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Dear Friends,

The BYU Museum of Art and its exhibitions are here for you and endure because of your steadfast support. We want you to feel more connected and informed about all of the things happening at the MOA. Recently, we have been discussing better ways to connect to our donors and dedicated friends of the museum. This inaugural annual magazine, offered digitally and in print, will allow us to share “behind-the-scenes” stories, introduce new staff members, share exciting updates on exhibitions and acquisitions, and feature special events.

As the fall season settles around us, we are eagerly diving into a new academic year. *Maynard Dixon: Searching for a Home* concluded on Oct. 7th, after almost a year at the museum. It was full of rewarding programming from gallery talks, tours, artist panels, and an impressive symposium with highly-acclaimed scholars. We were delighted to reconnect with various members of Maynard Dixon’s family throughout the exhibition. In early October, we opened a photography exhibition featuring the 6 full-time female photographers working for LIFE magazine in the 1940s and 50s. This exhibition features powerful work by women photojournalists, and you won’t want to miss it!

We are also delighted to announce a once-in-a lifetime exhibition of over 150 works from the Hispanic Society Museum, located in New York City. For many of our Utah visitors, and even visitors from Western states, this will be a unique opportunity and privilege to see the highest quality of Spanish and Spanish-influenced art, including artists such as Goya, Velázquez and Sorolla. Come explore the art and culture of Spain in this landmark exhibition, opening January 25 to June 15, 2024.

Through our many exhibitions and programs, the BYU Museum of Art strives to create countless opportunities for visitors to be inspired, and connect with art alongside friends and family. When was the last time you wandered through our galleries? If it has been some time, come visit us; we would love to welcome you back!

I would like to share my profound appreciation for our museum donors and friends. Your involvement is crucial to the life and future of the Museum, and I thank each and every one of you.

Best,

Janalee Emmer, Director
Brigham Young University
Museum of Art

Photo by Alyssa Dahneke, BYU Photo
Art Inspires!

Our mission is to provide a space where art experiences inspire dialogue and connection with our campus, community, and the world. During the 2022–2023 school year, the BYU Museum of Art did this by:

- Welcoming 286,000 visitors
- Sharing collections digitally with 370,000 people across the globe
- Hosting 11 exhibitions
- Acquiring 25 new artworks
- Hosting scholars at 2 symposia on artists Maynard Dixon and James Tissot
- Celebrating at Art After Dark parties, the Family Arts Festival, and hundreds of other events
The MOA’s collection is constantly growing, thanks to the generosity of our wonderful friends and supporters. Here are just a few highlights of works acquired by the Museum this past year.

**The Arrest of Christ**
by Luca Giordano (1634–1705)

This 17th century masterwork introduces a new subject to the MOA religious collection. Luca Giordano uses intense contrasts of light and dark, emotive expressions, and telling gestures to bring Christ’s betrayal to life, rendering the scene at its dramatic apex as captors close in and Peter lunges to His defense. Jesus’ pale face and hand placement suggest both humble submission and heartache as Judas enacts his treachery—symbolized by Judas’ bag of coins and the red cloak flowing down: the price of blood on his hands. The Savior is encircled by Roman guards whose invasive hands hold his arm, shoulder, and hair—heightening the sense of vulnerability and imprisonment. Giordano’s staging may reflect the Psalmist’s Messianic prophecy: “The assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet” (Psalm 22:16). Acquired through the generosity of the Labor and Honor Foundation, this singular Baroque masterpiece poignantly invites viewers into the Savior’s atoning experience.

—Ashlee Whitaker, Former Roy and Carol Christensen Curator of Religious Art

**Brooklyn Bridge, New York**
by Todd Webb (1905–2000)

When Todd Webb—former stockbroker, gold prospector, Chrysler employee, and veteran of the U.S. Navy who became close to Berenice Abbott, Alfred Stieglitz, Beaumont Newhall, and other notable figures in the history of twentieth-century photography—arrived in New York City in the 1940s, he took to the streets to photograph the signs, storefronts, elevated trains, skyscrapers, markets, and neighborhoods of Manhattan, creating a vast yet intimate profile of the features of urban life. The Brooklyn Bridge, in particular, entranced Webb, who returned to the suspension bridge repeatedly in 1946–47 with his camera.
A recent gift to the MOA collection, Webb’s *Brooklyn Bridge, New York* offers one of the most remarkable structures of the city as a sweeping drama of cables, rivets, steel beams, and quarried stone.

