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# An Artist Favored by the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan

BY SU WU | JANUARY 14, 2015



Though plenty of ink is spilled about the intersection of politics and aesthetics, less is said about the artwork hanging in the rooms where statesmanship is actually conducted. Recently, one of the most geopolitically sensitive locations in the world, the U.S. embassy in Islamabad, Pakistan, reserved a multimedia wall piece and watercolors by the Los Angeles-based artist [Jennifer Nocon](#), whose solo

show “You See Ocean I See Sky” opens tomorrow in New York. Assembled from wool, clay and steel, standout pieces in the exhibition combine the artist’s signature motifs, branching tendrils and small scales, layered into a gathering storm of color.

For Nocon, the deliberate repetition of elements in her work, which also include reconstructed Hans Wegner teak dining chairs, reflects what she sees as a tendency toward repetition in human behavior. “A plant may develop thorns over time in order to protect itself,” she explains. “People do the same thing. Kindness, hostility, generosity, warmth, coldness, hardness: These tendencies harden into patterns and ultimately determine character.” If that’s an apt consideration for moments of political stalemate, this isn’t lost on Nocon, for whom the importance of confronting entrenched habits might be the ability to choose whether to diverge from them: “Once I am conscious of the basic principles of construction, whether it’s an object or my own current state of mind,” she says, “I am free to make all kinds of deviations with the high hope of opening myself, and my work, up to unlimited possibility.”

*“You See Ocean I See Sky” is on view Jan. 15 through Feb. 14 at Tracy Williams, Ltd., 521 W. 23rd Street, New York, [tracywilliamsltd.com](http://tracywilliamsltd.com).*

**Correction: January 14, 2015**

*An earlier version of this post misstated the relationship of the American embassy in Islamabad to a multimedia wall piece by the artist Jennifer Nocon. The embassy reserved it, but has not yet acquired it.*