

Art

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Established in 1953 as a program of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Art in Embassies was formalized as a State Department program by President John Kennedy in 1963. Many prominent artists and illustrators with Maine connections have participated over the years, including N.C. Wyeth, Robert Indiana, Neil Welliver and Alex Katz. Katz is among the 10 artists whose work is on display with Read's in Doha now.

Participating ambassadors are encouraged to choose a theme for their exhibits. Some might choose a selection of works by the same artist, for example, or a more abstract notion such as the use of light, Smith said. For her, although she is a native Californian and leads the transitional, international life of a diplomat, the decision was made easier by her family's deep connections to Maine.

"No matter where we are living, or how scattered our belongings are or how disconnected we may feel from home, Maine is like a true north for us," she said. "When we thought about what kind of art we would like to live with and show



ASHLEY L. CONTI | BDN

the people of Qatar, we just knew that Maine art would capture a part of our own spirit and personality we might not otherwise be able to share."

"More broadly, the 'Maine personality' as seen through art really reflects some of the characteristics that describe us as Americans: independent, bold, risk-taking, innovative and unapologetic," said Smith.

Although the pieces in the exhibit were selected with the guidance of a professional State Department art curator, Smith said Read's "Library," was a must-have. Smith didn't say how she first saw it, but it resonated. For one thing, she said, books are some-

thing of a luxury in many Middle East homes, although Qatar places a high value on education for both men and women.

"It's something I respect immensely about the government here and gives me hope for the region," Smith said. "So I thought that 'Library,' being made of books, would enable us to talk about education, share our love of books and find common ground with the highly educated population here in Qatar."

The piece is prominently displayed — "the first thing you see when you walk in," she said — and has inspired "many, many hours of gazing, discovery and interesting conversation."

Appleton artist Abbie Read is among a group of Maine artists whose work is hanging in the residence of Dana Smith, U.S. ambassador to Qatar.

As she does most years, Smith and her family vacationed in Damariscotta this past summer, and made a special trip to visit Read's studio on Appleton Ridge Road.

"On the way home, we all remarked that she feels like family," she wrote. "While I have always appreciated art, I had not anticipated that getting to know the artist would make me feel connected to the work in a totally different way."

Read hopes to return to Doha within the coming year. She has created two additional panels that will reach to the corners of the display wall since the "Library" panels in the show

don't quite fill the space where they're hung. While there, she also hopes to teach more workshops and hang another exhibit of her work somewhere in the city.

Before its inclusion in the Art in Embassies program, "Library" was displayed in a 2013 show of Maine artists at the Portland Museum of Art as well as at smaller Maine venues.

Read said the experience of dealing with the federal program, having her work appreciated by the international community and interacting with artists from a foreign culture has boosted her confidence in the value of the piece and her own creative process.

"This is further confirmation that this is a major piece, worth sharing and worthy of recognition outside of myself and the mid-coast Maine community," she said.

Mainers who want the "Library" experience without traveling to Qatar will have the opportunity soon when Read installs 10 panels at the Rock and Art Shop on Central Street in Bangor on Sept. 14. The show that will hang through November. A reception and artist's talk will be held from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 2, in conjunction with Bangor's ARTober arts celebration.

Cash

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Crowe and the cast expect to see a diverse audience, who will be drawn to the show because of their varying connections to Cash's music.

"That's how audiences were for Johnny when he was alive," Crowe said. "You would have the hippie crowd in their bell bottoms, the cowboys in their boots and their hats because they're country fans. You'd have the rock and roll crowd in their tight black T-shirts and they'd all come together because Johnny appealed to all of them. They would all sit shoulder to shoulder and enjoy this music together. That's been my experience when I've played around the country and I hope and expect that will happen here."

To purchase tickets, call the Penobscot Theatre Company at 942-3333 or visit penobscottheatre.org. For a full schedule of the 2015-2016 season, visit penobscottheatre.org/season.

Book

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choose the activities that will be most interesting to their kids. She also suggests slipping the pocket-sized book into purses or bags to have on hand whenever you need it.

"Knowing your child, knowing what they enjoy is really going to help," Morin said.

She also said that although the activities are categorized by when they might be most useful, parents should feel free to use car games in hotels and shopping trip games whenever. The activities are flexible like that.

"On-the-Go Fun for Kids!" by Amanda Morin is available at bookstores around Maine, including The Briar Patch on Central Street in Bangor, where Morin will be signing copies of her book at 11 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 12.

Nite

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Husson University's Gracie Theatre last year, which offers NESCom greater flexibility technically.

"It's modeled after talk shows hosted by David Letterman and Jimmy Fallon and Johnny Carson. ... We have the same setup. We have a desk, we have two chairs, we have a monologue, we have a comedy bit, we have a house band, we have an audience. All of the things you would see on a national late-night talk show we try to bring to our local version. ... We're trying to bring a piece of New York or Los Angeles to Maine," Cashman said.

"The Nite Show" has hosted guests such as "Weird Al" Yankovic and Count von Count from "Sesame Street," which Cashman said was one his favorites. Other famous guests have included Detroit Red Wings goaltender Jimmy Howard, Gov. Paul LePage and former host of "Double Dare," Marc Summers. And then there are the recurring guests, such as Maine humorist Tim Sample and Ric Tyler of WVOM radio, among many others, who drop by every so often.

The 30-minute weekly show airs on three television stations and is set to pick up a fourth. In September the show will begin airing on Portland CBS affiliate WGME. "The Nite

Show" will air on four Maine broadcast television stations with the addition of CBS 13 and cover the state in all three of Maine's TV markets — Portland, Bangor and Presque Isle.

The show recently ranked No. 1 on Saturday late nights in eastern and central Maine, beating out "Saturday Night Live" in the Nielsen ratings. It has also been nominated for four New England Regional Emmy Awards, but Cashman always keeps the show's humble beginnings in mind.

"When it first started it was so rough around the edges. We are trying to make something that people are excited about watching, something that we're proud to do and

something that hopefully the region can be proud of," Cashman said.

"It's never lost on me how lucky I am. ... There are nights, literally, I'm sitting on the floor at our house, falling asleep writing bits and jokes, face first in a computer. I wake up with a stiff neck, back hurting and I wonder why I do this to myself," Cashman said. "And then I think ... because there aren't many people who get the chance to do this. And it's nothing but fun."

As for the future of the show, Cashman says it's here to stay in Maine and that the idea of lengthening it to an hour has been kicked around. In an interview back in 1997, he had

two very specific dream guests in mind as well.

"Back then my answer was David Letterman and Jewel, and that's still my answer. I have no idea if that will ever happen. I'm thinking probably not, but we'll see," Cashman said.

The next taping of "The Nite Show with Danny Cashman" will take place Wednesday, September 16 at 6 p.m. in Husson University's Gracie Theatre. Tickets are free of charge and can be requested at brownpapertickets.com/event/1586109. "The Nite Show with Danny Cashman" can be viewed Saturdays at 11:30 p.m. on WABI TV5, 10:30 p.m. on WPFO Fox23 and at midnight on WAGM-TV.



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