—Miri Kim, Curator of American Art

*Abstract in Pink*
by Mari Lyons (1935–2016)

Mari Lyons was an American artist who exhibited regularly in New York City galleries from the 1970s until her death in 2016. In addition to other educational experiences, including earning an MFA from the Cranbrook Academy of Art, she studied with Max Beckmann at Mills College. Her work is in the permanent collections of many significant institutions including: Museum of the City of New York; The New York State Museum; Bard College; Wellesley College; Mills College; Montana Museum of Art and Culture.

Lyons is notable for working both in abstract and figural art. *Abstract in Pink* is a large canvas that explores variations of pinks, reds, and oranges. Though fully abstract, it is loosely linked to some of her earlier floral paintings; one almost feels as if a colorful spring bouquet is just slightly out of focus. This acquisition benefits the collection in several ways; as a female artist and one representing late-twentieth century painting as well abstraction, Lyons’ painting is a welcome addition.

—Janalee Emmer, Director, Brigham Young University Museum of Art

# Exhibition Calendar

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the BYU Museum of Art

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<td><strong>Primal Forces: Earth</strong></td>
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<td>November 2023</td>
<td><strong>From the Vault: American Highlights and Recent Acquisitions</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Of Souls and Sacraments: Symbol and Context in Religious Art</strong></td>
<td>Now through Mar 1, 2025</td>
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<td><strong>LIFE: Six Women Photographers</strong></td>
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Spain and the Hispanic World: Treasures from the Hispanic Society Museum and Library
Jan 26 through Jun 15, 2024

Reconciliation: Biblical Imagination in German Expressionist Prints
Mar 15 through Oct 19, 2024

Counterpoint: Selections from the MOA from the 1960s and Beyond
Mar 22 through Dec 7, 2024

Off Kilter, On Point: Art of the 1960s from Colorado State University
Jun 7 through Dec 7, 2024
Constructing Paradise

When retired BYU Art Education Professor Sharon Gray began a service mission in Hawaii in 2016, she probably didn’t expect to discover any Italian masterpieces. Nevertheless, that’s what happened when she was cleaning out a storage room at BYU-Hawaii. She uncovered dozens of plaster casts of 15th-century sculptor Lorenzo Ghiberti’s *Gates of Paradise*, a name given to the eastern doors of the Florence Baptistery by Michelangelo himself.

There are conflicting theories of when and how the casts, made from the original Florentine doors sometime in the 1980s, made their way to BYU-Hawaii, which had no art museum or other Renaissance collections of which to speak. Gray contacted the BYU Museum of Art and, with the generous support of MOA donors Bill and Barbara Benac, facilitated an agreement between the two schools so that the Museum could acquire the casts.

Since that time, the MOA Fabrication Team has been working on the long, cautious process of examining, restoring, gilding, and assembling the disparate pieces so that eventually, the Museum will have its very own *Gates of Paradise*. Like the original, this will be a 17-foot-tall installation, gilded in gold leaf, depicting scenes from the Old Testament.

“The original in Florence is bronze, not plaster,” MOA Head of Fabrication John Adams acknowledges. “When you take a plaster mold of an existing object, you’re going to lose detail. We’re trying to save as much detail as we can. There were a few broken pieces. Luckily most of the broken pieces were still there and so we’ve been able to reattach those.” Over the years, John has worked with a number of past and current student specialists, including Megan Albot, Samantha Atzbach, Olivia Hunter, Liz Infanger, and Lyn Quach. Together, they have done the work of reconstructing one of the world’s most iconic installations.

The team’s preliminary condition report to assess the plaster casts was 500 pages long, detailing everything from cracks and defects in the plaster to details of the biblical scenes depicted. Then, they set to work restoring casts.

“When I began working on this project, I had absolutely zero experience with plaster,” admits current student employee Liz Infanger. “I spent months training on practice pieces such as plaster beetles, birds, and human figurines. After about a semester of practice building skill and confidence I was able to transition into the plasters themselves and begin minor restoration.”
Sam Atzbach, who worked on the project between 2020 and 2022, agrees. “I had to hone my plaster and fine detail skills. Because of all the small detail work, this project requires a steady hand and lots of patience.”

