Preservation League of NYS

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June 13, 2022

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor, City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine
One Center Street, 19th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor Adams, Borough President Levine, and Councilmember Rivera:

The Preservation League of New York State was pleased to include the proposed South of Union Square Historic District as one of our "Seven to Save" properties for 2022-2023. We are in strong support of the ongoing effort, led by Village Preservation, to create a local historic district in this unique part of Manhattan.

The Preservation League is New York's statewide not-for-profit preservation organization. We invest in people and projects that champion the essential role of preservation in community revitalization, sustainable economic growth, and the protection of our historic buildings and landscapes. We lead advocacy, economic development, and educational programs across the state.

Every other year, our "Seven to Save" list highlights properties of statewide significance in need of special attention, advocacy, and support, focusing on the economic and community-building benefits of historic preservation. Properties on this year's list range from individual buildings to institutional campuses and, in the case of the proposed South of Union Square Historic District, large and diverse collections of historic buildings.

The historic significance of the area south of Union Square has been thoroughly researched and documented, and includes numerous examples of outstanding works of architecture by some of the greatest architects of the nineteenth and twentieth

centuries, including Napoleon LeBrun, Carrere and Hastings, James Renwick Jr., and many others. Beyond its architectural significance, this area features a wealth of buildings and sites associated with watershed events, industries, and social movements. Recently the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation determined that the potential district is eligible for the State and National Registers of Historic Places based on its historic significance in multiple areas, including architecture, African American history, the women's suffrage and women's rights movements, the African American and LGBTQ+ civil rights movements, the publishing industry, and the New York School of writers and artists.

In the first few decades of the modern preservation movement, advocates often focused narrowly on high-style buildings that were "the best remaining example" of their particular architectural mode, as if cities were architectural museums where architectural purity is the only criterion for preservation and only a few representatives of each era or style should be saved. Today's preservationists recognize that buildings, structures, landscapes, and sites can be significant and worth saving for their associations with notable people, events, and movements reflecting the diversity of American history. As tangible connections to the work, sacrifices, and accomplishments of our predecessors of all walks of life, these buildings and neighborhoods continue to inspire and enrich our lives and communities today. In addition, we are cognizant of the devastating environmental impact of unnecessary demolition and reconstruction, and seek to ensure that buildings remain in use and out of landfills whenever possible.

The proposed South of Union Square Historic District is important not because it exhibits architectural conformity; quite the opposite: it is important precisely because its diversity of architectural eras, types and styles tells the story of an area where people of all walks of life came together to create a uniquely vibrant environment where remarkable things happened, generation after generation. It is important because the people who lived and worked here included leaders in commerce, publishing, the arts, and various social justice movements, among many other endeavors. African Americans, women, members of the LGBTQ+ community, and others led the fight for civil rights for themselves and their compatriots in this neighborhood, inspiring those who remain engaged in these ongoing struggles today. Artists active in this neighborhood defined the American artistic, literary, dance, and musical movements of the 19th and 20th centuries, ensuring New York's primacy as the cultural capital of the nation.

We recognize that no historic district, whether in Manhattan or anywhere else in New York State, can or should be frozen in time. Change defines this and other Manhattan neighborhoods and will continue to do so. As you know, historic district designation does not and should not prevent all change, but provides a mechanism for managing change in a way that is respectful of the history and character of the district, balances competing concerns, and does not cede control over the process to aggressive development interests.

On behalf of the Preservation League, I urge you to support the designation of the proposed South of Union Square Historic District.

Sincerely,

KEC

Katie Eggers Comeau
Vice President for Policy and Preservation

Cc: Hon. Erik Bottcher, City Councilmember, 3rd District
Andrew Berman, Village Preservation
Community Board 2, Manhattan
Community Board 3, Manhattan

National Women's History Museum
205 S. Whiting Street, Suite 401
Alexandria, VA 22304

May 6, 2022

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine
1 Centre Street, 19th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor Adams, Borough President Levine, and Councilmember Rivera,

For the last 20 years, the National Women's History Museum has been the largest online resource and cultural institution for women's history. It has also fueled support for preserving, documenting, and sharing historical sites pertaining to women's history. The National Women's History Museum fully supports Village Preservation's initiative to landmark the neighborhood South of Union Square. This area holds tremendous history connected to American women, including the headquarters of women's rights organizations, the home and offices of the first female doctor in America, and the homes and studios of trailblazing women in dance and civil engineering, literature, and the arts.

In 1849, Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell became the first woman to earn a medical degree in the United States. In 1851, she moved to New York City and rented the first floor of 80 University Place South of Union Square. From this still-standing building, she operated her practice. Dr. Blackwell's practice was frequented mostly by women and the local Quaker community. Then, during the Civil War, Dr. Blackwell realized the Union Army needed help organizing medical supplies. So, Dr. Blackwell organized the Women's Central Association of Relief. Blackwell ran the organization out of 814 Broadway, which spurred organizations to open across the country, attracting more the 4,000 women to the cause. By July 1861, the WCAR prompted the government to form a national version—the United States Sanitary Commission, which was the precursor to the American Red Cross.

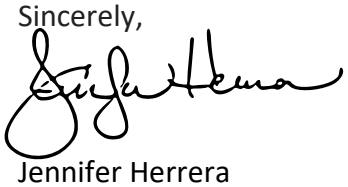
In the first decade of the 20th century, 78 Fifth Avenue, a beautiful eight-story loft building designed by Albert Wagner in 1896 also located South of Union Square, housed the offices of engineering firm Purdy & Henderson, which in turn employed two trailblazing women civil engineers who helped design and build some of New York's most prominent early skyscrapers. Purdy & Henderson moved into their offices here shortly after the building was constructed in 1896 and hired their first female engineer, Marion Parker, in 1900 and the second, Eliman Wilson, in 1906. These two women, whose accomplishments have been largely overlooked by history, were responsible for the structural design of prominent New York buildings, including the Whitehall Building, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Building, the Manhattan Municipal Building, and the Broad Exchange building. Marion Parker even assisted in the design of the Flatiron building. Parker and Wilson were trailblazers for women in STEM and should be recognized for their accomplishments.

In 1930, Selma Hortense Burke, according to the National Women's History Museum, was "one of the most notable sculptors of the twentieth century." She lived and worked at 88 East 10th Street, also in this proposed historic district South of Union Square. Her home, a typical Greek-Revival row house constructed between 1844 and 1845, served as her studio, where she created many of her most enduring works. While living here in 1943, Burke won a competition to create a profile portrait of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and was commissioned to produce a relief plaque of the president. In March 1945, Eleanor Roosevelt visited Burke's studio at 88 East 10th Street to approve the final design. The plaque was dedicated following Roosevelt's death, on September 24, 1945, at the Recorder of Deeds Building in Washington, D.C. "The Four Freedoms" was unveiled by Frederick Weaver, Frederick Douglass' grandson, and President Harry S. Truman spoke at the event. While U.S. Mint Chief Engraver John Sinnock is credited with Roosevelt's image on the U.S. dime coin, Burke's relief plaque is widely accepted as the model and original version.

The area south of Union Square contains many more important sites of women's history, including the Martha Graham studio at 64-66 Fifth Avenue, which was also home to the

revolutionary dancer Anna Sokolow. No. 10 East 14th Street houses the headquarters of the New York City Woman Suffrage League, while the groundbreaking book "The Feminine Mystique" was published at 55 Fifth Avenue. No. 80 Fifth Avenue housed the International Workers Orders that fought vigilantly for workers' rights, including women, even opening a clinic that operated a birth control clinic run by a female doctor. No. 814 Broadway housed the Elizabeth Blackwell-founded Women's Central Association of Relief. One of the city's first schools built for female education, a public school, was housed in the striking 34 ½ East 12th Street. The importance of this history and its tangible connection to the still-standing fabric cannot be overstated. We therefore strongly urge you to support the designation of the proposed historic district South of Union Square.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Herrera
Vice President of External Affairs
National Women's History Museum

NATIONAL PRESERVATION INSTITUTE
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March 21, 2022

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor Adams, and Councilmember Rivera,

The National Preservation Institute supports Village Preservation's effort to achieve landmark designation for the area south of Union Square. It is an architecturally and culturally rich area that retains a remarkable level of integrity. However, as these buildings are currently, for the most part, without landmark protections, they could be insensitively altered or demolished at a moment's notice, and that rich history would be lost.

The neighborhood South of Union Square is emblematic of the intersection of commerce, industry, culture, and the advancement of equality. One striking building that illustrates this is 78 Fifth Avenue. Albert Wagner designed this 1896 loft building for the Bloomingdale Department Store's offices. The building was later the home of the renowned engineering firm Purdy & Henderson. The firm completed the structural designs of the Flatiron, the Broad-Exchange building, the Whitehall building, and the Whitehall-Annex while at 78 Fifth Avenue. An astounding but lesser-known fact about Purdy & Henderson is that two women, Marion S. Parker and Elmina Wilson, drafted many of the structural designs that won them the contracts to these prominent commissions.

Marion S. Parker was a graduate from the University of Michigan, who joined Purdy & Henderson in 1900. She worked on such iconic buildings as the Flatiron, the Whitehall, and the Broad-Exchange building. Elmina Wilson, a graduate of Iowa State University, was the second woman to join the firm in 1906 and began working on such buildings as the Whitehall-Annex, which her colleague had completed only a few years prior. She would also later work on the Metropolitan Life Insurance Tower and the Manhattan Municipal Building.

The area south of Union Square was also a mecca and nexus for civil rights and social justice organizations. One building representing this history is the 1908 16-story Neo-Renaissance Revival-style loft building designed by Buchman and Fox at 80 Fifth Avenue. In 1930 the building became the headquarters of the International Workers Orders (IWO), started by the Jewish Workmen's Circle. This progressive mutual-benefit fraternal organization was a pioneering force in the U.S. labor movement. For a quarter of a century, the IWO fought relentlessly for racial equality, interracial solidarity, industrial unions, and social security programs that would protect working-class people. The House of UnAmerican Activities repeatedly investigated the organization. Several of its members, including the head of the organization which worked out of 80 Fifth Avenue, were deported on suspicion of communist activities.

The National Preservation Institute seeks to continue the education of those in the preservation field. Part of this continuing education includes furthering the field with a more progressive and inclusive perspective. The area south of Union Square represents history that the field has previously overlooked in designations of historic districts.

Therefore, I strongly urge you to support the designation of the proposed historic district South of Union Square.

Sincerely,

Jere Gibber
Executive Director

ERIK BOTTCHER
COUNCIL MEMBER

THIRD COUNCIL DISTRICT OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK
224 WEST 30TH STREET, #1206
NEW YORK, NY 10001

TELEPHONE
(212) 564-7757

March 15, 2022

Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chair Carroll:

As the New York City Council representative for Manhattan's District 3, I write in support of the Village Preservation's efforts to seek landmark protection for 60, 66, 68, 72, 74, 78 and 80 Fifth Avenue in New York City.

These buildings represent a significant and underrepresented slice of New York and American history, especially as it relates to the African American and LGBTQ civil rights movements, the peace movement, international human rights initiatives and the arts. Without landmark designation, all remain without protection and are vulnerable to demolition.

Last year, I was pleased to learn of the designation of 70 Fifth Avenue. Constructed in 1912 in the Beaux Arts style, this building is the former headquarters of the NAACP, Crisis Magazine and an array of progressive and civil rights organizations.

Along with 70 Fifth Avenue, the elaborately detailed Renaissance Revival style building at 80 Fifth Avenue was home to organizations that led American efforts to stop the Armenian Genocide, spearheaded the women's peace movement and organized labor's fight to end Jim Crow and discrimination against immigrants and others in mid-20th Century America. Most notably, from 1973 to 1985, this historic building also housed the original headquarters of the country's first national gay organization, the National Gay Task Force (currently the National LGBTQ Task Force).

The other buildings along this strip of Fifth Avenue in District 3 have been home to countless artists, publishers, and organizations, and significantly add to the social and cultural significance of the area south of Union Square:

- 64-66 Fifth Avenue, a striking Romanesque Revival structure, housed the Fifth Avenue Playhouse, one of the country's first art movie houses, and the studios of dance pioneer Martha Graham;
- 68 Fifth Avenue, built in a patrician Greek Revival design by William W. Thompson in 1840, staged the great Chinese American modernist artist Yun Gee's exhibition to raise funds for the Music Box Canteen in 1943;
- 72 Fifth Avenue, designed by Adolph E. Nast, was the home of several notable left-wing political magazines like *The Nation*;
- 74 Fifth Avenue housed Adelphi Hall, a center for left-wing political causes often investigated by the House for Un-American Activities Committee, was frequented by the likes of Paul Robeson.

Therefore, I strongly urge you to designate these building as soon as possible for their architectural significance, place in African American, LGBTQ and immigrant civil rights movements, place in the arts movement, and place in New York and American history.

Thank you for your attention to this request and for the Landmark Preservation Commission's ongoing commitment to preserving our city's history.

Sincerely,



ERIK BOTTCHER
Council Member

KEVIN KENNY
120 West 15th St.
New York, NY 10011

Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

March 15, 2022

Dear Chair Carroll,

I write in strong support of the Village Preservation's efforts to seek landmark protection for the area south of Union Square.

As a historian of immigration at NYU and president of the Immigration and Ethnic History Society, the principal national organization in the field, I would like to emphasize the unique historical importance of this area.

Many of the buildings in question were central locations in African American history and the LGBTQ rights movements, in the women's peace movement and international human rights initiatives, and in organized labor and the arts.

Without landmark protection, these buildings remain vulnerable to restructuring or even demolition. With protection, they will continue to embody vital elements of New York City's rich and diverse heritage, which is both unique to the city and important to the nation at large.

I strongly urge you to designate these building as landmarks for their cultural as well as architectural significance in keeping with the Landmark Preservation Commission's great tradition of preserving our city's history.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Kevin Kenny



Glucksman Professor History, New York University
Director, Glucksman Ireland House, New York University
President, Immigration and Ethnic History Society

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor Adams, and Councilmember Rivera,

As a leading professor of Irish studies at Fordham University, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for the area South of Union Square, which contains several sites of significance to Irish American history.

