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Yolene Legrand's 'Landscapes & Images' on display

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Landscapes and Images, Haitian artist Yolene Legrand's exhibition of oil paintings, pastels and intaglio prints, opened Sept. 25 at the Haitian Embassy in Washington, DC, 2311 Massachusetts Avenue.

Self-defined as a painter of landscapes in the classical tradition, country views and vistas of the artist's travels and experiences are her major inspirations. About half of the Embassy show's 25 works are images derived from Haiti.

For the artist, many Haitian landscapes seem incomplete without the presence of people and she includes them often as in *Lambi to Go*, (a woman vendor at the road side), *Peasant With His Cows* and *A Jacmel Street*. On the other hand, when the scene dictates, she will paint a touristless deserted beach (in an unvisited country).

Legrand does not limit her work to only childhood and personal cultural inspirations; she finds her subjects all around her. The show includes: Riverside Park,



Yolene Legrand holds painting entitled 'Lambi to Go.' Photo by Tequila Minsky

Miami Sunset, Stormy Normandy (the Normandy, France countryside), Squam Swamp with Barn (the lush terrain of Massachusetts's Nantucket) and a pastel entitled A Cape Cod View.

The painter carefully selects for contrasting light that affects the scene. With some scenes everything is observed; she doesn't add anything. For others, her artist's eye augments the scene employing a use of multiple colors while deriving shades and hues that best suit the scene.

For Yolene Legrand, her challenge is to be able to convey to the viewer through her use of composition, color and light, her feelings about the scene. Legrand explains, "Color helps me express the mood of the subject, be it excitement or tranquility. The painting must express both visual as well as emotional sensations."

The artist took a circuitous route in becoming an artist. It was after years in having a successful career in international banking when her passion for art drew her to study painting at the Art Students League. She gravitated toward working in oils, charcoal and pastels. That was 17 years ago. She's been a professional artist since 1994.

Most recently, she is expanding her medium and in this show, for the first time, she is exhibiting three etchings and aquatints: Toussaint Louverture, Manhattan Bridge and Cape Cod.

Legrand grew up in the hubbub of Port-Au-Prince. Respite to the Haitian countryside cultivated her love of the natural world and, she drew everything in sight as a child. She emigrated to the U.S. with her family after high school. She renews her home country inspirations by taking frequent trips back to Haiti. The artist resides and has a studio in New York City. She exhibits in solo and group shows locally and internationally.

The Haitian Embassy exhibition in Washington runs until Oct. 9. For more of her work: www.yolenelegrand.com.