

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION celebrating the Irondale Ensemble Project's INSPIRE! and paying tribute to the 2015 honorees at its 5th Annual M. Edgar Rosenblum Awards event

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to call attention to individuals and organizations that devote their time and energies to the cultural enrichment of the Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to celebrate the Irondale Ensemble Project's INSPIRE! and to pay tribute to the 2015 honorees at the 5th Annual M. Edgar Rosenblum Awards event; this auspicious occasion will be held on June 25, 2015, in Brooklyn, New York; and

WHEREAS, The 2015 M. Edgar Rosenblum Awards honorees include: Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, Carmen Farina, for her outstanding leadership and strong commitment to arts education; the Pig Pen Theatre Company, for its award-winning work which inspires the next generation of artists; and Jon Gould Rubin, who is receiving the inaugural Living the Life Award for his 40 years of achievement as an exceptional actor, director, producer, teacher; and

WHEREAS, Founded in 1983, the Irondale Ensemble Project is one of the most long-established companies of its kind in the United States; its work ranges from both accurate versions and radical reinterpretations of the classics, to original creations, often with a strong emphasis on company created music; and

WHEREAS, Since its inception, the Irondale Ensemble Project has created over 60 productions, offering audiences a wide range of plays which include the American premier of Brecht's "Conversations in Exile," and re-imaginings of Buchner, Chekhov, Gogol, Ibsen, Ostrovsky, Sophocles, Shakespeare, and Strindberg, as well as 13 original works created collaboratively by the company; and

WHEREAS, At the heart of this remarkable theatrical project is the spirit of collaboration and the idea of the ensemble; and

WHEREAS, A leader in the national ensemble theatre movement, the Irondale Ensemble Project helped to create and manage the Network of Ensemble Theatres from 2001-2007; this ethos has been further developed since the opening of its new home in Fort Greene, Brooklyn; and

WHEREAS, After renovating the former Sunday School of the historic Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church in 2008, the Irondale Ensemble Project became the first new organization to open in the Brooklyn Cultural District with its state-of-the-art theatre in Fort Greene serving as the company's first permanent home; and

WHEREAS, Over its illustrious 33 year history, the Irondale Ensemble Project has utilized its distinctive approach to expand appreciation for the arts in public schools, universities, special education facilities, correctional facilities, shelters, youth centers and cultural organizations; and

WHEREAS, A pioneer in the field of arts education, the Irondale Ensemble Project has used theatre to enhance teaching and learning for thousands of students, teachers and at-risk youth; and

WHEREAS, The Irondale Ensemble Project has developed literacy programs for special education students in collaboration with District 75, and has helped train middle and high school students in theatrical improvisation to develop their presentation, critical thinking, and teamwork skills in its STEAM (the "A" is for Acting) program; and

WHEREAS, In addition, the Irondale Ensemble Project provides training for children and teens on site, as well as in school residencies and partnerships throughout New York City; the organization has also offered

space subsidies and technical assistance to 45 performing groups and

more than 400 artists; and

WHEREAS, Many of Irondale Ensemble Project Young Company alumni now attend such schools as Carnegie Mellon, Dartmouth and Sarah Lawrence, or are currently teaching in its programs; former company members also continue to build on their Irondale work with their own ensembles including Irondale Canada, Epic Theatre Ensemble, Big Dance Theatre, Strike Anywhere, and Letter of Marque; and

WHEREAS, The Irondale Ensemble Project is a member of the Downtown Brooklyn Arts Alliance and the Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce; it also has active partnerships with BRIC Arts Media, Mark Morris Dance Group, Brooklyn Historical Society, Weeksville Heritage Center, Wave Hill, and CUNY, and many others; and

WHEREAS, Committed to making a global impact, the Irondale Ensemble Project and its senior members have toured Russia, created programs for AIDS affected children in South Africa, and directed at the Drama Centre London, a premier British training program; and

WHEREAS, Today, the Irondale Ensemble Project is the premier destination for artistic innovation, quality arts education programming, and a home and support for many underserved artists and companies; its work inside theatres and in the community is held in the highest esteem; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body that when organizations of such noble aims and accomplishments are brought to our attention, they should be celebrated and recognized by all the citizens of the great State of New York; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to celebrate the Irondale Ensemble Project's INSPIRE! and to paying tribute to the 2015 honorees at its 5th Annual M. Edgar Rosenblum Awards; and be it further

RESOLVED, That copies of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Irondale Ensemble Project, and aforementioned honorees.