The history in the area South of Union Square is rich with Irish writers, painters, businessmen, publishers, philanthropists, and politicians. Many influential, notable, and trailblazing Irish figures who worked and lived in this area include *Gov. Al Smith, the first Irish Catholic major party candidate for President*, *Andrew Carrigan, co-founder of the Emigrant Savings Bank and the Irish Brigade during the civil war, Barney Rossett, who owned and ran the revolutionary Grove Press*, *Editor, writer, journalist, and publisher Frank Harris*, and *Preeminent 19th century New York businessman James McCreery*. From this area, these men published novels, started businesses, fought for free speech, and worked to improve the lives of their fellow immigrants and the broader public. They were drawn here by the dynamic confluence of businesses, institutions, people, and culture in the neighborhood and stayed to grow with it. Regardless of their disparate individual goals, they all aided in the neighborhood's, city's, and society's continued growth.

The Irish culture embodied in this area underscores its role as a crossroads of art and commerce, politics, and culture, which Irish Americans profoundly impacted, especially in New York. The lives of Irish immigrants and Irish Americans in the area south of Union Square highlight the connection to our heritage and a different narrative for the Irish immigrant than that which is typically told.

I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district South of Union Square.

Sincerely,

Professor Maginn

JANICE P. NIMURA

January 10, 2022

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission

Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor
City of New York

Hon. Carolina Rivera, City Councilmember
2nd District

RE: Support for landmark designation of historic district south of Union Square

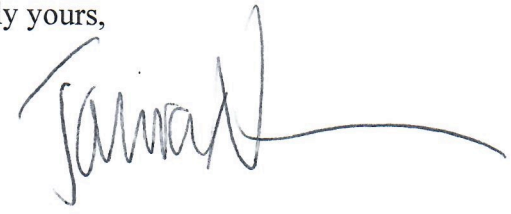
Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor Adams, Councilmember Rivera,

I am a fourth-generation New Yorker and the author of a recent biography of the groundbreaking sisters Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell, *The Doctors Blackwell* (W.W. Norton) Elizabeth Blackwell was the first woman in America to receive a medical degree, in 1849. Emily Blackwell, eternally eclipsed, was the third, in 1854. Together, they founded the New York Infirmary for Indigent Women & Children, the first hospital staffed entirely by women.

I am writing to add my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for the historic district south of Union Square, where many of the Blackwells' achievements took place. Seeing a need among the women and children within the poorer communities of the Lower East Side, Elizabeth Blackwell set up a dispensary to serve that population. This effort was furthered in 1857 when along with two other female physicians, her sister Dr. Emily Blackwell and Dr. Marie Zakrzewska, she established the New York Infirmary for Indigent Women and Children at the former James Roosevelt house on the corner of Bleecker and Crosby Streets. The Blackwells promoted innovation in hygiene and launched a "Sanitary Visitor" program to visit the needy in their homes. In 1861, Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell were founding members of the Women's Central Association of Relief, headquartered at 814 Broadway. Later, they founded the Woman's Medical College of the New York Infirmary to educate aspiring female doctors.

The significance of the pioneering work of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell—both in promoting hygiene and in opening the medical field to women—cannot be overstated. It is fitting that such work began in an area of New York City which over the years has born witness to other innovations in the areas of civil rights—particularly women's rights—the labor movement, the arts, and publishing. I strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district south of Union Square.

Sincerely yours,



515 EAST 89TH STREET, #2B ~ NEW YORK, NY 10128

American University of Sharjah

الجـــامـعـة الأمـيـركـيـة في الـشـــارقـة

December 17, 2021

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for the area South of Union Square, which contains a rich array of sites significant to labor history. Due to a current lack of landmark designation, historically significant buildings in the area such as these are being demolished, disfigured, and altered.

The Communist Party of the United States of America (CPUSA) has deep roots in the area along with related labor and progressive organizations. The Communist Party was known to be located in at least three buildings in the area south of Union Square. 35 East 12th was one of the most important buildings as it housed the headquarters of the Communist Party. Party headquarters included the office of Earl Browder, the CPUSA's General Secretary and two time presidential candidate, as well as the press of the *Daily Worker*, the official communist daily paper; the *Jewish Daily Freiheit*, the Jewish communist paper; the Communist Worker's Bookshop and Workers School; the Young Communist League; and the National Negro Congress. Other Communist Party offices and related organizations were located at 37 East 13th Street, and 28 East 14th Street.

The International Workers Orders (IWO), an organization closely affiliated with the CPUSA, was located at 80 Fifth Avenue from 1930 to 1954. The IWO fought for workers, immigrants, and minority rights. Like the CPUSA itself the IWO was regularly investigated by the House of Un-American Activities (HUAC). In 1952 after years of investigations, six of the IWO's leaders were denaturalized and deported to Russia in an egregious miscarriage of justice.

Buildings that currently represent the area's strong ties to labor history are in many cases under threat, and if not protected could follow the fate of the recently-demolished St. Denis Hotel. Current significant but unprotected sites include No. 45 University Place, which was the home of The Social Reform Club at the turn of the last century. The Club boasted a membership featuring the city's most renowned reform leaders and attempted to confront the most pressing issues facing working people locally and internationally. No. 70 University Place was in the 1950s the home of the union organizer and civil rights advocate David Livingston, a confidante of Martin Luther King Jr. who arranged a meeting between King and John F. Kennedy in 1960. No. 55 East 11th Street was the home of the *New Militant*, the weekly publication of the Socialist Workers Party, which supported Leon Trotsky, in the 1930s. And at 113-117 East 11th Street The Delehanty Institute, once the city's leading civil service school, was started by

Michael J. Delehanty. A former deputy sheriff and attendant in the State Supreme Court, Delehanty envisioned that the Institute would provide students with a civil service education that included mental preparation in addition to physical preparation. His approach was unprecedented and went on to transform the quality of civil service examinations and civil service education more broadly.

These are just some of the buildings, which along with the already-landmarked 70 Fifth Avenue, 832-34 Broadway, and Webster Hall, show the incredible concentration of labor history located in this district south of Union Square. Unfortunately, these buildings along with their significant role in labor history now face the threat of erasure due to mounting real estate pressure and inaction by the city government.

I strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district South of Union Square.

Sincerely,

Vernon L. Pedersen, PhD

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Twin Cities Campus

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College of Liberal Arts

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October 22, 2021

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As president of the Labor and Working-Class History Association (LAWCHA), I am writing to share my support for Village Preservation's effort to secure landmark status for the area south of Union Square. The area contains several sites that served as the headquarters for many political parties and organizations that were crucial to advancing the labor movement in the United States. Due to a current lack of landmark designation, historically significant buildings in the area such as these are being demolished, disfigured, and altered.

Among many sites within this area that were significant to labor history is 80 Fifth Avenue. Designed by Buchman & Fox in the Renaissance Revival style and constructed in 1908, this building served as the headquarters for the International Workers Orders (IWO) from 1930 to 1954. The IWO was a mutual benefit fraternal organization that led trailblazing fights against Jim Crow and discrimination against Jews and immigrants, fighting for integration in professional sports and the workplace. The IWO was a constant target for the House of Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC). The HUAC eventually deported several members of

the IWO, including a member who headed the order at 80 Fifth Avenue. However, the persistent investigations into the IWO didn't stop its effectiveness. At its height, the IWO had 200,000 members across the country. The leaders of the IWO would not uphold Jim Crow laws and constantly worked towards racial integration.

Buildings that currently represent the area's strong ties to labor history are in many cases under threat, and if not protected could be lost. Current significant but unprotected sites include 28 East 14th Street, the New York Workers School, which opened in October 1923. It was first located on University Place near Union Square, then moved to 28 East 14th Street, where the Communist Party headquarters was already located. The school sought to promote "true proletarian education" and to build a new generation of workers to advance the labor movement. 28 East 14th Street is a beautiful five-story loft building with unusual bay windows designed by William Wheeler Smith in 1881.

45 University Place was the home of The Social Reform Club at the turn of the last century. The Club boasted a membership featuring the city's most renowned reform leaders, and attempted to confront the most pressing issues facing working people locally and internationally. 45 University Place is one of the area's oldest buildings, constructed between 1845 and 1847.

70 University Place was in the 1950s the home of the union organizer and civil rights advocate David Livingston, a confidante of Martin Luther King Jr. who arranged a meeting between King and John F. Kennedy in 1960. 70 University Place represents another part of the area's earliest development as the rowhouse was constructed between 1843 and 1844. 55 East 11th Street, a 1908 Schwartz & Gross loft, was the home of the *New Militant*, the weekly organ of the Workers Party in the 1930s. And located at 113-117 East 11th Street (constructed in 1870) was the Delehanty Institute, once the city's leading civil service school, started by Michael J. Delehanty. A former deputy sheriff and attendant in the State Supreme Court, Delehanty envisioned that the Institute would provide students with a civil service education that included mental preparation in addition to physical preparation. His approach was unprecedented and went on to transform the quality of civil service examinations and civil service education more broadly.

This area became a mecca for the leftist and labor organizations in the 19th and 20th centuries, but so few of these sites have been recognized with landmark designations. Failure to designate historically significant sites in this neighborhood that was so crucial to labor history will result in their loss. For instance, the St. Denis Hotel was not considered for landmark designation and was lost in 2019. In the twentieth century, the former hotel was converted into a modern store and office building, and in the 1920s a number of labor unions and leftist organizations moved in. A flurry of leftist publications emerged from the St. Denis Hotel during these years. Publications such as the *Marxist New Horizons for Youth* were published out of Room 235, and the American Negro Labor Congress published *The Liberator* out of Room 338. This history has been erased from Broadway and East 11th Street and replaced by an office building, of which the city has an overabundance.

Organizations and individuals seeking better working conditions, fair pay, and social equality were highly concentrated in the area south of Union Square, along with other progressive political movements, artists, writers, and publishers. Many of these organizations and movements faced persecution at the time and pressure from our government to close their doors and end their work. Now, these historic sites are under threat of erasure due to mounting real estate pressure and inaction by the city government.

I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district South of Union Square.

Sincerely,



William P. Jones
President, Labor and Working Class History Association (LAWCHA)
Professor and Director of Graduate Studies, Department of History, University of Minnesota

kaj133@aol.com. *Kathryn A. Jolowicz* *(212) 249-0125*
ykhs-ny.org *133 East 84th Street* *(917) 494-2983*
New York, N.Y. 10028

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the Yorkville/Kleindeutschland Historian, I passionately support Village Preservation's effort to defend a Historic District South of Union Square. I am interested in all of the Lower East Side's preservation attempts and its rich history because this first "Kleindeutschland" was the ancestor of Yorkville/Kleindeutschland, the "village" where I was born, in 1939. The Era during the 30s through the 60s, once known as Little Germany, was a melting pot of Eastern and Middle Europeans, whose common language was not English, but German. It was a famous international landmark. All gone now. Sadly, there were no preservation groups around then, so no opportunity existed to preserve anything of this phenomenon, nestled in a corner of New York City's Upper East Side. Thus, my lone attempt to preserve this history of a lost Era is depicted in the 36 panels and artifacts, featured in my History of Yorkville/Kleindeutschland Exhibit/Lectures. Only here, can one experience and view the inimitable life of lederhosen and dirndls, and the tantalizing experiences of this lost Historic District.

By 1855 New York had the third-largest German population in the world and, it comprised a big chunk of our City. Kleindeutschland created a self-sustaining city within a city. It had its own businesses, architecture, intellectuals, economics, teachers, entrepreneurs artists, and craftsmen. It was a culture inspired not only by beautiful and exciting things that only could be done by hand but by innovative minds as well. But the Slocum Disaster in 1904 brought these grief-stricken residents to Yorkville. Since my mother and a survivor were good friends, I learned so much about the life of the Lower Wards. But due to the World Wars, German Americans were scorned, and their contributions unacknowledged. German names were anglicized, and recognition for their contributions to society and the world were ignored. As a double Fine Arts major at NYU in the late 50s, my social life centered around the Village. Thus, I often

walked the streets below Union Square and was in awe of the fine sculptured buildings, with their impressive stonework and design, and even the little cozy ones, wondering who these people living there were like, a century before me. I even recognized the façades of some of the elegant box-shaped buildings with their unusual brickwork, by German Architects. The style resembled closely the façade of the building where my grandparents met and worked, in Leipzig Germany, so long ago.

The Yorkville/Kleindeutschland I knew growing up, was a noted haven for the WW2 refugees, who came to New York and, were surprised to find a whole district offering not only their languages but the food and beer; the shops, nightlife, beer gardens, dance halls; the Vereins, music, theater all surrounding the 86th Street hub; all things which they were forced to leave behind. But it was there - BECAUSE PROGRESS LEFT IT ALONE! However, progress in the 60s, destroyed this cherished "Little Germany" about which people speak today, as I watched my "village" crumble, brick by brick. To preserve this unique life now, was not possible, because it was too late. But now there are preservation groups working hard to keep the early landscapes of NY alive. Village Preservation's goal here should be recognized and applauded for their effort to preserve this proposed historic district's architecturally noted buildings and the German histories that go with them.

Noted dwellings should not be allowed to be transcribed into boring, plain white or red brick, or ugly dark brown squared boxes, with lazy architectural design imagination. Due to the push for glass and steel, the youth of today may never know what beauty can be displayed in architecture and the history that inspired it. In school, we learn about history through books, but so little is taught by just looking up, and learning visually, and asking why. Descendants will never witness what our ancestors, or even our grandparents, have seen of those striking buildings with rhythmic designs, of play of light and shadow, coupled with fabulous sculptured ornamentation, labored skillfully by stone artists, and architects, if not preserved.

I was helpless to see my "village", being replaced as it quickly disappeared. Gone are the undulating building facades with their shapes and colors; their intricated stone carvings, columns, faces; gilded ormolus and embellishments of carved pediments and lintels. Such things which one sees only in the castles and villas of Europe had been brought to America by craftsmen of a special time and place. Long gone are the buildings, and their interiors of pressed metal interiors and stain-glassed windows. We systematically destroy eras that displayed awe-inspiring imagination, that few now can remember, and few will ever experience. I doubt anyone who reads this will have had the unique experience of which I speak.

