our important civic spaces celebrates the best of our and our host country's cultures and exemplifies how democratic societies benefit from the unique, creative talent of individual citizens