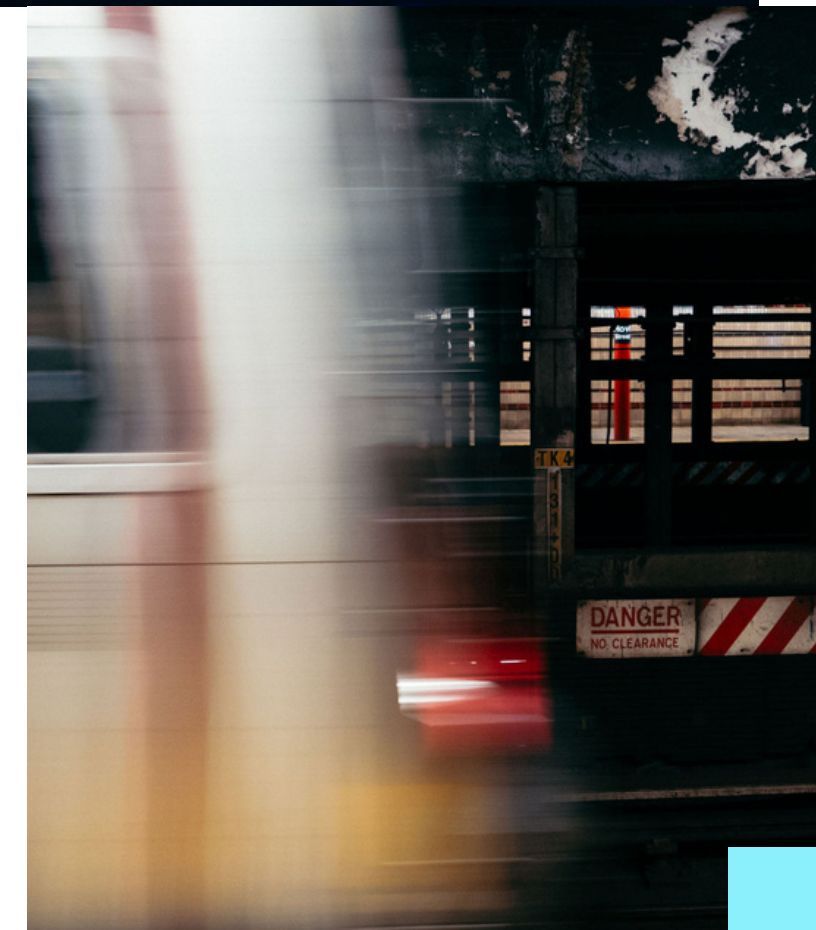


2023

ANNUAL REPORT  
CENTER FOR LATTER-DAY SAINT ARTS





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“Art moved by faith—from the poetry of ancient Hebrews to the architecture of medieval mosques, from the painting of Renaissance masters to the statuary of modern Buddhists—has incomparably enriched our world. It expresses both the yearning of the eternal soul and the realities of embodied lives, pointing us to heaven and connecting us with each other. In this wonderful world of religious expression, Latter-day Saint artists have a distinctive contribution to make. The time has come for us to support these gifted Saints. Our artists can be our most eloquent representatives of the things we stand for and the things we hope for. The Center for Latter-day Saint Arts understands this, perhaps more fully than any other institution of our generation. Its timely mission to provide material support and an encouraging community to our most creative sisters and brothers offers the prospect of a new artistic flourishing. I am tempted to say that the Center represents a signal step in the unfolding of the Restoration; at the very least, it promises a deepening of our discipleship as it promotes evocative expressions of faith and helps talented women and men explore new ways to convey our most cherished truths.”

**DAVID F. HOLLAND, HARVARD DIVINITY SCHOOL**



# CHAIRMAN'S LETTER

I enjoy meeting with our Board of Directors every six weeks or so. We usually convene at 9 p.m. Eastern time to accommodate the very busy schedules of our members scattered across the country from Stanley Hainsworth in Seattle to Monica Heslington in New York. We have brief reports on current activities to help the Board keep up with all that's going on. It is the Board's job to see that the Center uses its resources only in programs that advance its purpose: to promote the cause of Latter-day Saint art.