I write this letter to tell my story. It hopefully describes how the lack of preservation and negligence destroyed a once internationally famous landmark, then revered by our diverse City and, why a New York treasured phenomenon the whole world came to join in, has been lost forever. Therefore, it is important to close and bridge this gap between the historic Lower East Side, and the historic West Village, solidifying an American "Old City", and inserting this Historic District South of Union Square to create a historically solid cultural block, to serve as a magnet for students, visitors, and history enthusiasts, living both here and in the rest of the world.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Jolowicz
Yorkville/Kleindeutschland Historian (ykhs-ny.org)
E 83/84th Street Block Association, President (2nd – 5th Ave. 16 blocks)
19th Precinct Community Council VP

=

University of Massachusetts Amherst

College of Humanities and Fine Arts
History Department
Jennifer Fronc, Ph.D.
Professor
jfronc@history.umass.edu

August 27, 2021

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the author of *Monitoring the Movies: The Fight over Film Censorship in Early Twentieth-Century Urban America*, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 80 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1908 Renaissance Revival-style office building at 80 Fifth Avenue was the home of the Motion Picture Patents Company (MPPC) from 1909 until its dissolution in 1917. MPCC and 80 Fifth Avenue are a critical part of the incredibly important early history of the film industry to be found in the area south of Union Square.

The MPPC was a trust of the 16 major American film companies headed by Thomas Edison in the early 20th century. The trust came about as a result of Edison's desire to have a monopoly over the industry. The MPPC was instrumental in changing the advertising tactics for the film industry. In this trust, Edison restricted reel length, didn't allow for the acknowledgment of actors, and refused equipment to uncooperative companies, and sought to drive out rival film companies. These tactics were a major factor in motivating film industry competitors to move west to Hollywood out of reach of the regulation and control of Edison.

The Motion Picture Patents Company is only one of many buildings which housed the growing film industry in the area south of Union Square. 70 Fifth Avenue, which has recently been landmarked, housed the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures from the 1910s until at least 1949. Throughout its 111-year existence, the Board played a profound role in shaping the motion picture industry in America, single-handedly deciding what content would or would not appear in a film by either granting or denying their stamp of approval for movies: "passed by the National Board of Review."

Another building with rich film history worthy of landmark designation is 64-66 Fifth Avenue, which housed The Fifth Avenue Playhouse, arguably the first art movie house in America. The Playhouse opened on December 16, 1925, showing "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari." In 1935 the Jewish Telegraph Agency reported that the "little playhouse brings to New York movies of interest to lovers of France and those familiar with the French language." The theater was renamed the Fifth Avenue Cinema in 1954 when it was operated by Ragoff & Becker. The theater operated until 1978 when it was purchased by the New School.

814 Broadway was home to the U-P Film Group and O-P Screening Room Cinema. Founded in the late 1960s by Palestinian Egyptian immigrant Rafic Azzouny, whom *Village Voice* film critic J. Hoberman called "an exuberant fixture of the downtown film and video scene for over three decades," they played a key role in the development of the Downtown underground and avant-garde film and video scene. U-P was a filmmaking collective that allowed many more daring or not commercially viable artists to create their works, while O-P was a venue for showing these audacious or unconventional films.

53 East 11th saw publisher Grove Press pushing boundaries against censorship not just in publishing, but also in film. In January of 1967 Grove Press announced the acquisition of the prestigious Cinema 16 Film Library, consisting of two hundred shorts and experimental works, including films by Stan

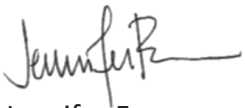
Brakhage, Kenneth Anger, Michelangelo Antonioni, and Peter Weiss, all darlings of the cinematic avant-garde. They opened a small office at 53 East 11th Street, but began operating a theater for both films and live productions here as well.

108-112 Third Avenue was a significant piece of film history in the area until its demolition in 2005. The Variety Photoplays Theater on Third Avenue between 13th and 14th Streets was one of New York's last surviving nickelodeon houses from the earliest stages of moving pictures. The original building that housed the Variety Theater at 110 Third Avenue was likely constructed as early as 1897 just as the moving picture craze swept the country and nickelodeon theaters sprung up throughout the city to bring the new medium to the masses. The theater's history became somewhat sordid, as did the area surrounding it in the 70s and 80s and it was temporarily closed. In 1991, the theater was reopened and ran for over a decade as the Variety Arts Theater until 2004, when it was closed and subsequently demolished in 2005 despite a campaign by Village Preservation to seek landmark status for the building.

The area south of Union Square played an incredibly important role in the genesis and global popularity of the American film industry. The historic fabric that remains in the area tells the story of the development of the film industry and this country's tremendous influence over it and impact upon it.

I therefore strongly urge you to support the designation of 80 Fifth Avenue and the proposed historic district south of Union Square.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Fronc

Roberta Brandes Gratz 25 Central Park West, New York NY 10023

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

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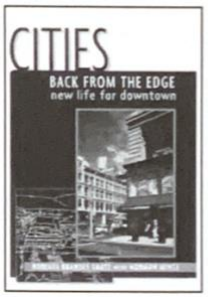
RE: Support for proposed historic district South of Union Square

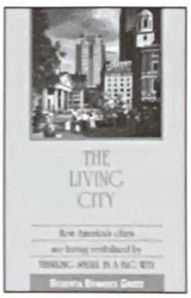
Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

I write to express my strong support for Village Preservation's proposal for a historic district in the area south of Union Square. As a former longtime member of the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, founding board member of the Center for the Living City with Jane Jacobs, and the author of multiple books about urbanism, *including It's a Helluva Town: Joan K. Davidson, the J. M. Kaplan Fund, and the Fight for a Better New York* and *The Battle for Gotham: New York in the Shadow of Robert Moses and Jane Jacobs*, I believe it is crucial to protect and honor the extremely rich, diverse, and vital social history and architecture found in the historic buildings south of Union Square.

The proposed historic district, spanning from Fifth Avenue to Third Avenue, 14th to 9th Streets, continues to suffer grievous losses of its historic buildings and architecture, especially since the 2018 upzoning for the Union Square Tech Hub.

Architecturally, the area south of Union Square is a collection of remarkable residential and commercial architecture from the 19th through the early 20th century, in every style from Italianate to Gothic and Romanesque Revival, Neo-classical, Queen Anne, Victorian, and Byzantine. Work by some of America's greatest architects, including Henry J. Hardenbergh, Emery Roth, Griffith Thomas, Napoleon LeBrun, Harvey Wiley Corbett, David and John Jardine, George B. Post, Carrere and Hastings, John Kellum, and Charles Rentz, among others, can be found here, along with the largest collection of designs anywhere in the world by renowned architect James Renwick Jr.





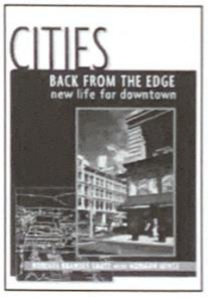
Phone (917) 699-8338 *Email* roberta.gratz@gmail.com

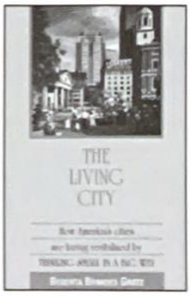
Culturally, this neighborhood and its buildings played a critical role in the African American and LGBTQ civil rights movements, women's suffrage and women's rights movements, the labor movement, the New York School of writers and artists, and in the publishing industry. This is just the tip of the iceberg of the area's critical role in the artistic, literary, commercial, political, civil rights, and social justice history of our city and nation. There is no question of the historic, cultural, and social significance of the area's threatened historic fabric.

I urge the Landmarks Preservation Commission to act swiftly and designate the area south of Union Square a historic district.

Sincerely,

Roberta Brandes Gratz
25 Central Park West
New York, NY 10023
roberta.gratz@gmail.com
(917) 699-8338





Re: Landmark Preservation Status of 80 Fifth Ave

June 30, 2021

Hon. Sarah Carroll
Chair, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007
<scarroll@lpc.nyc.gov>

Cc: Andrew Berman, <andrew@gvshp.org>
Council Member, Corey Johnson, Corey.Johnson@council.nyc.gov
Erik Bottcher, <ebottcher@council.nyc.gov>
Kate Lemos McHale, <klemosmchale@lpc.nyc.gov>
Lisa Kersavage, <LKersavage@lpc.nyc.gov>

Dear Chair Carroll,

We write in support of the Greenwich Village Preservation Society's (Village Preservation) request to obtain Landmark Preservation status for the building at 80 Fifth Avenue. Village Preservation has amply demonstrated that 80 Fifth Avenue provides a significant contribution to the LGBTQ history of the neighborhood because it was the home of the National Gay Task Force from 1973 to 1986. This is a critical piece that contributes to the understanding of how a Union Square building became a home to a variety of historically significant progressive movements over time, an effort that we have helped document. The National Gay Task Force (now the National LGBTQ Task Force), was the first national LGBTQ rights organization in the country, and for the first 13 years of its existence was located at 80 Fifth Avenue.

As a Scholars' Working Group housed at Cornell University, dedicating to studying the history of the International Workers' Order (IWO), a mutual aid society headquartered at 80 Fifth Ave, our collective research demonstrates that the historical and social significance of this Buchman and Fox building is even older, dating back to the Great Depression and the New Deal. Its location near Union Square is reflective of the area's collective, progressive history at that period. Our collective research demonstrates that 80 Fifth Avenue's preservation is also crucially important to the history of women's health and medicine, labor, immigrant Jewish activism, civil rights, and African American women. A simple but telling actuarial example that relates to addressing public health disparities in regard to race is seen: the IWO was unique in charging the same rate for health, life and burial insurance to its Black members, thus bucking the prevalent discriminatory policies of insurers that granted insurance only at higher rates.

Founded in 1930 by Jewish immigrants as an activist Yiddishist left-wing fraternal mutual aid society, the IWO was headquartered at 80 Fifth Ave between 1930-1954. By 1940, the IWO had expanded to include fourteen other ethnic groups, was racially integrated, and occupied a significant portion of the building, from the tenth through the sixteenth floors. One of its most

remarkable contributions to the building's history was the birth control clinic established there in 1936. The IWO founded its birth control clinic to provide low-cost contraception to thousands of New York's working-class women, primarily immigrants. When it opened, publicity materials boasted that, at the clinic, women could obtain "information about and materials for the most modern methods of birth control." The clinic operated seven days a week, and offered evening appointments for women who worked during the day. Membership in the clinic plan cost $4 per year for IWO insurance holders (approximately $70), and included a gynecological exam, contraceptives, and follow-up exams. The clinic's physicians also prescribed "scientific birth control advice" for "eligible" women.

Dr. Cheri Appel (1901-2003), the clinic's medical director, was one of five women to graduate NYU medical school in 1927. She completed her residency in gynecology at Morrisania Hospital, worked at Margaret Sanger's Birth Control Clinical Research Bureau on West 16th Street, and in 1932 assisted Sanger in opening a birth control clinic funded by Nancy Carnegie Rockefeller in Portchester, New York. When the International Workers Order offered her the position as head of their new clinic, she accepted. The IWO's birth control clinic became the first center for women's health established by a fraternal organization in the United States, and the only birth control clinic operating on an insurance system. It offered the opportunity to become a model for similar programs nationwide.

The IWO became the "first insurer to include contraception in its benefit package." IWO leaders linked economic issues relating to sex and reproduction to larger structural challenges bound up with poverty and the system of waged labor. As Elizabeth Temkin has remarked, "the actuarial is political:" the IWO's fraternal insurance plan allowed working-class New York women a form of sexual, and economic, autonomy. "Even in the short time of the center's existence, the center has shown its worth," an IWO publication proclaimed in 1940. "Our numbers show the significant cost which American mothers pay both in terms of cash and in terms of health, due to abortions and a shortage of information regarding motherhood."

IWO leaders regarded their birth control clinic as a cutting-edge response to the economic crisis of the Depression, and saw health insurance as a major vehicle for broader social reform. By 1940, the IWO's City Central Committee had enrolled 18,000 members in its medical plan, and, through family plans it provided low-cost medical care, through neighborhood physicians, to almost sixty thousand people. The family plan cost 50 cents per month, or $6 a year (about $100 today). For a single person, the plan cost 35 cents per month, or $4.20 per year (roughly $70 now). The medical plan included visits to the doctor's office, as well as house calls. There were about one hundred neighborhood physicians in the IWO insurance network. In addition, the IWO provided access to specialists, available on a pay-as-needed, discounted basis. For example, while the normal fee for a major operation such as appendectomy started at $150, an IWO member undergoing a procedure with an IWO surgeon paid only $50. Similarly, pre-natal and delivery care cost about $150 through many insurance plans, but on the IWO plan, it cost about $75. The IWO also invested in preventative care: in 1937, it began offering free Wasserman tests to diagnose syphilis, and in 1939 it began to offer an annual chest x-ray to screen for tuberculosis. IWO officials considered these campaigns successful both in terms of

saving lives, and in terms of limiting insurance costs for all by catching medical problems before the cost of treatment skyrocketed.

Dave Greene, a New Yorker who joined the IWO in 1931, became secretary of the Central Committee in 1937, and the following year became an example of how the IWO's insurance plan could protect workers from wage and job loss due to illness. One morning, without warning, Greene woke coughing up blood. An IWO internist paid a house call, and concluded that Greene required a chest X-ray. The doctor made a follow-up visit, bringing along a portable X-ray machine. The X-ray was then examined offsite by the IWO's pulmonologist, who diagnosed incipient tuberculosis. Greene was sent to the IWO's sanitarium upstate in Liberty, New York. As a benefit of his insurance coverage, Greene received sick benefits of $20 per week for thirty weeks, which covered the complete cost of his stay in the sanitarium, including room and board, and daily visits from his doctor. Greene spent three months in Liberty, and then returned to his job with the IWO. He later remarked, "I owe my life to the fact that I had available to me, through the medical plan, services when I needed it, without having to worry about whether I had the money available at the time to cover the cost of it."

Another remarkable and pioneering woman who worked with the IWO at 80 Fifth Ave was IWO Vice-President, Black feminist Louise Thompson Patterson. She was born in Chicago in 1901, but spent her early years out west, as one of the few black children in the rural towns of Nevada, Idaho, Utah, and Oregon, a childhood she later described as "a bit of a nightmare." Patterson graduated from the University of California-Berkeley with a degree in business administration in 1923. After teaching in Arkansas and then in Virginia, she came to New York to study social work. Taking up an active role in the artistic circles of the Harlem Renaissance, she won the opportunity to travel with a number of other black artists to the Soviet Union in 1932, which opened her eyes to a new way of viewing the world. Upon her return, she became actively involved in the campaign to free the "Scottsboro Boys," and then took a job at the International Workers Order at 80 Fifth Avenue. She quickly moved from clerk to organizer to officer. She then began to build Harlem's first IWO lodge, known as the Solidarity Lodge, located on 125th Street and St. Nicholas Avenue.

