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## Team America: Artists As Cultural Ambassadors

by *brianoucher* 10/18/11

A new program of the U.S. State Department is betting that visual artists in residence in foreign countries will sway public opinion and foster friendly views of the United States. Today, the Bronx Museum of the Arts, in conjunction with the U.S. Department of State, announced the 15 American artists they have selected from an open call to participate in their new smARTpower initiative.

Starting in May, the chosen artists will travel to countries around the globe for 6- to 12-week periods to create public artworks in a \$1-million, two-year pilot program to be administered by the Bronx Museum of the Arts (BxMA).

In a post-9/11 age, the state department's cultural diplomacy budget has ballooned from \$1.6 million in 2001 to \$11.75 million in 2010. And as holder of the purse strings, the State Department reserves final approval over the artists selected for the program as well as their projects.

The artists, along with their destinations and partner organizations:

**Duke Riley** of Brooklyn, New York - Shanghai, China

Partner Organization: Arthub Asia

**Chris "Daze" Ellis** of New York, New York - Quito, Ecuador

Partner Organization: Cero Inspiración

**Arturo Lindsay** of Atlanta, Georgia - Cairo, Egypt

Partner Organization: Medrar/Nagla Samir

**Rochelle Feinstein** of New York, New York - Accra, Ghana

Partner Organization: Foundation for Contemporary Art

**Caroline Woolard** of Brooklyn, New York - New Delhi, India

Partner Organization: KHOJ

**Miguel Luciano** of Brooklyn, New York - Nairobi and Dadaab Province, Kenya

Partner Organization: Kuona Trust

**Samuel Gould** of Minneapolis, Minnesota - Pristina, Kosovo

Partner Organization: Stacion Center for Contemporary Art

**Think Tank** (comprised of **Christopher Robbins, John Ewing, and Maria del Carmen Montoya**) of Little Neck, New York; Roxbury, Massachusetts; and Corvallis, Oregon - Beirut, Lebanon

Partner Organization: Arab Image Foundation

**Pepón Osorio** of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania - Kathmandu, Nepal

Partner Organization: Kathmandu Contemporary Arts Centre

**Brett Cook** of Berkeley, California - Lagos, Nigeria

Partner Organization: Wy Art Foundation

**Art Jones** of Bronx, New York - Karachi, Pakistan

Partner Organization: Vasl

**Mary Mattingly** of New York, New York - Manila, The Philippines

Partner Organization: Green Papaya Art Projects

**Xaviera Simmons** of Brooklyn, New York - Columbo, Sri Lanka

Partner Organization: Theertha International Artists Collective.

**Kabir Carter** of Brooklyn, New York - Istanbul, Turkey

Partner Organization: PiSt///Interdisciplinary Project Space

**Seth Augustine and Rachel Shachar** of Los Angeles, California - Caracas, Venezuela

Partner Organization: Centro Cultural Chacao



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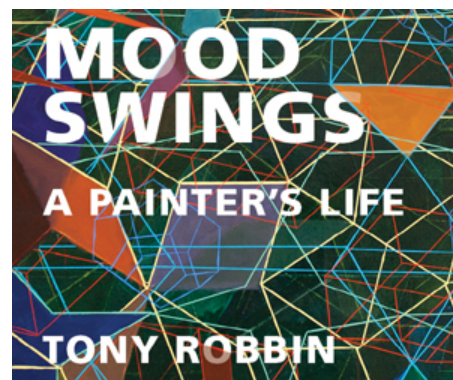
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**Eli Hansen, I've Made a Lot of Love Out of This One, 2010**

Mixed Media

Image courtesy the artist and Macarone Gallery.

In his sculpture and installation, Eli Hansen, who lives and works in Taco

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