Here is a sample of matters the Board heard about during the past year.

The publication of our online journal, *The Season*, which created an extensive monthly calendar of events involving LDS creators plus a broad collection of reviews and commentary. In 2024 *The Season* will morph into an online journal of art essays.

A New York concert by Brandon Flowers squeezed into his loaded concert schedule. His fans (who are many and highly enthusiastic) came from all up and down the East Coast to hear him and try for a conversation and a picture.

The completion of the second round of The Ariel Bybee Endowment Prize with an award to visual artists, Susana and Gonzalo Silva. The first winner of the Bybee Endowment, S. Andrew Lloyd, has also written a song cycle to be performed by the eminent LDS soprano Rachel Willis-Sørensen in Carnegie Hall on April 9. (You can get tickets online at [centerforlatterdaysaintarts.org](http://centerforlatterdaysaintarts.org).) The next Bybee competition just finalized in the area of music education, a matter of great concern to Ariel.

The first week-long New York residency in early October for six LDS artists knocked us all for a loop. We knew it would be exciting to bring artists together to get to know each

other, but I had not counted on how moved I would be by their stories. The six were all engaged in inspiring work, deeply felt, skillful, and relevant. Next year's competition is now on the way.

Then there are all the new projects coming to fulfillment. 2024 will be the biggest year in the Center's history. Beside the Carnegie Hall concert in April, exhibits of LDS contemporary and historical work will open in major LDS markets. For the past three years, Glen Nelson has worked with three imaginative and skilled curators who are developing these shows: Ashlee Whittaker, Heather Belnap, and Brontë Hebdon. They have worked assiduously, and the results are thrilling.

The Center's 600-page, profusely illustrated "Latter-day Saint Art: A Critical Reader" edited by Amanda Beardseley and Mason Allred is to be published by Oxford University Press in the fall. We think it will be a path-breaking work.

The Board of Directors gets an update on each of these programs each meeting. They know this expansive program puts great pressure on our staff and our finances, but they also know we have managed big projects before, and we will do it again.

It is a big year for me too. I will be stepping down as Chairman in September, handing the reins to Stanley Hainsworth. I will remain as a member of the Board of Directors, but the burden or responsibility will rest with him and our Executive Director, Mykal Urbina. I will give them my full support and know I can count on our thousands of friends to do the same. Thanks to all the generous and engaged art lovers who have made the Center possible.

### RICHARD BUSHMAN

Watch Richard Bushman as he shares the news of his successor, Stanley Hainsworth, and his hopes for the future of the Center.

WATCH



above  
Richard Bushman

above  
Stanley Hainsworth



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 Camlyn Giddins  
 Lita Little Giddins, co-head  
 Kevin Giddins, co-head  
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 Tyrone Whitehorse

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**STAFF**

Daily operational support for the Center

Mykal Urbina, Executive Director  
 Glen Nelson, Director of Special Projects  
 Emily Larsen Doxford, Director of Communications & Marketing  
 Emily Spung, Administrative Assistant



Above  
 New York City, 2023. Photo: Samantha Zauscher



The Center for Latter-day Saint Arts **exists at the intersection of divine creativity and cultural relevance.** We believe that God is the ultimate creator and that art is the common language of our human experience. We draw from the diverse spectrum of Latter-day Saint creators (visual art, music, literature, film, dance, design, and drama) to connect with a worldwide audience – artistically, intellectually, and spiritually.



#### CENTER STUDIO PODCAST

Hosted by co-founder, Glen Nelson, the award-winning, Center Studio Podcast shares interviews with Latter-day Saint artists, cultural thought leaders and influencers all over the globe.

Left  
Glen Nelson and Walter Rane in NYC. Photo: Samantha Zauscher



#### COME, FOLLOW ME (ART COMPANION)

A pioneering resource, and one of the first of its kind, *The Come, Follow Me (Art Companion)* is designed to provide an artistic supplement to weekly Gospel learning for every age and to spark thoughtful discussion.