Solidarity Lodge became an important locus of new Black culture. Patterson worked with Langston Hughes to establish the Harlem Suitcase Theater at Solidarity Lodge, which premiered Hughes' play, "Don't You Want to Be Free" in early 1938, with an interracial cast. Under the lodge's president, the young Black actress Beryle Banfield, the cultural wing of Solidarity Lodge became the Harlem People's Art Group, founded in 1943 and led by Black director Abbie Mitchell. The lodge sponsored cutting-edge Black cultural events, such as hosting Swahili dancers and African singers, as well as experimental modern dancers such as Pearl Primus. With Solidarity Lodge's mixed audience, and the support of white IWO members across the city, the new Black culture of Solidarity Lodge flourished including Patterson's work with Paul Robeson, arranging concerts for community and political audiences. Poetry and songs such as Hughes' "Let America Be America Again," and Robeson's performance of "Ballad for Americans" were launched in this milieu.

The interracial IWO forcefully advocated, too, for racial equality and throughout its 24 years lobbied the federal government for voting-rights, equal-employment and anti-lynching legislation. Some of the earliest classes in African American history were conducted at IWO schools. At a time when segregation reigned in much of America, the International Workers Order promised “There’s no Jim Crow in the IWO!”

In the summer of 1944, as the IWO was rapidly becoming one of the largest leftwing organizations in the country, the FBI broke into the IWO offices for the first time. By the end of the decade, information provided by the FBI and House Un-American Activities (HUAC) hearings helped New York State helped shut down the IWO during the Red Scare. An extraordinary fraternal organization and insurer was closed down, and 80 Fifth Avenue lost one of its most remarkable tenants.

We wholeheartedly support the campaign to designate 80 Fifth Avenue a landmark due to its cultural and historical significance as a beacon of forward-thinking, progressive causes.

Sincerely,

Dr. Elissa Sampson, Cornell Visiting Scholar and Lecturer
Professor Robert Zecker, St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, ns B2G 2W5, CA
Jennifer Young, Independent Scholar and Researcher, 80 Market St, Northampton MA 01060

NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project

Making an invisible history visible

www.nyclgbtsites.org

June 29, 2021

Hon. Sarah Carroll

Chair, NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North
New York, NY 10007

Re: Letter of Support for 80 Fifth Avenue, former National Gay Task Force Headquarters

Dear Chair Carroll,

On behalf of co-directors Andrew Dolkart, Ken Lustbader, and Jay Shockley, I am writing in support of the Request for Evaluation recently submitted by Village Preservation for 80 Fifth Avenue, in Manhattan, which was the longtime headquarters of the National Gay Task Force (now the National LGBTQ Task Force). We also support VP's historic district proposal for the area south of Union Square, which includes other LGBT-related sites.

As you know, the NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project is a cultural heritage initiative and educational resource that documents historic sites connected to the LGBT community throughout New York City from the 17th century to 2000. Our website features over 350 historic sites, including the former National Gay Task Force Headquarters. This site is also included in our award-winning *Historic Context Statement for LGBT History in New York City* (2018), which was undertaken as part of an Underrepresented Communities Grant from the National Park Service.

The National LGBTQ Task Force, the first national gay rights organization, was established in 1973 with the intention of bringing the LGBT rights movement into the national mainstream of American civil rights. Some of the founders were former Gay Activists Alliance (GAA) members disaffected by that group's internal squabbles, and included Dr. Bruce Voeller, Barbara Gittings, Frank Kameny, Dr. Howard Brown, Arthur Bell, Ron Gold, Nathalie Rockhill, and Martin Duberman. The "establishment" organization played a crucial role in helping to draft local gay rights bills across the United States, repeal sodomy laws, and encourage LGBT visibility. Its headquarters from October 1973 to 1986 was on the fifth floor of 80 Fifth Avenue. Renamed the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force in 1985, it moved to Washington, D.C., in 1986.

In 2019, we were thrilled that the LPC met with our organization to discuss LGBT historic sites and, following a list of recommendations that we submitted to your agency, the LPC designated six buildings New York City Landmarks for their significance to LGBT history. Among those were the GAA Firehouse, in Soho, and the Women's Liberation Center, in Chelsea, two sites of LGBT organizing and activism connected to the immediate post-Stonewall era. We ask that the LPC continue to recognize the fight for LGBT equality as a key part of the city's history by designating 80 Fifth Avenue a New York City Landmark.

We have been working on a follow-up list of recommendations for you to consider, and the former headquarters of the National Gay Task Force will be included. We look forward to sharing that list with you in the following weeks and working with the LPC in designating more LGBT landmarks across New York City.

Please let us know if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,



Amanda Davis
Project Manager
amanda@nyclgbtsites.org

Copy:
Lisa Kersavage, Landmarks Preservation Commission
Kate Lemos McHale, Landmarks Preservation Commission
Andrew Dolkart, NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project
Ken Lustbader, NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project
Jay Shockley, NYC LGBT Historic Sites Project
Andrew Berman, Village Preservation

June 28, 2021

Irish Voice Newspaper
875 Sixth Avenue
Suite 1708
NY 10001
From Niall O'Dowd, Founder
To :
Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

To:Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the founder of the Irish Voice, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for the area South of Union Square, which contains several sites of significance to Irish American history. Due to a current lack of landmark designation, I understand that historically significant buildings in the area are being demolished, disfigured, and altered. These include 49-51 Fifth Avenue, 28 East 14th Street, 57 Fifth Avenue, 801-807 Broadway, and 61 Fourth Avenue.

I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district South of Union Square.

Sincerely,

Niall O’Dowd

March 17,2021

460 Riverside Drive
New York, NY 10027

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commisssion
1 Centre St 9th fl
NY NY 10007

Dear Sarah Carroll,

I just learned that my Grandfather George Arthur Plimpton was responsible for building 70 Fifth Ave for Ginn and Co a publisher of educational books.

It is a marvelous building and when I read about all the organizations that were housed in the building such as the NAACP, The Crisis Magazine and many other progressive organizations I can't imagine that this isn't an important building that should be landmarked. Besides those progressive organizations it housed educational books! What could be more important? This building is a true history lesson, not only the architecture but of its importance in civil rights, labor rights and even world affairs.

It was an education for me to read about 70 Fifth and it should be saved for others to learn as I did.

Respectively,

Sarah Plimpton

DEDALUS
FOUNDATION

February 12, 2021
Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

City Council Member Carlina Rivera
209 East 3rd Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for the landmark designation of 61 Fourth Avenue, as part of the proposed south of Union Square Historic District

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Council Member Rivera,

I am writing to express strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 61 Fourth Avenue as part of an historic district designation for the area. This intact 1889 Romanesque Revival loft building was designed by Benjamin E. Lowe, who was responsible for the designs of a number of other New York City landmarked buildings.

This structure has a number of significant historic associations, including that it was the location of Robert Indiana's studio, of the Reuben Gallery, and of the home of Grove Press publisher Barney Rosset. It was also the studio of Robert Motherwell at a critical period of his career, between 1949 and 1952.

Motherwell is considered one of the most important American Abstract Expressionist painters, along with other members of the New York School such as Philip Guston, Willem de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, and Mark Rothko. In addition to being a great painter, Motherwell was also an important theorist and became the leading spokesperson of the New York School, through his writings, lectures, and teaching. He also served as a bridge between the New York School and European artists and writers. The prominent art critic Clement Greenberg called Motherwell "one of the very best of the Abstract Expressionist painters."

In 1948-49, just before and during the time that Motherwell occupied his studio at 61 Fourth Avenue, he began to work on his celebrated Elegy to the Spanish Republic series, which memorialized the lost Republican cause in the Spanish Civil War, the prelude to World War II that Motherwell considered one of the great tragedies of his time. He continued to create works in this series, which paid homage to the victims of human suffering, throughout the rest of his life. Between 1949 and his death in 1991 he had created well over 200 works in the series, many examples of which are in major museum collections throughout the world. During the time he had his studio at 61 Fourth Avenue, his major works included *At Five in the Afternoon* (1950; collection of the M. H. de Young Memorial Museum), *Mural Fragment* (1950; collection of the Frederick R. Weisman Museum), and *Madrid* (1950; private collection). While he had his studio at 61 Fourth Avenue, Motherwell also worked with the Architects' Collaborative led by Walter Gropius, and was involved in two important mural projects: a maquette for a projected sixty-foot long mural for a junior high school in Attleboro, Massachusetts; and a mural for the main entry wall of Congregation B'nai Israel Synagogue in Millburn, New Jersey. In the fall of 1949, Motherwell also started the Robert Motherwell School of Fine Art Painting, Drawing, and Theory at 61 Fourth Avenue. And starting in 1951, he played an important role in shaping the art department at Hunter College.

The impact of the work done by various artists associated with 61 Fourth Avenue was exceptionally broad and deep, and affected not only the art world but also American culture in general. Robert Motherwell's very important place in American art history is inextricably linked to the area south of Union Square, and particularly to this building. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 61 Fourth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,



Jack Flam
President and CEO
The Dedalus Foundation

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
New York City Council Speaker Corey Johnson

February 11, 2021

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 61 Fourth Avenue, former studio of Robert Motherwell, and surrounding area south of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the daughter of Robert Motherwell, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 61 Fourth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1889 Romanesque Revival style building is significant due to its association with Robert Motherwell (1915-1991), one of the most noteworthy figures of the Abstract Expressionist movement and 'New York School' of artists.

Robert Motherwell had a studio at 61 Fourth Avenue during a critical period of his career, between 1949 and 1952. Along with other members of the New York School such as Willem de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko and Philip Guston, Motherwell is considered one of the great American Abstract Expressionist painters. Credited by *The American Art Book* as being the most articulate of this group, Motherwell became the theorist and leading spokesperson of the New York School. He did so through lectures, teachings, and writings, all the while maintaining his own productive output of paintings, collages, and prints. Motherwell also fostered relationships with European Surrealists and other intellectuals, serving as a bridge between the pre-war avant-garde movement in Europe and the post-war Abstract Expressionist movement in New York. He established automatism and psychoanalysis as the focus of American abstraction. In 1991, art critic Clement Greenberg said of Motherwell: "in my opinion he was one of the very best of the Abstract Expressionist painters."

In 1948-49, during the time that Motherwell occupied his studio at 61 Fourth Avenue, he began his lengthy series of paintings, *Elegies to the Spanish Republic*, which memorialized the lost Republican cause in the Spanish Civil War. This homage to the victims of this war, and all wars,

would be the theme of his works for decades to come, and consists of over 200 variants of black forms on white backgrounds. He insisted that these paintings were not political, but rather his intent was to ensure that those who lost their lives were not forgotten. During his time at 61 Fourth Avenue, his works included *At Five in the Afternoon* (1948-49), *The Voyage* (1948-49), *Madrid* (1950), *Wall of the Temple* (1951), and *Wall of the Temple III* (1952). In 1950, Motherwell worked with the Architects' Collaborative led by Walter Gropius, and exhibited a maquette for a sixty-foot-long mural for a junior high school in Attleboro, Massachusetts called *Mural Fragment*. Motherwell also started 'the Robert Motherwell School of Fine Art Painting, Drawing, Theory' at 61 Fourth Avenue in the autumn of 1949.

The impact of the work which took place at 61 Fourth Avenue and the figures connected to it was exceptionally broad and deep, affecting the art world and the larger culture. Without a doubt, Robert Motherwell's very important place in American art history is inextricably linked to the area south of Union Square, and particularly to this building. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 61 Fourth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Jeannie Motherwell
Jeannie Motherwell Studios, LLC
Miller Street Artist Studios
11 Miller Street, #108
Somerville, MA 02143

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

1 Centre Street, 19th floor, New York, NY 10007
(212) 669-8300 p (212) 669-4306 f
431 West 125th Street, New York, NY 10027
(212) 531-1609 p (212) 531-4615 f
www.manhattanbp.nyc.gov

Gale A. Brewer, Borough President

February 4, 2021

Sarah Carroll
Chair, New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North
New York, NY 10007

Re: Historic District Designation South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll:

I write to urge you to designate a historic district in the area immediately south of Union Square. This community, roughly located between Third and Fifth Avenues and East 14th and East 9th Streets, is home to many buildings and sites of architectural and historic significance to the City of New York. Many sites in the area are facing the threat of development or demolition if no action is taken.

Since 2018, seven historic buildings along Broadway south of Union Square have been landmarked. While this was an important step, many other sites in the area, such as Book Row along Fourth Avenue, the old headquarters of the NAACP, and the National LGBTQ Task Force along Fifth Avenue, deserve to be preserved.

I encourage the Landmarks Preservation Commission to consider a historic district designation for this area.

Sincerely,

Gale A. Brewer

Gale A. Brewer
Manhattan Borough President

BCC:

Andrew Berman, Executive Director, Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation
Alysha Lewis-Coleman, Chair, Manhattan Community Board Three
Elizabeth Goldstein, President, The Municipal Art Society of New York
Simeon Bankoff, Executive Director, The Historic Districts Council
Peg Breen, President, The New York Landmarks Conservancy

February 1, 2021

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 61 Fourth Avenue, former studio of Robert Motherwell, and surrounding area south of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the author of *Robert Motherwell with Pen and Brush* (2003) and *Robert Motherwell: What Art Holds* (1995), I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 61 Fourth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1889 Romanesque Revival style building is significant due to its association with Robert Motherwell (1915-1991), one of the most noteworthy figures of the Abstract Expressionist movement and 'New York School' of artists.

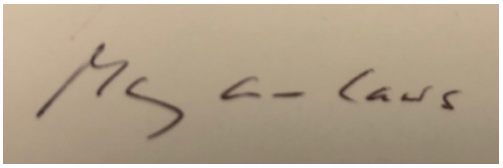
Robert Motherwell had a studio at 61 Fourth Avenue during a critical period of his career, between 1949 and 1952. Along with other members of the New York School such as Willem de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko and Philip Guston, Motherwell is considered one of the great American Abstract Expressionist painters. Credited by *The American Art Book* as being the most articulate of this group, Motherwell became the theorist and leading spokesperson of the New York School. He did so through lectures, teachings, and writings, all the while maintaining his own productive output of paintings, collages, and prints. Motherwell also fostered relationships with European Surrealists and other intellectuals, serving as a bridge between the pre-war avant-garde movement in Europe and the post-war Abstract Expressionist movement in New York. He established automatism and psychoanalysis as the focus of American abstraction. In 1991, art critic Clement Greenberg said of Motherwell: "in my opinion he was one of the very best of the Abstract Expressionist painters."

