

# SOCIETY PAGE

THE ELIZA R. SNOW SOCIETY NEWSLETTER - SPRING 2016



**BYU**  
IDAHO



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Evening of Honors

by Gina Miller

Last month you and I gathered together to honor a gentleman, colleague, brother, and friend. Rodger Sorenson was the gracious recipient of the Eliza R. Snow Award this year. The evening was filled with excellent

entertainment and delicious food. Towards the end, Rodger shared with us a few of his thoughts about the arts. His comments were thought provoking as he asked the question, "What is it about artists that compel us to choose, of our own free will, to put so much time and energy into doing something that causes fear and anguish, joy and laughter, and brings us to the brink of death?"

His question was intriguing, as I'm sure most of us have felt those emotions at one time or another in our artistic endeavors. It would seem logical that a human being would avoid the fear and anguish, but Rodger said that the arts are like seeds planted in the empty spaces in our souls. It is "a giver of new life and a generator of more seeds that die, sprout, and give new life. This is the power of the arts. The arts transform us. They make us laugh. They penetrate hearts, take us to the brink of death, fill empty spaces in our souls, help us understand one another, restore us and reveal eternity."

Rodger Sorenson filled an empty space in our souls, and we were privileged to share the evening with him and his wife.

We have also been privileged to work with Donna Howard on the board for many years and wish her a fond farewell and express our thanks for her service. She will be missed.

We would like to welcome Richard Clifford, the Associate Dean of the College of Performing and Visual Arts, to the board.

We thank you for your generous support to the college and look forward to visiting with you at our next event. ■



DEAN'S LETTER

From the Dean's Desk

by Kevin Brower

In preparation for a new teaching assignment in our Foundations of Education program as well as many other activities I am involved with on a day-to-day basis, I am frequently reminded of the value of and increasing need for the arts

in our lives. Nineteenth-century scholar John Ruskin stated:

"Great nations write their autobiographies in three manuscripts, the book of their deeds, the book of their words, and the book of their art. Not one of these books can be understood unless we read the two others, but of the three the only trustworthy is the last" (St. Mark's Rest: The History of Venice, 1877).

We live in a seemingly complicated and confusing world. It is sometimes difficult to remember and see the reality of our pursuit of charity, love, faith, and joy. It is as if the lens through which we view

our own horizon becomes foggy or diminished by a layer of dust from the dirt wherein we walk each day.

While some may see the arts as a frill or simply a fanciful luxury of an elite or gifted class, better awareness and deeper understanding of the arts authentically provides a clarity of vision often lacking in the normal dross of life. Perhaps this is why Pablo Picasso stated:

"The purpose of art is washing the dust of daily life off our souls" (Pablo Picasso, 1881-1973).

We need the "washing of dust" available through the arts to allow us more discerning vision of truth and light. In that spirit, Aristotle once said:

"The aim of art is to represent not the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance" (Aristotle, 384-322 BC).

Aligning this sentiment with the words of the Lord to the prophet Samuel seems to clarify this important aspect and need for our day:

"For the Lord seeth not as a man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7).

The experience in the arts allow us understanding of the heart. In reference to the arts while speaking about humanities in general, President Gordon B. Hinckley stated: "You need technology. You need the professions. You need all of those things, but we also need the heart also, and the humanities speak to the heart, men's aspirations for the good and beautiful" (Gordon B. Hinckley, LDS Church News March 19, 2005).

As members of of the Eliza R. Snow Society, you make it possible for BYU-Idaho students and many others to gain a greater understanding of the power of the arts as a clarifying, ennobling, and truth-discerning tool for immediate and longer-lasting joy and success. Thank you for your ongoing support in this important work. ■



BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Steve & Cynthia Davis

Steve and Cynthia Davis started their Ricks College / BYU-Idaho journey in 1982 when they met stuffing packets for new freshmen. Cynthia was a music major and sang in the Acapella Choir. Steve was studying psychology and was involved in the student activities program.

After completing studies at Ricks College, they transferred to Utah State University where Cynthia was on a vocal scholarship. Steve completed his bachelor's degree and then he was hired by Ricks College to work in High School Relations.

For the past 30 years Steve has had administrative roles in enrollment services, LDS Philanthropies, and Alumni Relations. He currently serves as the director of BYU-Idaho Alumni. Cynthia has been both a homemaker and voice teacher. Over the years she has taught hundreds of students, many of whom have gone on to win local, state and regional competitions, as well as earning music scholarships at several colleges. More than anything, they enjoy spending time with their five children and three grandchildren. ■



## EVENING OF HONORS

### Rodger Sorensen

by *LaMar Barrus*

Each year the Eliza R. Snow Society for the Performing and Visual Arts grants an award to an individual who has made significant contributions to BYU-Idaho and the community in the areas of music, drama, art and dance.