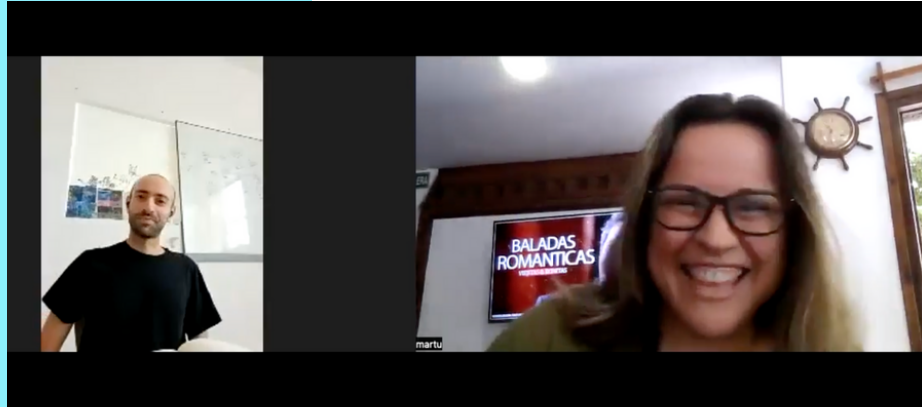
Left  
Avril Caron, *My grandfather hiding under an orange truck (2022)*, used with permission.



Above  
NYC, 2023. Photo: Samantha Zauscher



## THE ARIEL BYBEE ENDOWMENT AT THE CENTER FOR LATTER-DAY SAINT ARTS



above  
Gonzalo and Susana Silva, brother and sister artistic team from Argentina, are notified of their winning the 2023 Prize of The Ariel Bybee Endowment over Zoom.

The 2023 cycle of the Bybee Endowment asked artists to respond to the call for visual artwork, inspired by a specific piece of music of their choosing. The winners of this year's \$5,000 commission prize: sister-and-brother artists from Buenos Aires, Susana and Gonzalo Silva. The Silvas' proposal, "two studies in collaboration" is conceived as a mixed-media installation that will explore two distinct research frameworks: the dialogue between graphical music notation and its relationship with contemporary visual art; and a review of Latin American, female representation within the canon of contemporary musical history. This work will be exhibited at Sargent's Daughters, a gallery in downtown Manhattan in 2024.

The 2023 jury included Georgina Bringas, artist; Kent Christensen, artist; Janalee Emmer, director, Brigham Young University Museum of Art; Campbell Gray, retired director, The University of Queensland Art Museum; Brad Kramer, owner and director, Writ & Vision; Allegra LaViola, owner and director, Sargent's Daughters; Neylan McBaine, CEO, Duet Partner; Kah Poon, photographer; and Warren Winegar, art advisor, Winegar Fine Art.

I am thrilled with the outcome... The quality of our jury was world-class, and we were all delighted to find an equally illustrious equally artist in the brother and sister duo of Susana and Gonzalo. I for one can't wait to see the final work. Just as the opera productions my mom performed in were initially inspired by the music they represented, so too will Susana and Gonzalo's work be a tribute to a musician from their country who inspires them.

**NEYLAN MCBAINÉ**  
CHAIR, THE ARIEL BYBEE ENDOWMENT



Above  
photo of Linda Daines, Richard Bushman, S. Andrew Lloyd (2022 Bybee Prize winner) and Neylan McBaine (Bybee Endowment chair)

