

BY: M. of A. Woerner

COMMEMORATING the 100th Anniversary of Yaddo

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to honor and pay tribute to those cultural institutions and organizations whose commitment to promoting artists and their art has contributed to the strength, vitality, and cultural enrichment of the State, Nation, and world; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Yaddo of Saratoga Springs, New York; and

WHEREAS, Founded by financiers and philanthropists Spencer and Katrina Trask and philanthropist George F. Peabody in 1900, Yaddo is an artist retreat intended for artists to reside and work on creative endeavors in a uniquely quiet and secluded atmosphere; and

WHEREAS, Spencer and Katrina Trask initially purchased the 400-acre Saratoga Springs, New York, property in 1881, but a fire burned the original mansion to the ground, tragically killing their four children in the process; and

WHEREAS, Determined to rebuild, and fueled by a unique vision, Spencer and Katrina Trask transformed their estate and land into the Yaddo artists retreat; Yaddo was named intentionally, as the name means "unconquered by flame," which reflects their vision for healing and creation after the devastating fire that tore apart their home and family; and

WHEREAS, The official opening of Yaddo and the arrival of its first guests occurred in 1926, after the death of both Spencer and Katrina Trask; and

WHEREAS, The estate in Saratoga Springs, New York, features a historic rebuilt mansion, woods, lakes, and famous gardens, parts of which are open to the public; in 2014, the iconic Yaddo estate was designated a National Historic Landmark; and

WHEREAS, Over the past century since its opening, Yaddo has offered writers, composers, and visual artists uninterrupted space and time to foster creativity through a supportive environment; and

WHEREAS, Thousands of Pulitzer winners, Nobel laureates, cultural icons, and renowned artists have passed through Yaddo, including James Baldwin, Sylvia Plath, John Cheever, Leonard Bernstein, Langston Hughes, and Truman Capote; and

WHEREAS, Artists typically reside at Yaddo for two to eight weeks, and those who are interested must apply to be admitted by an advisory

committee of professional artists; the demand for staying at Yaddo is high, and in 2024 there were 2,662 applicants; and

WHEREAS, Yaddo is a non-profit, and its operations are supported by grants from the New York State Council on the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, private funding, and corporate funding; and

WHEREAS, Yaddo was initially overseen by Executive Director Elizabeth Ames before her retirement in 1969, and has since been overseen by presidents Newman E. Waite, Curtis Harnack, Myra Skanew, Michael Sundell, and, as of present, Elaina Richardson; and

WHEREAS, Since beginning her presidency in 2000, Elaina Richardson has transferred archival records to the New York Public Library and collaborated in a 2008 exhibition, expanded the endowment, grew the applicant pool, opened Yaddo's first movement-based studio, built a greenhouse, and opened five new working studios; and

WHEREAS, For 100 years, Yaddo has served as a unique sanctuary for artists from near and far, and its success is a testament to the importance of dedicated artistic spaces throughout our communities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of Yaddo; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Yaddo.