

Mia LaBerge

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Mia LaBerge (born 1967) is an American artist who painted the first Steinway Art Case Piano created to honor a university.^[1] In 2006, LaBerge was commissioned to paint the *Madison Bluestone* Art Case Piano which celebrates the hundredth anniversary of James Madison University^[2] and also recognizes its status as Virginia's first All-Steinway Music School.^[3]

The *Madison Bluestone* was among the last Art Case pianos with which Henry Z. Steinway (1915-2008), the National Medal of Arts winner and last of the long line of Steinway family members to be president of Steinway & Sons, had direct involvement. The piano was exhibited in the rotunda of New York City's Steinway Hall and was ceremonially unveiled on stage at the Kennedy Center in Washington,DC.^[4] Steinway kept LaBerge unofficially "on call" to paint scenic music stands for the company's *Madison Century* series of limited-edition pianos.^[5]

Circa 1990-2005, LaBerge's oil paintings were primarily realistic or painterly-realistic. Her art work from 2006 and later became ever more abstract --finally moving toward nonobjective subject matter^[6]. LaBerge had minor gallery representation in Philadelphia and elsewhere, but from 2003 to 2008 she preferred to interact directly with prospective patrons by self-exhibiting at juried art festivals in the parks and streets of Chicago, Tampa, Madison, Norfolk, Philadelphia, and Richmond^[7]. Artist Terry Ward served as LaBerge's roadie and occasional studio assistant at the time. In 2009 she ceased traveling for maternity leave.^[8]

A distant descendant of the LaBerges after whom Lake Laberge was named, Minneapolis-born Laberge is an alumna of Virginia Commonwealth University and of James Madison University.^[7] She supplemented college studies in art with museum-study trips to The Louvre in Paris, "the Met" in New York, and with frequent trips the National Gallery of Art.^[7]

Her paintings have appeared in the coffee table book *Virginia's Cattle Story : The First 400 Years* (ISBN 0975274511) and on the cover of youth textbook *All About You : A Course in Character for Teens* (ISBN 0-9710966-0-0) .^[5] At least one LaBerge painting is in the collection of former US President Jimmy Carter.^{[5][9]}



Artist Mia LaBerge on stage at the Kennedy Center during ceremonial concert unveiling of the *Madison Bluestone* Steinway Art Case Piano which she painted.



LaBerge with Henry Z. Steinway at Steinway Hall during planning of the *Madison Bluestone* Steinway Art Case Piano.

Gallery



A realistic LaBerge painting



A painterly LaBerge painting



A painterly LaBerge painting

A painterly LaBerge painting of Massanutten Mountain



An abstract LaBerge painting



An abstract LaBerge painting with invented-script markings



An abstract LaBerge painting

References

- [^] Robinson, Michael A., "James Madison University Gets a Unique Art Case Steinway", *Steinway & Sons* (Magazine), Summer 2007, pg 56-57
- [^] *Madison* (magazine), Summer 2007, pg 22
- [^] Bowser, Heather, "A Grand Work of Art : One-of-a-Kind Piano Comes to JMU Campus", *Daily News-Record* (Harrisonburg,VA) Tu 21 Aug 2007
- [^] "The *Madison Bluestone* Steinway", *The Kennedy Center Playbill*, April 2007
- [^] ^a ^b ^c <http://www.artandjunk.com/art-ml-page-01.htm>
- [^] <http://www.artandjunk.com/art-ml-page-02.htm>
- [^] ^a ^b ^c <http://www.labergeart.com/about.html>
- [^] <http://www.labergeart.com/sched.html>
- [^] Carter, Jimmy, Letter to Artist Mia LaBerge, 14 Feb 2008

External links

- *Steinway* Magazine, Summer 2007 (image) (<http://www.artandjunk.com/mnl-2007-b-094-32.jpg>)
- *Daily News Record* (Harrisonburg,VA) 7 Apr 2007 (image: LaBerge painting \$6000 at charity auction) (<http://www.artandjunk.com/mnl-2006-b-075-5.jpg>)
- LaBerge painting in book *Virginia's Cattle Story* (image) (<http://www.artandjunk.com/mnl-2002-b-120.jpg>)
- LaBerge painting in book *Virginia's Cattle Story* (image) (<http://www.artandjunk.com/mnl-2000-b-030.jpg>)
- LaBerge painting in book *Virginia's Cattle Story* (image) (<http://www.artandjunk.com/mnl-2004-b-115.jpg>)
- *Daily News Record* (Harrisonburg,VA) 25 Aug 2005 (text: LaBerge exhibit at Shenandoah Valley Art Center) (<http://www.artandjunk.com/mnl-2004-b-170.txt>)
- LaBerge painting on textbook *All About You* cover (image) (<http://www.artandjunk.com/mnl-1999-b-050.jpg>)
- *Madison* Magazine, Summer 2007, pg 22 (image: Laberge Kennedy Center unveiling photo) (<http://www.artandjunk.com/mnl-2007-b-094-16m.jpg>)
- *Shenandoah Journal* 3 July 2007 (image: Laberge in studio, Art Case piano also pictured) (<http://www.artandjunk.com/mnl-2007-b-150-1.jpg>)
- NBC-25 (Frederick,MD) "Frederick Festival of the Arts 2007" (image: news interview screencaps) (<http://www.artandjunk.com/mnl-2007-b-157.jpg>)

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