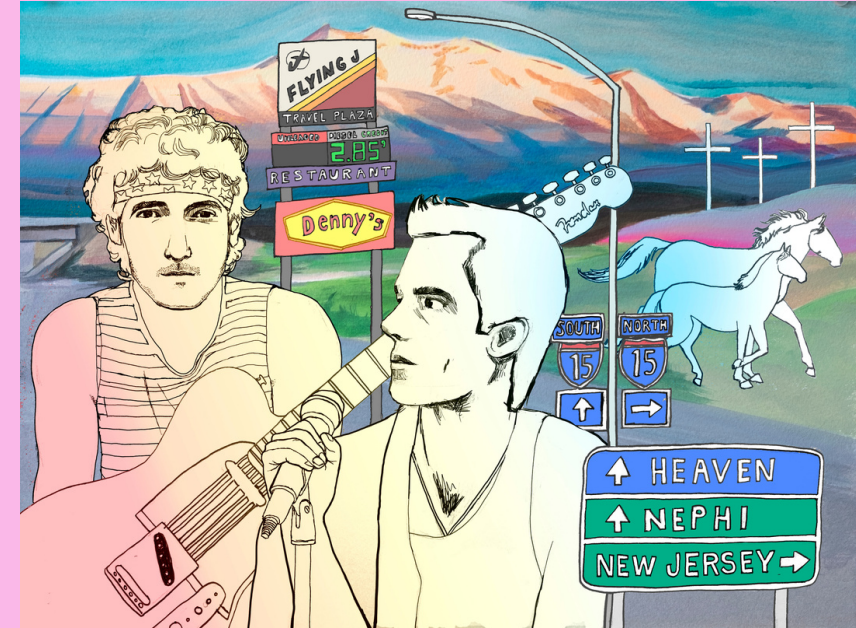


## THE SEASON 22/23

In late 2022, The Center launched one of its most ambitious projects to date in September: *The Season 22/23*, a comprehensive, one-year aggregation of cultural works by Latter-day Saint artists and creators around the world and throughout Latter-day Saint (Mormon) culture. In total, *The Season* captured and wrote about some **2,000** works and events. *The Season* included **185** articles, interviews, original scholarship, commissioned images and music, and notices of new works and events written by **66** contributing authors and artists. *The Season's* editorial board **shared lists** of music, books, podcasts, and events that they were interested in, published letters from readers, made playlists and searchable spreadsheets of new works, and noted artists who had passed away during the year. It also featured **two product catalogs**—one a Christmas gift guide, and the other a Summer guide. The main takeaway of *The Season* is the most obvious: the sheer number of artists who are LDS is both overwhelming and glorious. The comprehensive, 387-page book of *The Season* can be found [here](#).



above  
Summer and Christmas Gift Guide photos by James Ransom for *The Season*



Right  
Illustration by Madeline Rupard  
for *The Season*

### FROM THE ARCHIVE

As members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, in the thick of the action with our peers, we need to safeguard our light; otherwise, we risk having our flame smothered due to a lack of oxygen or fuel. But those looking for light will recognize it. “Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house” (Matthew 5:15).

#### BRIDGET VERHAAREN, FIRE IS A CHEMICAL REACTION

As art often does, it revised the map. Marriage outside of Mormonism descended. Then daughters. The marriage ended. Music and daughters endure. We hope this book, the result of a lifetime of gestation and a year of labor, will inspire other scholars. Mother work is never done.

#### JULIE TURLEY, MUSICKING IN AND OUT OF MORMONISM: THE MAKING OF HEAVY MUSIC MOTHERS: EXTREME IDENTITIES, NARRATIVE DISRUPTIONS

It's of course tricky to assign motivations to a whole group of artists, whose work is varied. Artists' and writers' influences come from some mixture of their histories, peers, mentors, and a mystical ether. It is easier to identify not why this art and literature exists, but what it does for us, as readers, as viewers, as (and here we'll reveal our authorial bias) as fans.

#### TED BUSHMAN & KRISTIN PERKINS, EMBRACING THE WEIRD IN MORMON ART

THE SEASON



On March 18, 2023, more than 600 guests took their seats at Symphony Space in New York City for an unplugged evening of stories and songs with beloved frontman of The Killers, Brandon Flowers.

The evening began with a powerful and moving performance by solo artists Bri Ray and Ashley Hess, joined by the multicultural, all-denominational musical group, the King will come, to which they both belong.

Then followed a captivating conversation between design & branding legend Stanley Hainsworth and Brandon about the intersection of art and faith. For thirty minutes, Stanley and Brandon engaged in vulnerable, honest discussion of childhood in the lights of Vegas, and universal messages from individual experiences in rural Utah, family, faith, and compassion. The setlist that followed featured Brandon on the guitar alongside his bandmates Robbie Connolly and Jake Blanton for “Terrible Thing” (acoustic), “Lord, I Would Follow Thee” (acoustic, Latter-day Saint hymn), “Be Still” (acoustic), and “Read My Mind (acoustic). This benefit concert raised more than \$50,000 for the Center for Latter-day Saint Arts to continue its commitment to supporting artists at the intersection of cultural relevance and divine creativity.

