

knew him; for he who sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me: Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he who baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God” (see also JST Matt. 3:45–46).

The HOLY GHOST is a spirit person in the form of man (D&C 130:22) and does not transform himself into a dove or any other form. The Prophet Joseph SMITH explained: “The sign of the dove was instituted before the creation of the world, a witness for the Holy Ghost, and the devil cannot come in the sign of a dove. The Holy Ghost is a personage [a man], and is in the form of a personage [a man]. It does not confine itself to the *form* of the dove, but in *sign* [symbol or representation] of the dove. The Holy Ghost cannot be transformed into a dove; but the sign of a dove was given to John to signify the truth of the deed, as the dove is an emblem or token of truth and innocence” (*TPJS*, p. 276). The dove was a supernatural sign given to John to witness the identity of the MESSIAH. Some non-LDS scholars have entertained differing opinions as to whether or not a real dove was present. Joseph Smith’s explanation leads toward a conclusion that the dove was not literally present (see JESUS CHRIST: BAPTISM).

Other references to the sign of the dove are 1 Nephi 11:27; 2 Nephi 31:8 and Doctrine and Covenants 93:15. The BOOK OF ABRAHAM states that to Abraham also was revealed “the sign of the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove” (Facsimile 2, Fig. 7).

ROBERT L. MARROTT

DRAMA

Latter-day Saints have supported and participated in theatrical activities throughout their history. Members of the Church established one of the first community theaters in America at Nauvoo, Illinois, in the 1840s. The Prophet Joseph SMITH directed that a home dramatic company be established. He taught the Saints to seek after all things “virtuous, lovely, or of good report, or praiseworthy” (A of F 13). These included theater, drama, and the related arts—music, dance, painting, singing, acting, and writing. Theatrical activity in Nauvoo did not cease until 1846, when the city was besieged and the Saints were driven out.

Soon after arriving in Salt Lake Valley in 1847, the Latter-day Saints erected what they call a bowery (a temporary shelter made from placing tree boughs on a frame structure) on the southeast cor-



LDS wards use drama or “roadshows” for entertainment, celebration, and instruction. This pioneer pageant was presented in the Logan, Utah, Fourth Ward in 1979. Courtesy Craig Law.

ner of what became TEMPLE SQUARE. Three successively larger boweries replaced the first. Concerts, plays, and dances were performed there. President Brigham Young observed, "If I were placed on a cannibal island and given a task of civilizing its people, I should straightway build a theatre" (Skidmore, p. 47).

Social Hall in Salt Lake City was formally dedicated in 1853, scarcely more than five years after the arrival of the Mormon pioneers in the valley. In *Utah and the Mormons*, Benjamin G. Ferris described the presentations held there: "During the winter they keep up theatrical exhibitions in Social Hall, and generally the performances are better sustained in all their parts than in theatres of Atlantic cities" (quoted in Maughan, p. 5).

The SALT LAKE THEATRE, one of the finest theater buildings of its time, was dedicated in 1862. Brigham Young believed that it had been created for an ennobling purpose. During the dedicatory service, he said, "On the stage of a theatre can be represented in character evil and its consequences, good and its happy results and rewards, the weaknesses and follies of man and the magnanimity of the virtuous life" (quoted in Maughan, p. 84).

The tradition of theater continues in the Church today. Latter-day Saints write and produce plays, musicals, and roadshows. Roadshows are original mini-musicals, locally created and produced under the sponsorship of WARD and STAKE activities committees. The Church also sponsors religious pageants, including those presented annually in Palmyra-Manchester, New York; Nauvoo, Illinois; Independence, MISSOURI; Temple View, New Zealand; Calgary, Canada; Oakland, California; Mesa, Arizona; and Manti and Clarkston, Utah (see PAGEANTS).

BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY in Utah and RICKS COLLEGE in Idaho have theater departments that train playwrights, actors, directors, and designers. The Promised Valley Playhouse in Salt Lake City is owned and operated by the Church. It stages its own productions, and its facilities are also available for stake and ward performances.

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CHARLES L. METTEN

DRUGS, ABUSE OF

The abuse of drugs is contrary to the teachings of the Church. Leaders have frequently cautioned members against using narcotics such as marijuana, heroin, LSD, and crack-cocaine, as well as misusing prescription medication or over-the-counter drugs. In the October 1974 General Conference, President Spencer W. KIMBALL stated, "We hope our people will eliminate from their lives all kinds of drugs so far as possible. Too many depend upon drugs as tranquilizers and sleep helps, which is not always necessary. Certainly numerous young people have been damaged or destroyed by the use of marijuana and other deadly drugs. We deplore such" (*Ensign* 4 [Nov. 1974]:6).

Latter-day Saints view drug abuse as harmful to both the physical and spiritual health of the individual. Drug abuse frequently results in substance addiction, which severely limits personal freedom. That AGENCY is vital and has eternal consequences is reason enough to avoid abuse and addiction. Furthermore, the impact on one's health and general well-being is often severe. Though not explicitly mentioned in the WORD OF WISDOM, the Church's health code revealed in 1833 (see DOCTRINE AND COVENANTS: SECTION 89), drug abuse is nonetheless viewed as contrary to its precepts. President Joseph Fielding SMITH explained that additional revelation in regard to drugs was unnecessary because if members "sincerely follow what is written with the aid of the Spirit of the Lord, [they] need no further counsel" (*IE* 59 [Feb. 1956]:78).

Bishops counsel drug addicts to seek professional treatment to help them overcome their addiction, and offer assistance as appropriate through LDS SOCIAL SERVICES.

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