2020 began in celebration. Not only was it the bicentennial of the First Vision but a ripe moment to laud our faith tradition’s great visionaries. And so we launched the Center’s first satellite festival in Dallas, Texas and looked forward to a summer of prolific programming. We eagerly anticipated festivals and gallery openings, celebrations and events.

But in March, the world upended.

The Center personnel who participated in a virtual meeting in late March described feeling “blindsided.” Our vision of 2020—once bright and unclouded—was now muddied and opaque. COVID-19 quickly immobilized our city of operation, and fear coursed throughout the nation. We consumed news and media as life-sustaining manna. The world around us both stopped and roiled.

*Art for Uncertain Times* was born because the Center desired to reach out and belong to our community in a moment of global distress. We believed the inclination to create—and to financially support our community as they created—would provide a tether of faith during uncertainty. We clung to Georges Braque’s notion, “Art is a wound turned to light.” Our Call for Proposals, issued in April, offered that illumination. It offered substance; corporal ways of processing our new normal. So in May, fifty (50) winners from all over the world and working in a variety of disciplines were selected from hundreds of proposals. Chosen by jury, these individuals were awarded micro-grants of $250 each. Since that time, visual artists, scholars, filmmakers, photographers, dancers, writers, poets, playwrights, musicians, and creatives have filled our online channels with their responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. From a playwright in Brooklyn grappling with the mental stakes of isolation to a Latin poet self-translating eight poems as a literary symbol of the menorah. The marks of light and dark can be read throughout these works. The seen and unseen. The known and unknown.

There’s another equally significant layer to the *Art for Uncertain Times* project. Undercurrents of national and social unrest in response to the tragic deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor are present—and sometimes dominate—these works. If initial and early reactions to the COVID-19 pandemic were about making individual peace treaties with illness or ambiguity; the challenges of a public health crisis led us to collectively engage with urgent discussions regarding systemic racism, generational trauma and neglect. These hard realities can be found in *Art for Uncertain Times*. In fact, the initial project for the grant was submitted by Dr. Farina King in early May. In King’s essay she writes about her father, both a Latter-day Saint physician and Diné healer, and poignantly exposes the inequities and consequences for BIPOC communities fighting COVID-19.

We’re not sure what comes next. But we do know *Art for Uncertain Times* comprises, in many ways, the best of us. It is a living record of this moment. The gallery offers substance to the overabundance of media and chatter. And these works will continue to fill our channels as they are completed, responding to stillness and frenzy, to our global family and those who drive us nuts during quarantine. They illuminate these moments as we live them. Sometimes a call-to-action, other times a question mark. The Center for Latter-day Saint Arts invites you to engage with *Art for Uncertain Times* and *Art for Uncertain Times: The Next Generation* and discover wounds turned to light.

Explore Art for Uncertain Times [from our homepage](#)

Explore Art for Uncertain Times: The Next Generation [here](#)