Below

Brandon Flowers with members of his band perform in NYC for the Center for Latter-day Saint Arts, 2023.



One of the ways that I've come to understand something that I don't have an answer to...is to write a song about it.

**BRANDON FLOWERS, FRONTMAN FOR THE KILLERS**

Performing as part of the Stories & Songs event was really special. The event created a unique opportunity to connect on the commonalities of the vulnerability, joy, hurt, spirituality, and love that we all experience throughout our individual lives. The event offered a much needed space for art to be expressed in its most raw and authentic form—Straight from the artist. As musicians and performing artists, we often don't get the chance to share the inspiration behind the music. What the Stories & Songs event reestablished is the relevance and importance of sharing the origins of our stories, beliefs and art, so that we might connect on the intimacy and intricacies of our experience on earth together as humans.

**BRI RAY, SONGWRITER**



Above

Ashley Hess, Bri Ray and The King will Come in New York City. Photo: Samantha Zauscher

How would it feel to live your religion on stage in front of the world? The night of Stories and Songs with Brandon Flowers of The Killers gave us a window into that life. Living under a double microscope of faith and celebrity, Brandon shared with us stories about the grounding he receives through family—both from his parents growing up, as well currently through his wife and children. And how both songwriting and faith is an ongoing process that share a common trait; you have to do it to find it.

**STANLEY HAINSWORTH, HOST, STORIES AND SONGS**



## THE ARTISTS RESIDENCY AT THE CENTER

2023 saw the realization of a long-held aspiration of the Center for Latter-day Saint Arts: The Artists Residency at the Center in New York City. The inaugural class, which explored the theme of **Intersections**, welcomed six artists from across the country:

- Jessica Heaton (Choreographer),
- Aaron Toronto (Filmmaker),
- Alixa Brobbey (Poet),
- Jenna Carson (Memorist),
- Joseph Sowa (Composer),
- and Sara Lindsay (Visual artist).

Hear more about their experiences through this video.

WATCH



Above  
(L to R, bottom) Alixa Brobbey, Sara Lynne Lindsay, Jenna Carson; (L to R, top) Aaron Toronto, Jessica Heaton, Joseph Sowa.  
Photo: Samantha Zauscher

### FROM THE RESIDENCY JOURNAL OF GLEN NELSON

#### SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15, 2023

Every once in awhile there is a moment at the Center where it comes together, when even we “get it.” I remember once, after a salon concert that included the performance of an elderly LDS composer who was completely unknown, Claudia Bushman came up to me and said, “If the Center never does another thing, this will have made it all worth it.”

Tonight, I’m feeling the same way. These six artists who have so little and so much in common came to town and immediately clumped together in profound discussions. The townhouse is beautiful, the details were worked out and organized to give the impression that these people are going to be pampered and loved for week of work. I have a bias that food = love, and they seemed to appreciate the extra care in store for them from the kitchen. They opened gifts chosen just for them and read cards written specifically to each by Stanley Hainsworth. A few got misty eyed, and all said some variation of the same thing, “This is the perfect gift.”

One final memory of the first night-- and it ties to our early impression of what the residency could be-- when we opened the call to applicants, the first 8 were so strong that we joked as a behind-the-scenes-group, “Let’s just close the application window and go with these.” I felt the same way after the first two artists arrived at the residence. They so quickly bonded, telling each other of deep and intimate aspects of their lives, chatting as if they trusted each other to say very personal things but were also new to each other and wanted to learn as much as they could. The three of us went on a short walk, and by the end of it, I could have sworn they had been friends forever. I said to the group a bit later, “My thought was, ‘Ok, we can send everybody home now; we’ve accomplished all the goals of the residency.”

New York is like breathing an energy drink. You don’t realize how stoked you get simply walk down a street, how it affects you and lifts you. It sometimes wears you out, too, but if you can manage the pace, it transforms at a turbo-charged rate.

of the brazen prediction I’d made when we announced the Residency, that this week would change their lives, but it probably wouldn’t take a week for that to happen. Yes. True. And in at least one case, I think I could say that the residency might have saved a life, too.

