

# ALUMNI FOCUS

**Glen Nelson** ('85 English), penned the words for an opera featuring a two-year period in the life of the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith. Titled *Book of Gold*, the opera was written to be performed during the 200th anniversary year of the birth of Joseph Smith. The world premier was performed in the DeJong Concert Hall on the campus of Brigham Young University. *Book of Gold* was the collaborative effort of two very talented individuals. Nelson wrote the script and Murray Boren, composer-in-residence at Brigham Young University, wrote the musical score. *Book of Gold* covers the years 1828-30, focusing on the period of Smith's life that he began translating the Book of Mormon and gradually transformed from a young man to a prophet. "Influences are important to me," Nelson said. "The opera is about how and why this change was made. I wanted to show how Joseph changed from profiteer to prophet." Edward Reichel, of the *Deseret Morning News*, notes that central to the story is the love between Smith and his wife, Emma. She is his strongest supporter and sees her husband through his darkest moments and gives him strength to continue.



This is the tenth project that Glen and Murray have written as a team. Along with five sets of art songs, they have produced two large cantatas and two other operas, *The Dead*, after the James Joyce short story, and *The Singer's Romance*, based on stories by Willa Cather. The first opera was performed at the Vineyard Theater in New York, and the second was given a concert reading at Brigham Young University shortly after Murray became the university's composer-in-residence.

The project was two years in the making but not without a lot of hard work and research. Glen says that after a year or two passed, "It occurred to me that although I did not have it in me to write the story of the almost 40-year old Joseph, I well understood what it is like to be a newly married man, a young father with a sick child, and an author of a first book being published. I had been through those struggles and the accompanying self-doubt, and while my experience was certainly not to the magnitude of Joseph's, I was willing to try to write it, and furthermore, I had something to say about it."

The technical name for the process is a libretto, which means a script is written to be set to music and is finished before any music is composed. Once the libretto is in satisfactory shape, the composer scores it from start to finish.

Glen a native of Cedar City, and his wife **Marcia Stephens Nelson** ('85 English) also of Cedar City, live in New York City with their two children.

**Justin Harding** ('00 Political Science), was recently promoted to the position of Legislative Director in the office of Congressman Rob Bishop (UT-01). As Legislative Director, he will ensure that the Congressman's overall legislative and policy goals are accomplished. Regarding his recent appointment, Justin stated, "I am honored to serve Rob in this important role."



Additionally, Justin is the new President of the Washington, D.C. Alumni Chapter. He stated, "I'm a proud T-Bird; and as such, I consider it a privilege to serve as the Washington, D.C. Alumni Chapter President." He also serves as the Executive Director of the Latter-day Saint Congressional Staff Organization. Justin is married to the former Bridget Millsaps and resides in Northern Virginia with his wife and two children.

**Dr. Richard Boardman** ('83 Pre-Engineering), received the 2004 Distinguished Scientist/Engineer Award from the Idaho Academy of Science (IAS). This Spring, he will be installed as President of the IAS. Dr. Boardman is currently a Senior Research and Development Engineer in Battelle Energy Alliances (BEA) Science & Technology Laboratory Directorate. Boardman is a native of Kanab, Utah. While growing up in Southern Utah, Boardman witnessed the serious debate and political turmoil surrounding the once proposed coal-fired power plant on the Kaparowitz Plateau. He remembers being intrigued by the technical debates over air pollution. Boardman credits his professors at Southern Utah University for recognizing and fostering his science and math abilities during his early days of education. He holds a Ph.D. in Chemical Engineering from Brigham Young University and has been associated with the Idaho National Laboratory since 1990. Richard met his wife **Susan** at SUU.



**Bryce Higgins** ('01 Business Management), has recently been appointed Director of Benefits for Sky West, Inc., the holding company for the St. George-based Sky West Airlines and Atlanta-based Atlantic Southeast Airlines. He will oversee the administration of company benefits for both airlines, including medical, dental, retirement programs, stock options programs and other ancillary benefits. For the previous three years, he was Sky West Airlines' Manager of Benefits. Michael J. Kraupp, Sky West, Inc. Vice President of Finance, said, "We commend Bryce for his commitment to our company and the employees he serves. Bryce has demonstrated his leadership ability and has assembled a talented team that administers our various benefits programs on behalf of our employees." Bryce is married to **Lisa** ('00 Marketing), and they reside in St. George, Utah.



**Brad Steinke** ('83 Communication), has just won his seventh Emmy Award. He is working for the Fox Sports Net, Southwest edition. This Emmy was in the category of Talent-Sports casting and covers the seven-state region that includes Arizona and Utah. He has been in sportscasting since graduation. Brad has traveled extensively and worked in several diverse television markets including Abilene, Texas; Tucson, Arizona; Salt Lake City, Utah; Phoenix, Arizona; Miami, Florida; and Atlanta, Georgia. He has just been relocated back to Phoenix, with Fox Sports and plans on being there for awhile.



**Todd Seipert** ('04 Graphic Design), is a current MFA candidate in Arts Administration. He recently returned from the Essentials of Orchestra Management course in association with the American Symphony Orchestra League. This organization's mission advocates training of management to better meet the needs of orchestras and to help ensure their success. The two week course



focused on the essentials of orchestra management including topics such as; fundraising, musician unions, operations, marketing, education, boards and their relation with the executive director and music director/conductor. Leaders in the field were highlighted at the conference, such as the executive director of the San Francisco Symphony, executive director of the L.A. Philharmonic, general managers, marketing directors and development directors who shared their wealth of expertise. It was enhanced by discussions with conductors, composers and musicians. This course was essential in gaining critical knowledge from leaders in the orchestra field.

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