Rodger Sorensen of Provo, Utah, a former faculty member at Ricks College (now BYU-Idaho), was granted the 2016 Eliza R. Snow Award.

Dr. Sorensen taught at Ricks College for 17 years. Ten of those years he served as Chair of the Department of Theatre and Dance. For the last 20 years Dr. Sorensen has taught at BYU in Provo where he served as Chair of the Department of Theatre and Media Arts and as Associate Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communications.

Dr. Sorensen served for 27 years with the Hill Cumorah Pageant in New York as scenic designer and technical director, Associate Director, and from 1997 to 2004 as Artistic Director. He has acted in dozens of plays and films, has directed over 100 plays in academic and professional venues, and has served in regional and national theatre organizations.

The Eliza R. Snow Society for the Performing and Visual Arts helps BYU-Idaho students develop their talents and achieve their potential in the arts. It is actively engaged in raising funds for scholarships, the purchase of musical instruments, and for specialized equipment in art, drama and dance. ■



## PREVIOUS EVENT

### The Redeemer

by *Noelle Baldwin*

Last year, Robert Cundick was excited when he heard that the BYU-Idaho choirs and orchestra would perform his oratorio *The Redeemer* as part of their biennial Sacred Music Series. Unfortunately, Brother

Cundick passed away on January 7, 2016, at the age of 89.

When *The Redeemer* was selected “[we] had no idea that Brother Cundick would pass away before it was performed. In fact, we had spoken to Brother Cundick and [he] was very, very excited to hear we were going to perform the work and he [was] looking forward to attending the performance,” said Don Sparhawk, coordinator of the Center Stage Performing Arts Series at BYU-Idaho.

On Friday, March 18, in the Salt Lake Tabernacle more than 400 performers from BYU-Idaho’s Collegiate Singers, Concert Choir, Men’s Choir and Women’s Choir were joined by the school’s Symphony Orchestra and five soloists to perform Brother Cundick’s greatest work *The Redeemer*. The concert, which was dedicated to

Brother Cundick, was conducted by Eda Ashby the director of BYU-Idaho’s Concert Choir.

“It was very fitting for us to perform this work in the Salt Lake Tabernacle,” said Brother Sparhawk. “As a Tabernacle organist, the Salt Lake Tabernacle was his home for many years.” Brother Cundick served as an organist for the Mormon Tabernacle Choir for 27 years and organized the restoration and upgrade of the Tabernacle organ.

Dr. Ralph Woodward, a former director of the Brigham Young University A Cappella and Oratorio choirs, devised the idea for *The Redeemer* and recommended Brother Cundick as the composer. Scriptures pulled from each of the standard works serve as the base for the three sections: “The Prophecy,” “The Sacrifice,” and “The Promise.” The three parts follow the Savior’s life and Atonement.

The five soloists — David Olsen, Paul Busselberg, Sam Chiba, Kristen Jensen and Rebecca Busselberg — portrayed different people who had a role in prophesying the Savior’s life or who had direct contact with Him during His mortal life.



Brother Sparhawk called Brother Cundick a great friend to BYU-Idaho “and we are grateful for the sacred music that he has left to the world.” *The Redeemer* is a “magnificent work, which is a tribute to our Lord and Savior,” said Brother Sparhawk to which Sister Ashby added that it is, “spiritually powerful [with a] life-changing testimony of Christ.” Friday’s concert was the 13th performance in the Sacred Music Series. It was streamed to distant audiences and recorded for later publication on DVD and CD. A second performance, which an estimated 5,000 people attended, was held the following day, March 19, in the BYU-Idaho Center in Rexburg, Idaho. ■

*Published in Deseret News on March 26.*

## UPCOMING EVENT

### Patriots and Pioneers

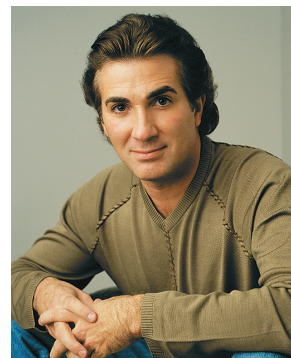
featuring *George Dyer*

Snow Society Reception:  
6-7 p.m.