New York is like breathing an energy drink. You don’t realize how stoked you get simply walk down a street, how it affects you and lifts you. It sometimes wears you out, too, but if you can manage the pace, it transforms at a turbo-charged rate.

#### SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2023

I am thinking wistfully of how much I once enjoyed sleeping. Just as Stanley predicted based on his many years leading “Design Camp” for his companies, there’s not a lot of sleeping going on this week. I got up this morning and made for them a hearty breakfast of pancakes, scrambled eggs, bacon, juice, English muffins, and fresh fruit. It was a big juggle as the artists have appointments for photoshoots and video blogs on two floors of the residence. Sam is taking photographs of the artists that they can later use as headshots—something that all of them need and few of them have—and Emily is on the first floor asking questions about what each artist experienced during the week. She reported that tears were common. What kind of tears are they? Probably a mix of sadness, exhaustion, gratitude, catharsis, and confessional self-reflection.

A long and intense week nearly completed, ... I should be more tired, I thought. I should be exhausted. But I was not. I was energized. I remember thinking during the residency





Above  
Alixa Brobbey at the MoMA. Photo: Samantha Zauscher



Above  
The 2023 residents with Richard & Claudia Bushman

Lifechanging!  
**SARA LYNNE LINDSAY, VISUAL ARTIST**



Above  
Joseph Sowa working on his composition. Photo: Samantha Zauscher

I knew the residency was going to be a great experience, but it was even better than I had expected. For me, perhaps the most valuable part was the relationships I formed with the other artists. I left the residency feeling so uplifted and inspired from the conversations I had with my fellow participants and the guests who visited us.

**JOSEPH SOWA, COMPOSER**

I learned that my unique faith journey did not need to be hidden or "painted" in a happy light to make me feel welcome with the staff and artists at the Residency. Rather, the staff and artists helped me see the beauty of my own story. Their support has helped my faith and my art by building my confidence in both.

**JESSICA HEATON, CHOREOGRAPHER**



Above  
The residents eat dinner together. Photo: Samantha Zauscher



Above  
Aaron Toronto at the MoMA. Photo: Samantha Zauscher

During The Artists Residency at the Center, I learned more about the practical and business side of being an artist. A successful poet sharing their experiences with the publication process helped me make a game plan for the next few years. Speaking with people further ahead in their careers taught me how to have a sustainable career in the arts over many decades. I also learned that everyone finds different ways to incorporate their faith into their creative work. This ranges from having it at the center of the pieces they create to being a motivating force in the background. Rather than copying someone else's path, it's important to find what works for you, and this is something that can also change over time.

I was most surprised by how friendly everyone was. I was unsure how the mix of disciplines and ages would play out, but we all got along extremely well. Instead of only sitting in my room writing all day, I loved getting the chance to go on walks, museum visits, and lunch outings with the other residents. I learned a lot about various artistic processes and how to better explain my own work during the informal interactions. This encouraged me to be more innovative in my poems, and in the weeks since the Residency I've been experimenting with new poetic forms, themes, and voices.

In one word, I would describe my experience with The Artists Residency at the Center as empowering.

**ALIXA BROBBEY, POET**



## DONOR PRINT

As a thank you to many of our donors, the Center for Latter-day Saint Arts commissions an annual work of art from a Latter-day Saint artist for their homes. The 2023 donor print is from Arizona-based artist, Corinne Geertsen, entitled *Saint George and the Dragon*.

Corinne Geertsen has been making digital photo collages since 2008. Her work is in museums and galleries across the country and private collections around the world. She shares this about the work:

The Saint George legend is a hero story that's over a thousand years old. Saint George is usually on a white horse, but let's turn the horse loose - the horse really doesn't need to be there.

Let's put Saint George and the dragon in bumper cars for their epic battle. Saint George's is red and white, because the Saint George flag is a red cross on a white background.

The mandatory distressed maiden in "Saint George and the Dragon" paintings is in a boat the dragon just blasted.

This work is a rascally take on the grand theme of good and evil. Saint George is good and is showered by flowers, butterflies and bubbles. The dragon is evil. He's black smoke, bats' wings and holds a match of devastation in the curl of his tail.