In 1948-49, during the time that Motherwell occupied his studio at 61 Fourth Avenue, he began his lengthy series of paintings, *Elegies to the Spanish Republic*, which memorialized the lost

Republican cause in the Spanish Civil War. This homage to the victims of this war would be the theme of his works for decades to come, and consists of 150 variants of black forms on white backgrounds. He insisted that these paintings were not political, but rather his intent was to ensure that those who lost their lives were not forgotten. During his time at 61 Fourth Avenue, his works included *At Five in the Afternoon* (1948-49), *The Voyage* (1948-49), *Madrid* (1950), *Wall of the Temple* (1951), and, *Wall of the Temple III* (1952). In 1950, Motherwell worked with the Architects' Collaborative led by Walter Gropius, and exhibited a maquette for a sixty-foot long mural for a junior high school in Attleboro, Massachusetts called *Mural Fragment*. Motherwell also started 'the Robert Motherwell School of Fine Art Painting, Drawing, Theory' at 61 Fourth Avenue in the autumn of 1949.

The impact of the work which took place at 61 Fourth Avenue and the figures connected to it was exceptionally broad and deep, affecting the art world and the larger culture. Without a doubt, Robert Motherwell's very important place in American art history is inextricably linked to the area south of Union Square, and particularly to this building. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 61 Fourth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,



Mary Ann Caws
Distinguished Professor Emerita of Comparative Literature, English, and French
CUNY Graduate Center
365 5th Ave
New York, NY 10016

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the author of *Everything We Want: Frank O'Hara and the Aesthetics of Free Choice* and *American Literature and the Free Market*, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for the area South of Union Square, which contains several sites significant to Frank O'Hara and literary history. Due to a current lack of landmark designation in the area, historically significant buildings that were home to major publishing houses and many noted 20th-century literary figures are being demolished, disfigured, and altered.

New York City served as a great muse to Frank O'Hara, the influential American poet. At 90 University Place, where O'Hara resided between 1957 and 1959, he took inspiration from his urban surroundings. While here O'Hara wrote many poems and a

monograph about artist Jackson Pollock. O'Hara lived here while he was a curator at the Modern Museum of Art (MoMa).

O'Hara's incredibly popular *Meditations In An Emergency* was published in 1957, around the time he moved into 90 University Place. Grove Press published *Meditations In An Emergency* while located at 795 Broadway, also within the proposed historic district.

There is an abundance of literary history to be found in the area south of Union Square in addition to O'Hara's home at 90 University Place and the several locations of Grove Press (795 Broadway, 64 University Place, 61 Fourth Avenue, and 80 University Place) all within the proposed historic district.

Publishers that worked in the area included Forbes & Son Publishing Co., which moved to 80 Fifth Avenue in 1952 when the magazine was on the cusp of fame. Appleton & Company publishers constructed 72 Fifth avenue for their headquarters in 1893. By the time 72 Fifth Avenue was constructed, the company was one of the leading and fastest-growing publishers in the country. They published such works as *The Red Badge of Courage* by Stephen Crane. Macmillan Company publishers constructed 64-66 Fifth Avenue to serve as their headquarters. During Macmillan's later years at 60 Fifth Avenue to which the company subsequently moved, it grew to become the largest publisher in the United States. While the Depression years were challenging for Macmillan, they nevertheless prospered, in no small part due to the success of their American operation, headquartered here, and their publication during this time of Margaret Mitchell's wildly popular *Gone With The Wind* in 1936.

Examples of the area's literary history also include 57 Fifth Avenue, built c. 1852 by James Lenox, the noted philanthropist and bibliophile whose mansion was located directly south of this building. In the late 19th century, 57 Fifth Avenue was the home of Robert B. Roosevelt, who is credited with being the first to write down and publish the "Br'er Rabbit" stories, in Harper's Magazine, which had been passed down orally by African slaves based upon traditional African folklore. 57 Fifth Avenue also served as

the home of the groundbreaking Pearson's Magazine and bookstore, with Irish immigrant Frank Harris as its editor.

At 17 East 13th Street, Anaïs Nin, one of the 20th century's most revolutionary female writers, established her press in the 1940s. Nin (1903-1977) was an essayist and memoirist; she also self-published and very often re-published her text when it went out of print. Today she is regarded as one of the leading female writers of the 20th century and a source of inspiration for women challenging conventionally defined gender roles.

Over the years, the four buildings that comprised the Albert Hotel hosted many of the most prominent names in American arts, literature, music, and radical politics. Writers who have stayed here include Robert Louis Stevenson, who in 1887 posed for sculptor Augustus St. Gaudens in his room at the St. Stephen (which merged with the Albert Hotel c. 1895). Hart Crane worked on his poem "The Bridge" here in 1919, and Thomas Wolfe modeled the Hotel Leopold in his novel *Of Time and the River* on the Albert in 1924. In the 1950s, many African-American writers stayed here, among them Chester Himes, Richard Wright, Charles Wright, Amiri Baraka (previously known as LeRoi Jones), and Samuel Delany, as the hotel maintained an anti-segregationist policy, and was known for doing so.

814 Broadway housed Thomas J. Hall music publishers. In 1870, Hall was a founder of the Lotos Club, one of the oldest literary clubs in the United States. Notable members of the club included Mark Twain, Brooke Astor, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Andrew Carnegie, Walter P. Chrysler, Mary Higgins Clark, George M. Cohan, Hume Cronyn, Mario Cuomo, Gilbert and Sullivan, Solomon R. Guggenheim, William Randolph Hearst, Angela Lansbury, Wynton Marsalis, Margaret Mead, Peter O'Toole, Bobby Short, Stephen Sondheim, Elaine Stritch, Susan Stroman, Jessica Tandy, Orson Welles, Tom Wolfe, Andrew Wyeth, and Yo-Yo Ma.

The St. Denis Hotel, also located within the proposed district, once one of the most desirable and elegant hotels in the country, also contained important literary history until its demolition in 2019. While staying here after the Civil War, Ulysses S. Grant was

joined by Mark Twain, who helped Grant write his memoirs. The Walt Whitman Fellowship, founded in 1894 following the death of Whitman two years before, also gathered here for lectures including: “Walt Whitman and Woman” and “Whitman and Physique.” In the twentieth century, the hotel was converted into a modern store and office building, and in the 1920s several labor unions and leftist organizations moved in. A flurry of publications emerged from the St. Denis during these years. The Marxist *New Horizons for Youth* was published out of Room 235, and the American Negro Labor Congress published *The Liberator* out of Room 338. The International Labor Defense released *the Labor Defender* from Room 430 and the W.E.B. Du Bois-founded *Freedomways: A Quarterly Review of the Negro Freedom Movement* came out of Room 542. The Labor Research Association also published leftist pamphlets from Room 634, which sold for five or ten cents. Unfortunately, despite efforts on behalf of the community and Village Preservation, the St. Dennis Hotel was not landmarked and this building which was so pertinent to the literary history of the area south of Union Square was demolished.

In the post-War era, the area south of Union Square was a primary center of the art and literary worlds, with some of the greatest painters, writers, and publishers of this critical time located here. They lived, stayed, created, shared their work here, met with publishers, and gathered with fellow writers and artists in bars, galleries, coffeehouses, lofts, and hotels. The significance of this area to the history of art and literature, and indeed to New York and the country, cannot be overstated.

I therefore strongly urge you to support the designation of the proposed historic district South of Union Square.

Sincerely,

Michael W. Clune

Michael Clune

LAFAYETTE
COLLEGE

Dr. Robert Saltonstall Mattison
Marshall R. Metzgar Professor of Art History

Easton, Pennsylvania 18042 • TEL 610-330-5360 • FAX 610-330-5058 • mattisor@lafayette.edu

February 1, 2021

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 61 Fourth Avenue, former studio of Robert Motherwell, and surrounding area south of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the author of *Robert Motherwell: The Formative Years* (1987), I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 61 Fourth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1889 Romanesque Revival style building is significant due to its association with Robert Motherwell (1915-1991), one of the most noteworthy figures of the Abstract Expressionist movement and 'New York School' of artists.

Robert Motherwell had a studio at 61 Fourth Avenue during a critical period of his career, between 1949 and 1952. Along with other members of the New York School such as Willem de Kooning, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko and Philip Guston, Motherwell is considered one of the great American Abstract Expressionist painters. Credited by *The American Art Book* as being the most articulate of this group, Motherwell became the theorist and leading spokesperson of the New York School. He did so through lectures, teachings, and writings, all the while maintaining his own productive output of paintings, collages, and prints. Motherwell also fostered

relationships with European Surrealists and other intellectuals, serving as a bridge between the pre-war avant-garde movement in Europe and the post-war Abstract Expressionist movement in New York. He established automatism and psychoanalysis as the focus of American abstraction. In 1991, art critic Clement Greenberg said of Motherwell: "in my opinion he was one of the very best of the Abstract Expressionist painters."

In 1948-49, during the time that Motherwell occupied his studio at 61 Fourth Avenue, he began his lengthy series of paintings, *Elegies to the Spanish Republic*, which memorialized the lost Republican cause in the Spanish Civil War. This homage to the victims of this war would be the theme of his works for decades to come, and consists of 150 variants of black forms on white backgrounds. He insisted that these paintings were not political, but rather his intent was to ensure that those who lost their lives were not forgotten. During his time at 61 Fourth Avenue, his works included *At Five in the Afternoon* (1948-49), *The Voyage* (1948-49), *Madrid* (1950), *Wall of the Temple* (1951), and *Wall of the Temple III* (1952). In 1950, Motherwell worked with the Architects' Collaborative led by Walter Gropius, and exhibited a maquette for a sixty-foot long mural for a junior high school in Attleboro, Massachusetts called *Mural Fragment*. Motherwell also started 'the Robert Motherwell School of Fine Art Painting, Drawing, Theory' at 61 Fourth Avenue in the autumn of 1949.

The impact of the work which took place at 61 Fourth Avenue and the figures connected to it was exceptionally broad and deep, affecting the art world and the larger culture. Without a doubt, Robert Motherwell's very important place in American art history is inextricably linked to the area south of Union Square, and particularly to this building. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 61 Fourth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Robert Mattison

Robert Mattison
Marshall R. Metzgar Professor of Art History and Chair
203 Williams Center
Lafayette College
730 High Street
Easton, PA 18042

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson

THE UNION LEAGUE CLUB

Office of the
President

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

City Council Member Carlina Rivera
209 East 3rd Street
New York, NY 10009

December 7, 2020

RE: Support for landmark designation of 59 Fifth Avenue, former property and home of Jonathan Sturges and the William and Virginia Sturges Osborn family, as part of proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Council Member Rivera,

I am writing to express strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 59 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This ca. 1853 townhouse was built by James Lenox, one of the "fathers" of the New York Public Library, on the same block front as his own mansion at the corner of Fifth Avenue and East 12th Street.

Jonathan Sturges acquired the property for his daughter and son-in-law, Virginia Sturges and William H. Osborn. In addition to being a prominent businessman, philanthropist, and patron of the arts, Jonathan Sturges was a founder and director of the Illinois Central Railroad. His lead lawyer was Abraham Lincoln prior to Lincoln's election as President of the United States.

The Union League Club was founded during the Civil War in 1863; Jonathan Sturges was one of its founders and served as its second President. The Club was established to support President Lincoln, the Union, and the abolition of slavery, a position not popular among New York's governing elite and working class. At the time, the Club was located only a few blocks from Sturges' home on Fifth Avenue. Along with the Colored Orphans Asylum, the Clubhouse

was a prime target during the 1863 Draft Riots. Under Sturges' direction, Club members kept the mob at bay with an armed vigil in the locked and barricaded clubhouse.

In the wake of the New York City draft riots of July 1863, its first voluntary contribution to the war effort was to recruit, outfit, and train three black regiments: the 20th, 26th, and 31st. In spite of numerous threats, on March 5, 1864, 250 members of The Union League Club marched with the men of the 20th U.S. Colored Infantry as the ladies of the Club ("mothers, wives, and sisters") presented the colors to the regiment. The 20th's organization was the Club's first public work, and the regiment acquitted itself with distinction in combat as did all of the more than 6,000 soldiers whom the Club recruited and sent to the front before the war was over.

In addition to his involvement with the early years of the Club, Sturges was an active contributor in the founding of the Bank of Commerce of New York (and its running), the Gallery of Fine Arts, the Century Association, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the New York Society for the Relief of the Ruptured and Crippled. He was also a patron of the New York Historical Society and the Academy of Design. This impressive list of prominent 19th century organizations illustrates that he was not just a significant part of the history of The Union League Club, but also involved in the history of New York City.

59 Fifth Avenue is one of several structures in the area south of Union Square connected to a very important chapter in the development of American civic, artistic, and cultural institutions. I therefore urge you to move ahead with designation of the proposed historic district south of Union Square, encompassing 59 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Mary Beth Sullivan

Mary Beth Sullivan, ULC Club President

cc:
Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson

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October 27, 2020

Hon. Sara Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation
One Center Street, 9th floor
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chair Carroll,

As a small business owner with a 65-year history of running a gallery on Broadway between 12th and 13th street, our family is in a unique position of having seen the many changes that have occurred south of Union Square. As both the owner of the building and a retail occupant, we have witnessed the various metamorphoses that have transpired, through some of the more difficult times and through the high points. The area below fourteenth street represents a special place in NYC history. It was the birth of the retail industry in the late 19th century, a center of artistic creativity, the birthplace of reform and civil rights movements, as well as having vibrant examples of architecture. We would not want to be anywhere else.

Our building, 836 Broadway, was designated as an individual landmark, a designation that I sincerely supported. This was done in conjunction with several other buildings on our block. However, I do not believe that individual landmarking alone can save the special character of the area South of Union Square. It was a start. More needs to happen to ensure that this region of NYC is protected as a whole.

So much has been lost in the last several years as developers grab parcels of buildings to put up large towers that simply do not relate to the neighboring structures. The usage in these new buildings has changed, and we are losing residents and small businesses. Big box chains and fast casual restaurants are the only tenants to occupy the small amount of ground floor spaces that may be available when these buildings are constructed. There is very little regard to the quality of life for those of us who live and work in the immediate vicinity. I fear that if protection is not granted then the city will lose a part of its rich history forever.

