



Dear Artists,

You blew us away again. Last year, in 2023, we had a record-breaking number of entries for the Annual Spiritual & Religious Art of Utah exhibition with 650 entries. As you know, we are experimenting with virtual jurying, and the weekend before entries were due, I started getting worried - we had less than 300 entries submitted, and I wondered if switching to digital would mean we would receive fewer entries overall. Well, in the last 4 days of submissions we received an avalanche of entries and ended with a final 913 total entries into the 38th Annual Spiritual & Religious Art of Utah Exhibition! Wow! We often receive around 900-1,100 entries for the Spring Salon which means this year's Spiritual & Religious exhibition is as competitive as a normal Salon

The Spiritual show is such an important venue for artists to showcase their work and it's a very hard show to jury. We not only are taking into account the artist's technical skill and conceptual ideation, but also looking at their very real, vulnerable expressions of faith, belief, and doubt. We want the show to feature the best works of art on these themes, and also a diverse representation of faith traditions in the State. I wish you could see every work submitted and the stories and ideas that come across in each one. If your work was not accepted, know that there are hundreds of compelling works that are in the same boat.

Our jurors were extremely thoughtful. One of the pros of digital jurying is that each juror, on average, spends more time with each individual work. Michael Hall, Madeline Rupard, Salma Djalal, and myself each spent hours reviewing every work submitted to the show. We then met together to discuss the scoring and narrow down the works to the final list accepted. They will come in person to jury awards in a few weeks.

Overall, the day we announce the works accepted for any juried show is bittersweet for us. We are excited for our friends and colleagues who have works accepted, and excited for the exhibition to come together. But, we as a staff are also sad and grieve with those whose works did not make the cut. It's a vulnerable thing to put your art out into the world and we commend you for doing it - accepted or not.

As we get further along with this exhibition, we will be asking for your feedback on what you liked and disliked about the digital jurying process and if we should do future shows this way.

Thank you again for participating in this exhibition. We love being a hub and community for Utah artists and are so happy you are part of that community.

With love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Emily A. Larsen'.

Emily Larsen
Director, Springville Museum of Art