Who will win? Place your bets.



Corinne Geertsen (American, born 1953)  
*Saint George and the Dragon* (2023)  
 Digital Photo Collage, 11 x 14 inches  
 Edition of 20

## HOLIDAY BENEFIT PRINT 23

Each year the Center hosts annual holiday benefit print so those interested may purchase works from various Latter-day Saint artists. In its second year, the holiday benefit print featured the work of Leslie Graff, a visual artist from Massachusetts. Some may remember Graff as a winner of the Center's 2020 grant project, *Art for Uncertain Times*, and then as a featured artist in our 2021 Center Gallery exhibition, *Siloed: Art for Uncertain Times*.

In 2023, the artist graciously donated the original painting pictured here (which was purchased through Center channels) and 50 risograph prints as part of the Center's holiday benefit print campaign.

Audiences may also be interested in hearing more about this work; or what we call the wild, true story of *She made the holidays delicious* (2023):

In January 2021, a 48-year old man was arrested by the Boston police department. He had broken into Arden Gallery, destroyed and stole artworks, and tried to break into the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum with a small sledge hammer. Leslie Graff's work was in that Arden Gallery show. Her painting titled *She made it delicious* was slashed by the thief and was unrepairable. Now, to bring a destroyed work back to life, Graff has returned to the image for a new work. To accomplish it, she created a full-scale cake image paired, this time, with a 1950s wrapping paper pattern based on one her grandparents had in their Idaho fabric store, which they used to wrap her Christmas gifts every year. The artist was working on the painting as her grandmother passed away a month shy of 99 years old. Graff then created the smaller holiday scene for this project which she titled *She made the holidays delicious*. This painting was then the source to create the holiday benefit print for the Center for Latter-day Saint Arts.

*The annual holiday benefit print campaign features a different artist each year. As inventory allows, interested buyers may purchase works from prior years. If you are interested in purchasing this print for the holidays 2024, please contact us here.*



Leslie Graff (American, born 1976)  
*She made the holidays delicious* (2023)  
 Risograph print on Mohawk Via Vellum, 9 x 12 inches  
 (image size), 11 x 14 inches (paper size), signed and  
 numbered, edition: 50, unframed

Photographed by James Ransom, 2023





Above  
New York City, fall 2023 Photo: Samantha Zauscher

The Center matters to me for two reasons; first, because of the way their program nurtures artists and gives them the time and means to produce high-quality work; second because they create an intellectual space that facilitates discussion surrounding the creation and propagation of worldwide religious culture and identity.

**BRONTË HEBDON, ART HISTORIAN**

2024 will bring the most ambitious programming for The Center for Latter-day Saint Arts yet. With major and highly anticipated visual arts exhibitions in both Salt Lake City and Mesa, we look forward to sharing our prolific history of divine creativity as well as highlighting the cultural relevance of artists working now, in the current moment.

This year, the Center returns to Carnegie Hall with acclaimed soprano Rachel Willis-Sørensen. This event marks Willis-Sørensen's New York City recital debut, as well as the world premiere of S. Andrew Lloyd's, *Amaranthine*. Lloyd, an LDS composer, is a prize winner of The Ariel Bybee Endowment at the Center for Latter-day Saint Arts. His work is being performed by Willis-Sørensen, who is a world-renowned Latter-day Saint singer. The last time the Center was at Carnegie Hall was in 2019 with Scott Holden. We eagerly anticipate our return.

The fall will bring a constant stream of major Center projects, one of which has long been underway. The 600-page Oxford University Press volume, entitled "Latter-day Saint Art: A Critical Reader" will hit the presses this summer.

Of course, our mainstay programming will continue to bring art into your lives and your homes through the weekly *Come, Follow Me (Art Companion)* and the Center Studio Podcast. We look forward to the fall when we will invite the second cohort of residents to join The Artists Residency at the Center in NYC and to learn why chairman Richard Bushman called the program, "a thunderbolt."

Thank you, as always, for being our friends and supporters. 2024 promises to be most impactful and significant, and we invite you to stay by our side as we explore the intersection between divine creativity and cultural relevance.

**DONATE**