I urge you to preserve character of this neighborhood by landmarking the district South of Union Square.
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind Regards,

Rachel Karr

Rachel Karr
Owner, Hyde Park Antiques
836 Broadway
New York, NY 10003

October 21, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of a historic district south of Union Square, home of the Fourth Avenue Book Row

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the owner of Alabaster Bookshop, the last of many secondhand bookstores that once lined Fourth Avenue, I am writing to express strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure a historic district designation for the area south of Union Square. Since at least the 1890s and through the twentieth century, this neighborhood was the center of the bookselling industry in New York, and probably had the highest concentration of booksellers in the world.

For over 80 years, the seven blocks along Fourth Avenue between Astor Place and Union Square made up the spine of what was known as New York Booksellers' Row, most commonly referred to simply as "Book Row." This concentrated, eclectic hub of rare and secondhand bookstores has been documented thoroughly by Marvin Mondlin and Roy Meador in their spectacular publication *Book Row: An Anecdotal and Pictorial History of the Antiquarian Book Trade*. Fascinatingly, the Book Row district embodied many of the other historic trends that shaped this area in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The bookstores on and around Fourth Avenue were an essential part the neighborhood's identity as a site of organizing in the labor and civil rights movements, and as a center for dance, fashion, art, photography, publishing, music, and so much else.

The Fourth International Socialist Worker's Party Bookstore, for instance, was located at 28 East 12th Street in the 1930s. Then, in 1940, the Corner Bookshop opened at 102 Fourth Avenue, selling cookbooks and titles covering the subjects of gastronomy, food, and wine. Next door at 100 Fourth Avenue, the Atlantis Bookshop specialized in mathematics, philosophy, science, and sexology. The Samuel Weiser Bookstore, which spent most of its life at 115 Fourth Avenue,

attracted customers interested in magic, New Age, and Eastern philosophy. Meanwhile, the University Place Bookshop housed an extensive selection of books by Black authors and on the subjects of Black, Caribbean, and African Studies, occupying three buildings in this area from 1936 through 1995. As late as 2003, the Art & Fashion Gallery sold books on fashion and photography from its storefront at 111 Fourth Avenue. Many of these businesses published their own catalogues and titles, and organized collectively to protect the interests of local booksellers.

Without a doubt, this diverse array of rare and secondhand bookshops — and the dedicated, colorful owners who ran them — is inextricably linked to the neighborhood south of Union Square. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including these buildings and their surroundings.

Sincerely,

Steve Crowley
Owner, Alabaster Bookshop
122 Fourth Avenue #4903
New York, NY 10003

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson

October 20, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

RE: Support for landmark designation of 70 Fifth Avenue, former home of the New York City Teachers Union and *The American Teacher*

Dear Chair Carroll and Mayor de Blasio,

As the Archivist for the American Federation of Teachers historical collection at the Walter P. Reuther Library, I write to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 70 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1912, 12-story Beaux Arts-style office building holds extraordinary significance as the site of a staggering array of political organizing and social activism. 70 Fifth Avenue housed the New York City Teachers Union for two decades, and the American Federation of Teacher's publication *The American Teacher* emerged from this building as well.

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) historical collection resides in the Walter P. Reuther Library at Wayne State University. The Reuther library is the largest labor archive in North America and holds the primary collections of some of the most powerful and largest unions in the country. The AFT historical collection covers over 100 years of teacher empowerment, and within this collection are the documentation of the New York City Teachers Union and *The American Teacher* at 70 Fifth Avenue.

As documented by the Albert Shanker Institute's Executive Director Leo Casey in his article "The Early Years of the New York City Teachers Union," the New York City Teachers Union was formed at a mass meeting held in 1913, organized by 20 local socialist teachers. Originally the organization was called the Teachers League, and Henry Linville was named as the union's president. In 1916, the Teachers Union banned together with seven other local teacher unions, forming the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). The publication *The American Teacher*, started in 1912 by Linville and several others, then became the voice of the larger organization. The same year the AFT was founded, the Teachers Union and *The American Teacher*'s offices moved to 70 Fifth Avenue, while the AFT headquarters were located in Chicago. The New York City Teachers Union was the AFT's largest local chapter, and remained at this address until the Teachers Union split in 1935.

The Teachers Union had intimate connections and shared a common cause with many of the other organizations located in this building at this time. John Dewey, one of the founders of the Teachers Union, was also a founding sponsor of the NAACP and an officer of the League for Industrial Democracy. Members of the Teachers Union collaborated extensively with these two neighboring organizations, along with The Woman's Peace Party and the National Civil Liberties Bureau (which would become the American Civil Liberties Union). In fact, it was Linville who recruited John Scopes to challenge the law against teaching evolution in Tennessee public schools, and who invited the ACLU to participate. The ACLU subsequently urged lawyer Clarence Darrow, a founder of the League for Industrial Democracy, to defend John Scopes in what became the landmark "Scopes Monkey Trial."

Without a doubt, the history of the New York City Teachers Union and *The American Teacher* is inextricably linked to 70 Fifth Avenue and the surrounding neighborhood, which throughout the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries fostered the growth of deeply interconnected leftist, labor, civil rights, and social justice groups and activists. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 70 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Dan Golodner, AFT Archivist
Walter P. Reuther Library
Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs
Wayne State University
Detroit, MI 48202

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson
City Councilmember Carlina Rivera

ALBERT SHANKER INSTITUTE
555 New Jersey Ave, NW | Washington, DC 20001
Tel: 202.879.4401 | shankerinstitute.org

October 19, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

RE: Support for landmark designation of 70 Fifth Avenue, former home of the New York City Teachers Union

Dear Chair Carroll and Mayor de Blasio,

As the Executive Director of the Albert Shanker Institute, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 70 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1912, 12-story Beaux Arts-style office building holds extraordinary significance as the site of a staggering array of political organizing and social activism, and was for two decades the home of the New York City Teachers Union.

The New York City Teachers Union was formed at a mass meeting held in 1913, organized by 20 socialist New York City teachers. Originally the organization was called the Teachers League, and Henry Linville was named as the union's president. In 1916, the Teachers Union banded together with seven other local teacher unions, forming the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). The publication *The American Teacher*, started in 1912 by Linville and several others, then became the voice of the larger organization. The same year the AFT was founded, the Teachers Union and *The American Teacher*'s offices moved to 70 Fifth Avenue, while the AFT headquarters were located in Chicago. The New York City Teachers Union was the AFT's largest local chapter, and remained at this address until the Teachers Union split in 1935.

The Teachers Union had intimate connections and shared a common cause with many of the other organizations located in this building at this time. John Dewey, one of the founders of the Teachers Union, was also a founding sponsor of the NAACP and an officer of the League for Industrial Democracy. Members of the Teachers Union collaborated extensively with these two neighboring organizations, along with The Woman's Peace Party and the National Civil

Liberties Bureau (which would become the American Civil Liberties Union). In fact, it was Linville who recruited John Scopes to challenge the law against teaching evolution in Tennessee public schools, and who invited the ACLU to participate. The ACLU subsequently urged lawyer Clarence Darrow, a founder of the League for Industrial Democracy, to defend John Scopes in what became the landmark "Scopes Monkey Trial." For more information on the New York City Teachers Union and the cross-movement alliances that developed at and continued beyond 70 Fifth Avenue, please see my article "The Early Years of The New York City Teachers Union."

Without a doubt, the history of the New York City Teachers Union is inextricably linked to 70 Fifth Avenue and the surrounding neighborhood, which throughout the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries fostered the growth of deeply interconnected leftist, labor, civil rights, and social justice groups and activists. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 70 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,



Dr. Leo Casey
Executive Director
Albert Shanker Institute
555 New Jersey Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20001

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson
City Councilmember Carlina Rivera

National Trust for Historic Preservation
Save the past. Enrich the future.

October 15, 2020

Ms. Sarah Carroll
Chair
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North
New York, NY 10007

Dear Chair Carroll:

I write to express the National Trust for Historic Preservation's support for local landmark designation of 70 Fifth Avenue, 80 Fifth Avenue, 55 Fifth Avenue, 10 East 14th Street, and 17 East 13th Street. These five historic buildings near Union Square have deep connections to important progressive movements in 20th century New York City—including the struggle for African American, LGBTQ, and women's civil rights.

These five buildings make deep contributions to our multifaceted American narrative. Located within blocks of each other, these sites have incredibly significant connections to African American, women's, and LGBTQ history—in some cases, all three. Their proximity reflects the legacy of the Union Square neighborhood as a crossroads of creativity and social change.

The National Trust is a private, nonprofit organization chartered by Congress in 1949 to facilitate public participation in the preservation of our nation's heritage and to further the historic preservation policy of the United States. Congress intended the Trust "to mobilize and coordinate public interest, participation and resources in the preservation and interpretation of sites and buildings."

The National Trust advocates for places, like these five buildings, that help tell the full American story. Through the Trust's African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund, we draw attention to the remarkable places and stories that evoke centuries of African American activism and achievement. Through the Where Women Made History Campaign, we identify, honor, and elevate places of women's struggles and triumphs. The National Trust also supports LGBTQ heritage preservation through work such as the Pauli Murray House National Treasure, which is helping the project's leaders to

The Watergate Office Building 2600 Virginia Avenue NW Suite 1100 Washington, DC 20037
E info@savingplaces.org P 202.588.6000 F 202.588.6038 SavingPlaces.org

transform the home of the trailblazing LGBTQ activist and lawyer into a remarkable new Center for History and Social Justice.

These five buildings in New York City contribute to the fuller narrative that the National Trust and so many others across the nation are working to highlight.

They are:

70 Fifth Avenue A 1912 Beaux Arts-style office building that served as the headquarters of the NAACP from 1914 until 1925. From this building, the NAACP fought for anti-lynching legislation and campaigned against D.W. Griffith's film *The Birth of a Nation,* among numerous other efforts. The building was also home of *The Crisis* magazine. Edited by W.E.B. DuBois, *The Crisis* was the first magazine ever published for a Black readership. It featured the early works of Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, and Zora Neale Hurston. The American Civil Liberties Union also traces its formation to this historic building.

80 Fifth Avenue A 1908 Renaissance Revival-style building that served as the original headquarters of the National Gay Task Force (now the National LGBTQ Task Force), the first and oldest national LGBT rights organization, from its founding in 1973 until 1985. From this headquarters, the National Gay Task Force fought tirelessly to end discrimination against gay and lesbian people. From 1930 to 1954, the building once housed the headquarters of the International Workers Order (IWO), a mutual benefit fraternal organization which led trailblazing fights against Jim Crow and discrimination against Jews and immigrants, fighting for integration in professional sports and the workplace.

55 Fifth Avenue A 1912 neo-Renaissance-style office building that was home of the Columbia Phonograph Recording Studios (now Columbia Records) in the 1920s and 1930s. It is where producer and civil rights activist John Hammond created some of the first integrated musical recordings, and where Billie Holliday made her first musical recordings. Iconic feminist, LGBTQ, and African American blues singer Bessie Smith also recorded here, and W.W. Norton & Co. published the seminal feminist text *The Feminine Mystique* from offices located here.

10 East 14th Street A 1884 cast-iron structure which in 1894 became the headquarters of the New York City Woman Suffrage League, established to lead the campaign to seek an amendment to the New York State Constitution

to give women the right to vote. The League's mission was finally accomplished when New York State granted women the right to vote in 1917.

17 East 13th Street A simple two-story 1911 brick structure that in the 1940s housed the personal printing press of seminal, revolutionary feminist and LGBTQ writer Anais Nin, who personally supervised and designed the printing of her works here.

This collection of buildings tells an extraordinary social history. Each building merits protection and recognition. Honoring and ensuring the preservation of the history that is embedded in these five buildings seems particularly timely at this moment of upheaval, reckoning, and change, and I strongly urge you to designate these sites as individual landmarks.

Sincerely,

Seri Worden
Senior Field Director, Preservation Services & Outreach Department
National Trust for Historic Preservation

CC: Hon. Bill de Blasio
Speaker Corey Johnson
Borough President Brewer
Councilmember Rivera
Village Preservation

October 5, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 80 University Place, former home and office of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, and 814 Broadway, headquarters of the Women's Central Association of Relief

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the Executive Director of the Elizabeth Blackwell Institute for Health Research, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 80 University Place and 814 Broadway as part of a historic district designation for the area. Built c. 1841-42, 80 University Place was the home and office of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, who was born here in Bristol and who then relocated to the United States where she became the first woman to receive a medical degree in the United States. Among her many inspiring accomplishments, Blackwell organized the Women's Central Association of Relief (WCAR) — the predecessor of the United States Sanitary Commission and the American Red Cross — at the 1854 structure at 814 Broadway.

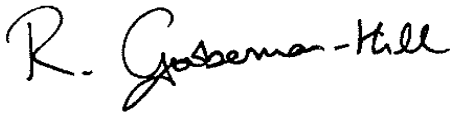
After receiving a medical degree from Geneva College in 1849, Blackwell was denied opportunities to practice medicine because she was a woman. In 1851, she moved to New York City and rented a floor at 80 University Place, which was at the time numbered 44 University Place. As she had been refused many work opportunities, Blackwell began using the building as her own medical office, as well as her home. Although she faced insults and objections from her landlady and neighbors, Blackwell began providing medical services to patients, most of whom were women and members of the local Quaker community. Elizabeth Blackwell's legacy of inspiring and empowering women to enter the medical field began during this early phase of her career, which unfolded at this site. Blackwell opened a dispensary at a since-demolished house at 207 East 7th Street, and later moved it to 150 East 3rd Street (then numbered 36 Avenue A/136 East 3rd Street). Her New York Dispensary for Poor Women and Children was incorporated in 1854 in a small house on the corner of East 15th Street and Second Avenue.

In 1857, Blackwell's work moved to its next influential stage when she established the first hospital for women, staffed by women, and run by women. This was called The New York Infirmary for Women and Children and provided healthcare for women who might not otherwise have received such help. Originally located at 58 Bleecker Street (then numbered 64 Bleecker Street), the hospital was open seven days a week and provided medical care for the most vulnerable women and children free of charge. It also offered practical medical instruction for women who were studying for their medical degree, and this practical instruction was unavailable elsewhere and was vital to their medical training. We understand that the hospital moved in 1861 to 128 Second Avenue (then numbered 126 Second Avenue, now demolished). At that location, Blackwell established the first women's medical college.