BYU-Idaho Top Floor

Concert:  
July 9 at 7:30 p.m.  
BYU-Idaho Center

RSVP to *Vicki Nye* at 208.496.4800



The BYU-Idaho Department of Music will present a major July concert to celebrate American patriots and pioneers. Singer George Dyer will join more than 200 students, including Men’s Choir, Women’s Choir, and Symphony Band. Mr. Dyer has performed extensively in prestigious opera houses and concert halls across North America in many countries. He has been a guest soloist with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir on numerous occasions. In fall 2009, “The George Dyer Show” opened in Branson, Missouri. ■



## STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

### Kelly Fisher

by Steve & Cynthia Davis

**K**elly Fisher is a senior at BYU-Idaho majoring in Dance with a teaching emphasis. She is from Belmont, Massachusetts. Kelly started dancing when she was three years old. She has stuck with it, even through some of the hard

times associated with the social aspects of dance, particularly with internal competition and gossip. Her mom asked if she was dancing because of the social part or because she loved it. She responded because of her love of dance and it has become an enduring passion.

At BYU-Idaho, Kelly's emphasis has been in modern dance; but she also learned and taught tap, jazz, ballet, hip-hop, and ballroom. She was blessed that at her home studio in Massachusetts she was trained in many genres of dance.

At BYU-Idaho, she met her husband Daniel Fisher as part of Dance Alliance where they toured to Canada. She and Daniel have been married for two years. Daniel is completing his academic studies in pre-medicine. He is in the process of applying to medical schools. Kelly plans on pursuing her graduate studies in dance wherever Daniel continues his education.

Kelly has loved the dance program at BYU-Idaho. She has appreciated the caring and nurturing faculty, who care about her life, not just her academics. The professors are also experts in dance, including the proper techniques that ensure both safety and the longevity of the dancers.

Kelly has also loved Dance Alliance, which features several styles of dance. This has allowed her to broaden her horizons and experience. Dance Alliance has also provided her wonderful opportunities to make new friends and share the gospel through dance. ■



## FUNDRAISER UPDATE

### Tracker Organ

by Shayne Summers

**T**he Snow Society members continue to give to help bring the tracker-action pipe organ to campus. This fall students will be able to practice on the first manual pipe organ on campus. We are approaching 75% of our goal and need the momentum

to continue. All gifts small and large are making a difference to help pay for the organ and the remodel of the room that it will be housed in. Thank you to all of you that have given and sacrificed your funds to help improve the education of these great music students. If you haven't made a recent donation to the Snow Society, 100% of your contribution will be used for this organ. A big thank you, also, to the Workboots Foundation that matched the first \$10,000 raised to kick start the campaign for the organ. ■

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Department of Art

*Matthew Geddes Retrospective*  
Exhibit: *Playing in Mud*  
May 27-June 16  
May 26; 7-9 p.m. Reception  
Spori Art Gallery

*"Detritus" n. - An Accumulation of Material or Debris*  
June 24 - July 20  
June 23; 7-9 p.m. Reception  
Spori Art Gallery

### Department of Music

*RixStix Percussion*  
June 28 at 7:30 p.m.  
Barrus Concert Hall

*Jazz Ensemble*  
July 12 at 7:30 p.m.  
Manwaring Center Little Theater

*Spring Choirs*  
July 13 at 7:30 p.m.  
Barrus Concert Hall

### Department of Theatre & Dance

*The Ibsen Series: A Doll House, Enemy of the People, Hedda Galder*  
May 25-28, May 31-June 4 at 7:30 p.m.  
Snow Black Box Theatre

*A Midsummer Night's Dream*  
June 28-30, July 5-8 at 7:30 p.m.  
July 9 at 2 p.m. Matinee  
Snow Drama Theatre

*Extravagance*  
June 23-25 at 7:30 p.m.  
Kirkham Auditorium



## Eliza R. Snow Society Board Members

PRESIDENT - Gina Miller

PRESIDENT ELECT - Paula Hegsted

DEAN, PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS - Kevin Brower

LDS PHILANTHROPIES REPRESENTATIVE - Shayne Summers

SECRETARY - Vicki Nye

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**T**he College of Performing and Visual Arts sends a weekly electronic newsletter with information on upcoming recitals, concerts, and exhibits on the BYU-Idaho campus. If you would like to receive this newsletter, please send your request by email to Vicki Nye at [nyev@byui.edu](mailto:nyev@byui.edu) ■

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### PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS

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208.496.4800

<http://www.byui.edu/giving/snowsociety>

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