



Fine Arts Center

COLORADO SPRINGS

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9/11 REMEMBERED

With the play, *Lovers Leapt*, and World Trade Center paintings

COLORADO SPRINGS (Aug. 16, 2011) –The Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center will remember the events of 9/11 on the 10th Anniversary of that tragic day through visual and performing arts.

On Sunday, Sept. 11, the Fine Arts Center will present the short play, *Lovers Leapt*, in front of four World Trade Center paintings by Denver artist Joellyn Duesberry in the El Pomar Gallery. The play will be performed at 2:30 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. The play contains adult subject matter and is free with gallery admission.

“The arts have a huge capacity for healing,” said Sam Gappmayer, FAC CEO and President. “They highlight the best aspects of our humanity and remind us that while we are capable of acts of incredible destruction, we are also capable of both creating and responding to tremendous beauty. George Bernard Shaw said that, ‘Without art the crudeness of reality would make the world unbearable.’”

Lovers Leapt playwright Leslie Bramm believes the arts provide a catharsis during trying times and it is instinctual for artists to respond to tragic events.

“It is what is most true to our nature,” Bramm said. “It’s instinctual. Like the people who respond by rebuilding what’s been destroyed, or those who respond by realizing how fragile life is, and that love is all there is. Sometimes they respond with outrage. Artists do that a lot.”

Lovers Leapt by Leslie Bramm

Commissioned by New York City's THE PRESENT COMPANY, one week after the attacks of Sept. 11, this 10-minute play muses on what inspired the World Trade Center workers who chose to jump rather than endure the fireball within. It is a hair-raising premise yet, the resulting play—about two pining office workers who finally connect in a shared demise—has a surprisingly light tone.

“*Lovers Leapt* is a reminder of, among other things, the lost potential that is central to the loss of any human life,” said Gappmayer.

"For the people who were in the towers and decided their only way out was to jump, we will never know what they were thinking," said Scott RC Levy, Director of Performing Arts. "But Leslie Bramm has created a fantasy that showcases the possibilities and the fragility of life. In the end, I hope that audience members recognize that life is fleeting, and if we choose to not say what we really feel, we may never have the opportunity to do so."

Leslie Bramm, a New York playwright, received a Stanley Drama Award (*Oswald's Backyard*), Paul T. Nolan Award (*Islands of Repair*) and the Tennessee Williams Literary Award (*Big Ball*). He is published by JAC Publications, Smith and Krause, Brooklyn Publishers, One Act Play Depot and the New York Theatre Experience. Bramm, a published poet, is also a member of the Present Company's Pool, The League of Independent Theatres and the Dramatists Guild.

Elevated Perspective: Paintings by Joellyn Duesberry

In the late 1990s, painter Joellyn Duesberry earned a World Trade Center grant to study and paint the cityscape for five months. The grant came from the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council who provided Duesberry with a studio on the 91st Floor of the north tower. The person who replaced Duesberry in the Artist Residency program died in the attacks of 9/11. There are three paintings in the FAC exhibition, *Elevated Perspective: Paintings by Joellyn Duesberry*, painted during this time and one painting from 2002 of the Ground Zero.

"Personally, I was in NYC during 9/11 and I had been inside the WTC many times," Levy said. "Joellyn's paintings are a stark emotional reminder of the world that existed before 9/11/01. And while it brings up pangs of devastation it is also sublimely comforting to remember the power and height of those buildings."



Brooklyn and Manhattan Bridges, New York
1999, Charcoal on paper, Collection of William and Alma Kurtz

From the 91st Floor of the World Trade Center
1999, Oil on linen, Collection of Steve and Christy Owen

Cloud Over Mid-Town Manhattan, New York
1998, Oil on linen, Collection of Marilyn Thomas

First Pairing: Ground Zero and Elephant Graveyard
2002, Oil on panel, Courtesy of the artist (left)

"I compressed six episodes of visiting the place where so many of our friends died; smelling it, recording it, only by memory, no sketches," she wrote. "Took me two years to find out that, if I paired the elephants I saw in Kenya just two months after the tragedies of September 11, I could deliberately recreate and compress what I had experienced at ground zero in New York because I wanted it exorcised, ridded from my dreams. The compression is to get all the feelings in at one go and to get rid of them - to express distress."

Duesberry is nationally recognized for her dynamic landscape paintings, remarkable for their rich and intense use of color, and for her distinct interest in the geometry of the cityscapes and landscapes she interprets. Her use of light, scale and texture culminates in paintings that are both visually and emotionally arresting.