To help them practice, John’s team made some plaster casts and 3D prints of their own, so they could get used to working on the delicate medium. Once they were ready, they began work on the casts from Hawaii. As their work has progressed, they are now moving on to the gold leafing process.

“Gilding frames I know quite well, but this is plaster,” John says. “I ran about 50 tests trying to get everything as thin as possible [to capture all the detail].” This phase of the process is still in its early stages, but the preliminary results are nothing short of beautiful.

“My next big hurdle is working out the framework that will hold this on display. Being as it’s plaster, it’s very fragile, but I’ve got some ideas that I’m working on,” he adds. The details of those ideas aren’t ready to be shared just yet, but he seems excited about the prospect.

“Working on this replica has been a humbling experience,” Liz says. “I have felt a reverence for Ghiberti’s work and creative genius, and it is an honor to have the opportunity to preserve this piece of history.”

So has Sam, and she’s excited for MOA guests to see the finished product: “I hope visitors will be amazed by the craftsmanship and artistry of Ghiberti.”

There are hopes that the finished Gates of Paradise will be ready for public display by the end of 2025, but the Fabrication Team is committed to being thorough and cautious, willing for the process to take as long as it needs without cutting corners. “It took Ghiberti 27 years to make the original,” John reminds us. So as far as we’re concerned, our team is well ahead of schedule. Whenever they are ready, Ghiberti’s Gates of Paradise will soon become an iconic fixture in the MOA’s collection.

The Museum is grateful to Sharon Gray, Bill and Barbara Benac, and everyone else who has made this project possible.
In one episode of *Golden Girls*, the wisecracking Sophia belittles her friend Blanche’s supposedly simple job at an art museum: “It’s a museum. What’s to know? You bang in a nail. You hang up a picture. Any idiot could do that.”

While the joke stings a little, we know that a lot of work goes on behind the scenes to make museums like the MOA the inspiring places they are. The seldom-seen offices of the BYU Museum of Art are filled with some of the most passionate, talented workers you’ll find anywhere, with skills ranging from finance to art conservation to keeping a large group of three-year-olds entertained for an hour-long museum visit.

Among these accomplished employees are two incredible designers, Jeff Barney and Anna Bates, who together are in charge of making sure that the Museum and its productions look and feel perfect so that you can enjoy the artworks on display. We sat down with them to ask them for some details of how they help transform the MOA through shrewd design decisions.

**How did you first get involved in the museum sector?**

**Jeff:** I had done my undergraduate work in Los Angeles and went to the Getty Villa and Norton Simon museums frequently. I remember thinking this is the coolest stuff in the whole world, but I still didn’t think it might be part of my future.

During my master’s program in Art History, I had a class from then-director of the MOA Campbell Gray. It became really clear that this was something I wanted.

**Anna:** I always had an interest in fine art and art history and I was exploring careers with both artistic and design elements. As a student, I worked here in registration and met Jeff. I realized that museum design offered a crossover of design and art and just knew that I would love it.

**What kinds of projects do you work on at the MOA?**

**Anna:** We work on everything that’s related to the exhibition visually, as well as everything visual outside the exhibition that’s related to the Museum.

**Jeff:** It includes everything from color and wall placement to the interior architecture of the space to create a connection between the artwork and the patron. We do all the advertising, and if there’s anything associated with an exhibition, like a catalogue or building banner, we design that too. It’s a lot of fun!

**What makes designing for a museum different than other types of design?**

**Jeff:** A lot of times in the design world, you want your piece to stand out, to be the one people remember. It’s almost the opposite at a museum because it’s all about subtlety, designing things that people feel but don’t necessarily notice. We never want to upstage the artwork by the design in the gallery.

**Anna:** That’s my favorite part: having subtle influence over people; they don’t realize that we’ve adjusted the color, the lights, the typeface, or placement to affect their experience, and they never know. They’re caught...
up in having this experience with the art, which is exactly what we want.

Jeff: There are little teeny subtle things that we do that lead you through an exhibition. And if we’ve done them well, you really don’t notice them, you just experience them.

What are some of your favorite exhibitions to work on?

Jeff: Sacred Gifts was a big one. We knew it would be very popular, but we wanted it to feel like a private, intimate experience. I did an exhibition called Loving Devotion: Visions of Vishnu. It was all about Hindu art. There was so much to learn, not only about Vishnu and Hinduism, but also about the culture and the people for whom this is everyday life. It was a wonderful non-western experience, and we just had a ball doing it.