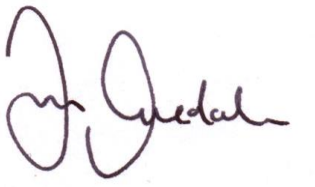
During the Civil War, Blackwell realized the Union Army needed a system for distributing supplies and organized four thousand women into the Women's Central Association of Relief (WCAR). Located at 814 Broadway, the WCAR grew into chapters around the county, systematically collecting and distributing life-saving bandages, blankets, food, clothing and other medical supplies. Blackwell also partnered with several prominent male physicians in New York City to offer a one-month training course for 100 women who wanted to be nurses for the army. This was the first formal training for women nurses the United States. By July 1861, the WCAR prompted the government to form a national version. This was the United States Sanitary Commission, which was the precursor to the American Red Cross. From just May 1, 1861 to November 1, 1863, WCAR donated nearly a half million items of clothing and nearly 300,000 items of bedding to the war effort, which was valued at nearly $600,000. It continued to raise money and relief items for the remainder of the war.

The significance of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell and the buildings at 80 University Place and 814 Broadway cannot be overstated. Blackwell was a pioneer as the first woman to receive a medical degree in the United States, as well as in her promotion of medical education and opportunities for other women physicians, and in her implementation of revolutionary innovations in healthcare. She is an internationally known figure. In the United Kingdom we celebrate her name too, as she had major impact in her lifetime and beyond. I therefore hope you are able to consider the proposed historic district including 80 University Place, 814 Broadway, and their surroundings.

Sincerely,



Professor Rachael Gooberman-Hill
Executive Director
Elizabeth Blackwell Institute for Health Research
Royal Fort House
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 1UH
United Kingdom



Professor John Iredale
Pro Vice-Chancellor (Health and Life Sciences)
Vice-Chancellor's Office
Beacon House
Queens Road
BS8 1QU
United Kingdom

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson



Committee on
Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual
& Transgender History

September 23, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of a historic district south of Union Square, home of notable LGBTQ history sites

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the Co-Chairs of the Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender History, we are writing to express strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure a historic district designation for the area south of Union Square. Several key individuals, organizations, and meeting spaces connected to LGBTQ history were located here, including the headquarters of the country's first national LGBTQ rights organization, and prominent LGBTQ writers, artists, musicians, and performers.

Perhaps most notably, the 1908 Renaissance Revival style office building at **80 Fifth Avenue** served as the original headquarters of the National LGBTQ Task Force from its founding in 1973 until 1986. Originally known as the National Gay Task Force, this organization was the first national LGBTQ rights organization in the United States. It accomplished a number of groundbreaking changes in the dozen or so years it was located here, initiating battles for civil rights that are still being fought today.

The National Gay Task Force was founded by Dr. Howard Brown, Martin Duberman, Barbara Gittings, Ron Gold, Frank Kameny, Natalie Rockhill, and Bruce Voeller in 1973. Among its early accomplishments,

the Task Force helped get the federal government to drop its ban on employing gay people, and pushed the American Psychiatric Association to remove homosexuality from its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. It also advocated for the ultimately successful ruling by the U.S. Civil Service Commission eliminating the longtime ban upon gay people serving in federal government, ending decades of witch hunts against government workers suspected of being gay. In 1977, the Task Force arranged the first meeting between the White House and a gay advocacy group.

Also during its time at 80 Fifth Avenue, in the late 1970s, the Task Force staff conducted the first national survey of corporate hiring policies (called Project Open Employment) to determine whether U.S. employers explicitly barred discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. This was followed by another survey of municipal police departments, laying the groundwork for ongoing campaigns to secure protections by government and private employers against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (and eventually gender identity as well). The Task Force was further instrumental in drafting and securing the introduction of the very first federal gay rights bill in Congress in 1975 by local Congressmembers Bella Abzug and Ed Koch, as well as several other representatives. While the bill did not pass then and still has not passed the entire Congress, it has been consistently reintroduced in various forms — most recently as the Equality Act — in the forty-five years since, gaining increasing support. It has become the basis for non-discrimination laws passed by 22 states and the District of Columbia, as well as hundreds of cities, counties, and localities throughout the United States. While headquartered at 80 Fifth Avenue, the Task Force also secured the first federal funding for AIDS education, approval of the first HIV test, and a change of the name "Gay Related Immune Deficiency Syndrome" to "Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome." Today, the National LGBTQ Task Force remains a social justice advocacy non-profit organizing the grassroots power of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community and advancing a progressive vision of liberation.

Surrounding this prominent historic site, the neighborhood south of Union Square was an important place for a number of LGBTQ figures — and significant LGBTQ-focused media emerged from its buildings. Notably, several of the key players involved in the groundbreaking African American publishers located at **70 Fifth Avenue** were gay, often openly so and at times at considerable peril to their careers and lives. Augustus Granville Dill founded DuBois and Dill publishing along with W.E.B. DuBois, which while here in the early twentieth century released *The Brownies Book*, the first-ever magazine geared towards African American youth. Dill was also one of the prime movers along with DuBois of *The Crisis* magazine, also headquartered and published from this building, which has been called "the most widely read and influential periodical about race and social justice in U.S. history." *The Crisis* played a major role in the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s and 30s and the African American civil rights movement beginning in the 1910s. Dill knew, helped advance the careers of, and showcased the work of, several gay Harlem Renaissance figures, including Langston Hughes and Countee Cullen, whose writings were featured in *The Crisis*. However, in 1928, Dill was arrested by vice-squad detectives for homosexual activity and fired from *The Crisis* by DuBois. In his 1968 autobiography DuBois expressed regret for the decision regarding Dill (who died in 1956, saying "I had before that time no conception of homosexuality. I had never understood the tragedy of an Oscar Wilde. I dismissed my co-worker [Augustus Dill] forthwith, and spent heavy days regretting my act").

Across the street, *Pearson's Magazine* and bookstore was located at **57 Fifth Avenue** and run by author, journalist, editor, publisher, and provocateur Frank Harris in the 1910s and 20s. Harris' notable works include a biography of the poet and playwright Oscar Wilde, who was found guilty of engaging in acts of "gross indecency" in 1895 and later became an icon in the emergence of the modern LGBTQ rights

movement. From 1926 until 1934, **55 Fifth Avenue** was the home of Columbia Phonograph Recording Studios and OKeh Phonograph Recording Studios, where Jazz pianist Garland Wilson recorded and Blues singer Bessie Smith completed her last records. At the height of his career in the late 1950s, the celebrated "New York School" poet Frank O'Hara lived at **90 University Place.** Also in the 1950s, artist Robert Indiana, best known for his iconic "LOVE" sculpture, lived and worked at **61 Fourth Avenue**. From 1952 to 1959, the ground floor of **86 University Place** housed "The Bagatelle" or "The Bag," a popular lesbian bar frequented by famed lesbian writers Audre Lorde and Ann Bannon.

Upon moving to **64 University Place** in 1959, the boundary-pushing Grove Press published gay-themed fiction like John Rechy's *City of Night* and the previously banned writings of the Marquis de Sade. Around 1967, Grove Press moved to **53 East 11th Street**, where it began operating a theater for both films and live productions, showing Andy Warhol's *I, A Man* in June 1968. In the 1970s and 80s, **795 Broadway** housed the Robert Samuel Gallery/Hardison Fine Arts, which specialized in photography by gay male artists such as Robert Mapplethorpe, Peter Hujar, and Christopher Makos, among others. Junior Vasquez, one of the most celebrated DJs and remixers of his time, had a recording and mixing studio at **816 Broadway**. Vasquez was the co-founder of one of New York's hottest night spots: the Sound Factory Club in Chelsea, which catered to an ethnically diverse and primarily gay crowd. Meanwhile, over its decades of operation, the Hotel Albert at **23 East 10th Street/40-52 East 11th Street/65-67 University Place** served as an unprecedented mecca for radical and creative LGBTQ figures, including Salvador Dali, Walt Whitman, Anais Nin, Andy Warhol, and Samuel Delany.

Without a doubt, the rich and diverse LGBTQ history of these many individuals and organizations is inextricably linked to the neighborhood south of Union Square. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including these buildings and their surroundings.

Sincerely yours,

Julio Capó, Jr.
Co-Chair, CLGBTH
Associate Professor of History
Florida International University

Emily K. Hobson
Co-Chair, CLGBTH
Associate Professor of History
University of Nevada, Reno

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY
ARTS & SCIENCE

EXPOSITORY WRITING PROGRAM

September 22, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 49-51 Fifth Avenue, former home and studio of Jane Freilicher

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the author of *Jane Freilicher: Painter Among Poets*, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 49-51 Fifth Avenue, a 1928 Colonial Revival style apartment building, as part of a historic district designation for the area. This building is significant due to its association with artist Jane Freilicher, a critical figure in the New York School, a highly acclaimed expressionist-turned-representational painter, and one of the most esteemed female artists of her generation.

Jane Freilicher, known for her vibrant landscapes and still lifes, was a longtime Greenwich Village resident who studied at the Village-based Hans Hofmann School of Fine Arts in the late 1940s. Freilicher resided in the East Village at 16 West 11th Street before moving to 49-51 Fifth Avenue in 1965. The artist lived in this apartment, where she had a greenhouse studio, until her death in 2014. According to Freilicher, interviewed for the *Greenwich Village Stories* collection published by Village Preservation, she could paint views from her studio "in more or less every direction." "I have painted these views for years, never tiring of them," Freilicher affirmed. The intensity of Freilicher's focus on the view from her apartment was unique. Among the hundreds of artists' studios and apartments across the East Village and West Village, hers was unique in its visibility in her work.

Freilicher was a significant, unifying presence in the New York School, an informal group developed in the 1950s that included artists Larry Rivers, Grace Hartigan, Alfred Leslie, Robert Goodnough, Mike Goldberg, and Fairfield Porter. Freilicher was especially close to the School's poets, Kenneth Koch, John Ashbery, James Schuyler, and Frank O'Hara, with whom she shared deep friendships and a distinctive artistic camaraderie. Each of these individuals wrote

about Freilicher and her work, and she in turn painted their portraits, designed their book covers, and corresponded with them regularly. The impact of these relationships on the life and work of Freilicher, Koch, Ashbery, Schuyler, and O'Hara – all renowned artists and writers in their own right – cannot be overstated.

While living at 49-51 Fifth Avenue for almost fifty years, Freilicher expanded her portfolio, exhibited across the country, and received a number of major awards including the National Academy of Design Saltus Gold Medal, the Academy of the Arts Lifetime Achievement Award from the Guild Hall Museum, and the Academy of Arts and Letters' highest honor: a Gold Medal in Painting. By the end of her life, her art had been shown in over fifty solo exhibitions and hundreds of group exhibitions, and it is now in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Whitney Museum of Art.

Most people, when they think about downtown New York and painting from the 1940s through the 1960s, tend to imagine larger abstract expressionist works by painters like Willem de Kooning, or Mark Rothko. Freilicher was unusual in that she was a woman, and that she painted recognizable landscapes that insisted on their quotidian roots. She is a quiet corrective to the dominant narrative about painting in New York, which is why her apartment and studio is so important; preserving this building is also about preserving other interpretations of New York and its attractions to painters in the twentieth-century.

Without a doubt, Jane Freilicher's very important place in American art history is inextricably linked to this neighborhood. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 49-51 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,



Jenni Quilter
Executive Director of the Expository Writing Program
Assistant Vice Dean of General Education, College of Arts and Science
Clinical Professor
Expository Writing Program
New York University
411 Lafayette St, 4th Floor
New York, NY 10003

jq9@nyu.edu

Pronouns: she / her / hers

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson

The Museum at FIT

Fashion Institute of Technology
Seventh Avenue at 27 Street
New York City 10001-5992

Office of the Director
telephone 212 217.5970
fax 212 217.5978
www.fitnyc.edu/museum

September 17, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 4 and 6 East 12th Street, former sites of Jessie Franklin Turner's workrooms and showrooms

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 4 and 6 East 12th Street, two adjacent ca. 1846 Greek Revival houses, as part of a historic district designation for the area. These buildings are significant due to their association with noted fashion designer Jessie Franklin Turner, once called by "the famed Parisian Couturier" Paul Poiret "the only designer of genius in the United States." She is remembered today as the first modern American couturier.

Jessie Franklin Turner, known especially for her tea gowns and internationally-inspired textiles, established workrooms and showrooms at 4 and 6 East 12th Street beginning in 1919. At this time, much of this area and the buildings to the east were used as fur storehouses. Turner's move to East 12th Street – where she used the label Winifred Warren Inc. – was a key transitional moment in her career, when she started working fewer hours for Bonwit Teller & Company and devoting herself to her independent design work. According to a 1919 article by Morris De Camp Crawford, Turner's mentor and Design Editor of *Women's Wear*, Turner hoped to create a custom salon and craft guild to train young artists and teachers at this new location.

Turner's impact on the American fashion world cannot be overstated. She played a prominent role in the emergence of the high-fashion industry in New York during World War I through to the increasing influence of Hollywood in the 1930s and 1940s. Furthermore, she is highly revered for her successful fashion business, which lasted until 1942 and had its origins at 4 and 6 East 12th Street.

The area south of Union Square in the mid-20th century was one which attracted painters, writers, publishers, and radical social organizers — who likely made up a significant part of Turner's clientele and influenced her work just as she influenced the neighborhood. Without a doubt, Jessie Franklin Turner's very important place in American fashion history is inextricably linked to the area south of Union Square. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 4 and 6 East 12th Street and their surroundings.

Sincerely,

Patricia Mears
Deputy Director
The Museum at FIT
27th Street at Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10001

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson

September 17, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 80 University Place, former home and office of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, and 814 Broadway, headquarters of the Women's Central Association of Relief

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the author of *Wedded to War*, a novel inspired by Elizabeth Blackwell and the Women's Central Association for Relief (WCAR), I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 80 University Place and 814 Broadway as part of a historic district designation for the area. Built c. 1841-42, 80 University Place was the home and office of Blackwell, the first woman to receive a medical degree in the United States. Among her many revolutionary accomplishments, Blackwell organized the Women's Central Association of Relief (WCAR) — the predecessor of the United States Sanitary Commission and the American Red Cross — at the 1854 structure at 814 Broadway.

