



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 1, 2013

CONTACT: Anne Delaney, Executive Director, IPAR
annedelaney@publicartreston.org
703-476-9797

Janet Rems, IPAR Communications Chair
editoratlarge@cox.net
703-815-3794

IPAR public art film series travels world, March 12, with Art in Embassies program

Diplomacy takes many forms. Especially effective has been the transcending of cultural borders and the building of vital connections and understanding with visual arts. For five decades, the U.S. Department of State's Art in Embassies (AIE) program has played a leading role in U.S. public diplomacy through its focused and dynamic artist exchange.

As part of its public art film series, the Initiative for Public Art-Reston (IPAR), in collaboration with the Reston Community Center, is presenting a selection of videos highlighting artworks commissioned by the State Department through the AIE program. Celebrating its 50th anniversary, today AIE is a public-private partnership that engages more than 20,000 participants globally, including artists, museums, galleries, universities, and private collectors. It encompasses more than 200 venues in 189 countries. Free and open to the public, the public art film program is part of the Reston Community Center's "Tuesday Night at the Movies" series and will take place on Tuesday, March 12, at 7:30 p.m. at CenterStage at the Reston Community Center (RCC), Hunter Woods, 2310 Colts Neck Road, Reston.

Camille Benton, a curator of the AIE program, will introduce the videos and talk about the program. Among the videos will be one detailing an installation by Maryland artist Margaret Boozer, "From This Distance: Djibouti," commissioned by AIE for the U.S. Embassy in the Republic of Djibouti in the Horn of Africa. The artist also will be there to discuss the process, challenges, and installation of her work.

Benton, with AIE since 1999, has created more than 200 exhibitions for display in U.S. embassy residences throughout the world, most on subjects in American and contemporary art. More recently, she was involved in AIE's Capital Projects Division, for which she curates permanent collections for new U.S. embassies and consulates. In 2008, she assisted the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs on a caseload of visual arts programs. Prior to joining the State Department, she worked in the education department of the Hunter Museum of American Art in Chattanooga, Tenn., and as an intern for the National Gallery of Art. She holds a BA from the University of Tennessee and an MA in Art History from the George Washington University.

Boozer received a BFA in sculpture from Auburn University and an MFA in ceramics from New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University. Her work is included in the collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Museum of the City of New York, the U.S. Department of State, the Wilson Building Public Art collection and in many private collections. She taught for 10 years at the Corcoran College of Art and Design before founding Red Dirt Studio in Mt. Rainier, Md., where she directs a ceramics and sculpture seminar. Recent projects also include writing a chapter for the U. S. Geologic Survey's "Soil and Culture," and recent exhibitions include "Swept Away: Dust, Ashes and Dirt" at the Museum of Arts and Design in New York City.

The Museum of Modern Art first envisioned this global visual arts program in 1953, and President John F. Kennedy formalized it at the U.S. Department of State in 1963. Professional curators and registrars create and ship about 60 exhibitions per year, and since 2003, more than 58 permanent collections have been installed in the Department's diplomatic facilities throughout the world. In the last decade, more than 100 artists have traveled to countries participating in AIE's exchange programs and collaborated with local artists to produce works now on display in embassies and consulates.

For more information on the public art film program, call 703-467-9797 or visit www.publicartreston.org.

[577 words]