Anna: One of my favorites was Tiffany Glass: Painting with Color and Light—all of Louis Comfort Tiffany’s glass designs. Those pieces shine on their own, and I went over the top with the design, so there were custom colors, walls, arches, and crown molding everywhere. It was really fun to design.

What are your favorite parts of your job?

Anna: Most graphic designers fall into a niche; maybe they’re typographers, or maybe they’re doing book design, maybe they’re doing only in-house graphic design. We get to do all of that. Every exhibition is unique and different, so every time we get to design a look and feel for a new brand identity, which is really fun and exciting!

Jeff: I agree. Every time we design a new exhibition it’s a little jump back into visual history—techniques, design styles, and colors that were used during that period and all of the idiosyncrasies that go along with it. I like that difference; it keeps you learning.

What are some aspects of your job that the average museum visitor might find surprising?
Anna: I still don’t think my parents understand what I do. They don’t know the extent to how deep we dive into each exhibit—history, research, typography—how we run behind the scenes, working closely with every department. There’s this whole industry of museum coordination, and we work closely with all of it to plan our exhibitions, storing artworks, and security, care, and conservation.

If you were to give advice to someone who wanted to go into museum design, what would you say?

Jeff: Usually, people have no idea that this is even a job, so when I go into a classroom and talk to students, their minds are a little bit blown as to all the things that we do. It’s not like you can go to most schools and major in museum design.

Anna: I’ve only ever found one program. I would say that graphic design is the number one skill.

Jeff: I agree. Interior design, architecture, environmental design—you have to be able to do all of those things as well. You also need to be able to work in 3D as well as 2D, so it’s quite a broad spectrum.

Is there anything else that you’d like to share?

Jeff: One of the best things is working up close with the art. You’re standing there, inches away from it, marveling at how they’ve created this. And it’s you that determines how it’s going to be viewed. You’re the one that has, with the curator, chosen where that goes on the wall and how people are going to experience it. Those behind-the-scenes moments are just magical.

Anna: There’s a very satisfying moment, when all that work that you’ve done becomes something tangible. You’ve worked on this exhibition for months on the screen of your computer. And then all of a sudden it becomes real.


View of Tiffany Glass
Trajectory

By MOA Student Educator Susannah Kearon

I have been working as a Student Educator at the MOA since January of 2022 and it has been one of the most fulfilling experiences of my life! I began as an undergraduate student studying Humanities and Art History, so being able to share my passion for the arts with museum visitors has been a privilege and a natural fit. I love giving tours to visitors of all ages and backgrounds, helping with the various museum events, and working with the education team to design optimal instructional experiences for all who come to the museum to learn.

One of many highlight experiences was having the opportunity to participate in the James Tissot Prophets, Priests, and Queens Symposium in October of 2022. I was privileged to present alongside some of the world’s leading scholars of James Tissot’s work, and to learn from their expertise. This experience allowed me to utilize the research and public speaking skills I have been developing throughout my time as a Student Educator. It also allowed me to share in the joy of art enthusiasts coming together to celebrate a common interest.

The opportunity to work at the MOA has not only brought joy to my life and purpose to my experience as a BYU student but has also altered the trajectory of my continuing education and career. When I started working at the museum, I was still trying to figure out what kind of career I wanted and whether I would pursue further education. However, through my experiences within the education department, I discovered my passion for museum education and made the decision to apply to the Instructional Psychology & Technology program here at BYU. I recently started the program and am excited to continue my studies and apply them to the ever-changing field of museum education. I truly am thankful for the ways in which working at the MOA has changed my life!

Donations

The Museum of Art is dependent on the generous support of friends and patrons to pay its employees, grow its collection, preserve and conserve artwork, host traveling exhibitions, put on events, and cover other vital expenses. We are extremely grateful for all donations of both funds and artworks, and we consider all gifts to be of the utmost sacredness.

If you would like to support any of the causes listed above, we welcome your support. Your contributions will forever change the Museum and inspire its visitors in new and unique ways. To learn more about how you can make a difference at the Museum of Art, please visit moa.byu.edu/give or contact Mark Magleby (801-422-8282; mark_magleby@byu.edu).