After receiving a medical degree from Geneva College in 1849, Blackwell was denied opportunities to practice medicine because of her gender. In 1851, she moved to New York City and rented a floor at 80 University Place, which was at the time numbered 44 University Place. Tired of being refused work opportunities, Blackwell began using the building as her own medical office, as well as her home. Although she faced insults and objections from her landlady and neighbors, Blackwell began providing medical services to patients, most of whom were

women and members of the local Quaker community. Elizabeth Blackwell's legacy of inspiring and empowering women to enter the medical field began during this early phase of her career, which unfolded at this site. Blackwell opened a dispensary at a since-demolished house at 207 East 7th Street, and later moved it to 150 East 3rd Street (then numbered 36 Avenue A/136 East 3rd Street). Her New York Dispensary for Poor Women and Children was incorporated in 1854 in a small house on the corner of East 15th Street and Second Avenue.

In 1857, Blackwell made an even greater leap forward when she established the first hospital for women, staffed by women, and run by women: The New York Infirmary for Women and Children. Originally located at 58 Bleecker Street (then numbered 64 Bleecker Street), the hospital was open seven days a week and provided medical care for the most vulnerable women and children free of charge. It also offered practical medical instruction for women studying for their medical degree, which was unavailable elsewhere. According to one source, the hospital moved in 1861 to 128 Second Avenue (then numbered 126 Second Avenue, now demolished) where Blackwell would also establish the first women's medical college.

During the Civil War, Blackwell realized the Union Army needed a system for distributing supplies and organized four thousand women into the Women's Central Association of Relief. Located at 814 Broadway, the WCAR grew into chapters around the county, systematically collecting and distributing life-saving bandages, blankets, food, clothing and other medical supplies. Blackwell also partnered with several prominent male physicians in New York City to offer a one-month training course for 100 women who wanted to be nurses for the army. This was the first formal training for women nurses in the country.

By July 1861, the WCAR prompted the government to form a national version — the United States Sanitary Commission, which was the precursor to the American Red Cross. From just May 1, 1861 to November 1, 1863, WCAR donated nearly a half million items of clothing and nearly 300,000 items of bedding to the war effort, which was valued at nearly $600,000. It continued to raise money and relief items for the remainder of the war.

The significance of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell and the buildings at 80 University Place and 814 Broadway cannot be overstated. Blackwell was a pioneer not only as the first woman to receive a medical degree in the United States, but in her promotion of medical education and opportunities for other women physicians, and in her implementation of revolutionary innovations in healthcare. Without a doubt, her work shaped and was shaped by the area South of Union Square: a longtime hub of civil rights and labor organizing, and a critical site of women's history and Civil War history. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 80 University Place, 814 Broadway, and their surroundings.

Sincerely,

Jocelyn Green
Author of *Wedded to War*
314 Olive Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
www.jocelyngreen.com

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson

September 8, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

RE: Support for landmark designation of 70 Fifth Avenue, former home of the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief (now the Near East Foundation), initiated by Henry Morgenthau, Sr.

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Speaker Johnson,

As the great-granddaughter of Henry Morgenthau, Sr., I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 70 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1912, 12-story Beaux Arts-style office building holds extraordinary significance as the site of a staggering array of political organizing and social activism. Notably, the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief (now the Near East Foundation) was located here. This organization, initiated by Henry Morgenthau, Sr., is the oldest nonsectarian international development non-governmental organization in the United States, and only the second humanitarian organization chartered by Congress.

During World War I, millions of Armenians, Assyrians, Greeks, and members of other disenfranchised communities in the Ottoman Empire were displaced and killed. Over a million and half people died from deportation, forced marches, starvation, and execution between 1915 and 1923. Throughout this horrific period, Henry Morgenthau, Sr., the American Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, reported the unfolding atrocities to the U.S. State Department. However, his concerns were largely ignored, and Secretary of State Robert Lansing suggested Morgenthau seek assistance from private entities instead. In turn, Morgenthau worked with friends and colleagues to develop the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief, founded in 1915. The Committee adopted the battle cry "remember the starving Armenians," and proceeded to raise millions of dollars to support the people targeted in what is now known as the Armenian Genocide.

In his book *The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and the American Response*, Peter Balakian writes: "Ambassador Morgenthau went beyond the duty of his job as he became the crucial nexus between the killing fields and the American relief community and the press back home. A man of high moral conscience, Ambassador Morgenthau was most likely the first

highranking diplomat to confront boldly the leaders of the Ottoman government about its treatment of the Armenians." The Committee went on to expand its engagement throughout the Middle East and West Asia, renaming itself Near East Relief by 1919, the year it was chartered by Congress. It changed its name again to the Near East Foundation in 1930, reflecting its shift from relief efforts to long-term, development-oriented involvement in the Middle East and Africa.

Henry Morgenthau, Sr. and The American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief not only played a major role in confronting the Armenian Genocide, but also established a philanthropic model that was widely emulated, and continues to be used, by leading development organizations internationally. Without a doubt, the history of Henry Morgenthau, Sr. and the Near East Foundation is inextricably linked to 70 Fifth Avenue and the surrounding neighborhood, which throughout the twentieth century fostered the growth of many civil rights and social justice organizations. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 70 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,



Sarah Morgenthau
Managing Director & Head of the Washington, DC Office
Nardello & Co.
1401 K Street, NW
Suite 725
Washington, DC 20005

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson
City Councilmember Carlina Rivera

COPY

Frederick Henry Osborn III
Post Office Box 347
Garrison, NY 10524-0347
Telephone: 845-424-3683; Cell: 914-672-3919; Email: osbornf@aol.com

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

City Council Member Carlina Rivera
209 East 3rd Street
New York, NY 10009

Wednesday 19th August 2020

RE: Support for landmark designation of 59 Fifth Avenue, former property and home of Jonathan Sturges and the William and Virginia Sturges Osborn family

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Council Member Rivera,

I am a direct descendant of Jonathan Sturges, William Henry Osborn, Virginia Reed Sturges Osborn and William Church Osborn and I am writing to express strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 59 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area.

The contributions of both families to American art and New York's arts, cultural, and charitable institutions are inestimable. My great-great-great grandfather Jonathan Sturges was a leading force in promoting the arts and art institutions during the mid-19th century in New York. Artists such as Thomas Cole, Asher B. Durand, and William Sidney Mount, just to name a few, received the benefit of Sturges' support through his purchases of their works and his encouragement of friends and colleagues to purchase their works. Institutions which benefited from his generosity both in terms of finance and effort included the National Academy of Design, the New-York Historical Society, the Union League Club, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the New York Society for the Relief of the Ruptured and Crippled (now the Hospital for Special Surgery).

Sturges' son-in-law, my great-great grandfather William H. Osborn and his wife, Sturges' daughter Virginia Reed Sturges Osborn, also supported many mid-to-late 19th century artists. In particular, the Osborn family shared a special friendship with the renowned Hudson River School painter, Frederic Edwin Church, and his family. The Osborns also

were generous in terms of monetary contribution and effort towards some of the same institutions that Sturges supported including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Society for the Relief of the Ruptured and Crippled. Additionally, Virginia, along with Sturges' wife, Mary Cady Sturges established the Bellevue Training School for Nurses, the first such school in the United States organized according to Florence Nightingale's nursing principles.

The Osborn's son, my great-grandfather William Church Osborn (his middle name was in honor of the family's relationship with Frederic Edwin Church) very much carried on his family's legacy as a philanthropist, environmentalist, patron of the arts and longtime trustee and president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Both during his lifetime and after, many pieces of his personal art collection were donated to the Met. William Church Osborn also took an active role in civic life, serving as president of the Society to Prevent Corrupt Practices at Elections, and chairman of the New York State Democratic Committee and in 1932 he founded the Citizens Budget Commission, serving as its president and chair.

59 Fifth Avenue is one of several structures in the area south of Union Square connected to a very important chapter in the development of American art and cultural institutions. I therefore urge you to move ahead with designation of the proposed historic district south of Union Square, including 59 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Frederick H. Osborn III

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson

bcc: Sarah Bean Apmann ✓

HISTORIC DISTRICTS COUNCIL

THE ADVOCATE FOR NEW YORK CITY'S HISTORIC NEIGHBORHOODS

August 19, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
The Municipal Building
1 Centre Street, 9th Floor North
New York, NY 10007

Dear Commissioner Carroll,

The Historic Districts Council is pleased to support the proposal for a historic district south of Union Square, sponsored by Village Preservation. The proposed district, sometimes affectionately called "the daughter of Ladies' Mile", contains an extraordinary inventory of buildings with architectural, cultural, and historic significance. This area, long known to historians and preservationists but unfortunately unprotected, is under extreme threat by development pressures caused by the city's economic development plans. Although many of these buildings have served a variety of changing uses throughout the decades without losing their essential visual character, the recent drive to reimagine the area as "Midtown South" has endangered the very existence of these solid, handsome commercial buildings with a glistening mirage of glassy office space and of-the-moment hotels. This district, roughly consisting of the blocks from Fifth Avenue to Third Avenue, East 13th Street to East 9th Street, has begun to be devoured by piecemeal urban renewal schemes; formulated with little thought of the actual history they destroy while trading in the cachet of downtown "authenticity". Please act now to save this small but remarkable area before it disappears under a cloud of construction sheds and cranes.

In 2018, the Landmarks Preservation Commission took the first steps in protecting some of the historic buildings in the area as individual landmarks. HDC supported the Commission's actions at the time on the basis not only of the buildings' handsome commercial character but the fascinating common themes of labor and social history which the Commission's research had uncovered, connecting these buildings to the greater story of New York. Subsequent to these designations, Village Preservation produced additional research on this area which reveals a remarkable tapestry of significance to a variety of cultural histories including, but not limited to, the African American and LGBTQ civil rights movements, women's suffrage and women's rights, the labor movement, the New York School of artists, and our city's profoundly important literary communities. This just skims the surface of the historic, cultural, and social significance of the area and these extant but threatened buildings.

On architectural merits alone, the area south of Union Square warrants strong consideration for preservation protections. It contains a remarkable array of residential and commercial architecture from the 19th through the early 20th century, with a particularly rich collection of late 19th and early 20th century commercial buildings, in every style from Italianate to Gothic and Romanesque Revival, Neo-classical, Queen Anne, Victorian, and Byzantine. Work by some of America's greatest architects, including Henry J. Hardenbergh, Emery Roth, Griffith Thomas, Napoleon LeBrun, Harvey Wiley Corbett, David and John Jardine, George B. Post, Carrere and Hastings, John Kellum, and Charles Rentz, among others, can be found here, along with the largest collection of designs anywhere in the world by renowned architect James Renwick Jr. These buildings were developed, constructed and owned by the some of the families which built New York City, including the Stuyvesants, Roosevelts, Brevoorts, Astors, Forbeses, Lorilards, and James Lenox, among many others.

While HDC is grateful for the Landmarks Commission's actions to preserve some buildings in the area, New York's history would be far better served by a broader designation which could better document and protect the multi-layered heritage of this distinctive section of the city. This area borders upon Union Square, a National Historic Landmark which has long served as a urban locus and community focal point and the proposed historic district provides the body to the heart of the square. It gives meaning and context to the interesting and complex layers of urban history for this part of Manhattan. As the northern edge of Downtown, the district possesses both the attraction and fragility characteristic of liminal spaces. It is an area in the constant process of becoming something new, while retaining its own distinctive visual character. HDC urges the Landmarks Preservation Commission to designate this district and help shape its future into one which respects and preserves its past.

Sincerely,



Simeon Bankoff
Executive Director

Cc: Mayor Bill de Blasio
NYC Council Speaker Corey Johnson
Council Member Carlina Rivera
Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
State Senator Brad Hoylman
Assembly Member Deborah Glick
State Senator Liz Kruger
Municipal Art Society, Elizabeth Goldstein
New York Landmarks Conservancy, Peg Breen
Community Board 2, Carter Booth
Community Board 3, Alysha Lewis-Coleman

Cornell University

To: Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th floor New York, NY 10007
Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor, City of New York,
City Hall, New York, NY 10007
<bdeblasio@cityhall.nyc.gov>

Re: 80 Fifth Avenue, NY NY

Date: August 17, 2020

As an urban geographer and lecturer in Jewish Studies at Cornell University, I am writing to express my full support for the landmarking of 80 Fifth Avenue, located at the intersection of Fifth Avenue and 14th Street. I have documented online the history of the International Workers Organization (IWO) and its affiliated Jewish People's Fraternal Order (JPFO): their headquarters were located for many years at 80 Fifth Avenue until the IWO was closed down as a fraternal organization in 1953 as part of the Red Scare.

Cornell owns the IWO's and JPFO's confiscated organizational archives. Its Catherwood Library at the ILR (Industrial Labor Relations) School takes pride in showcasing its holdings on this important organization since they shed light on immigrant history, Black history, Jewish history, feminist history, Yiddish publishing, and radical life as well as the Cold War. The Catherwood Library offers an online curated selection of documents that I digitized and assembled from its archives most of which were eventually donated to Cornell by New York State: https://digital.library.cornell.edu/collections/iwo-jpfo

While their politics were indeed pro-Soviet, during World War II the IWO and JPFO had been fully accepted as loyal American patriotic fraternal groups contributing to the War effort when the U.S. and the U.S.S.R were allies. The Cold War meant that even fraternal organizations offering much needed insurance benefits were targeted.

Where the IWO and JPFO shined was in allyship and advocacy. These differentials are impressive: as an interracial, nonprofit fraternal benefit society, a slogan it took to heart was "No Jim Crow in the IWO." It offered security through insurance but went further than most: the IWO had a medical department with dentists and specialists that offered birth control. It lobbied for racial progress and anti-lynching bills, supported the Civil Rights Congress and its bail fund, and saw itself as a leader in the fight against race discrimination, anti-Semitism, and anti-alien bills. Unusually in its time, its recreational facilities included an interracial camp: Wo Chi Ca, a "Workers Children Camp" that Paul Robeson's son attended. Other well-known names that were part of these circles include Marc Chagall, Albert Einstein, Paul Roberson, Louise Thompson Patterson, Clara Lemlich Shavelson, Vito Marcantonio, Rockwell Kent and Paul Novick.

Cornell University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action educator and employer.

My research focus encompasses how migration to New York's Lower East Side affects, and is affected by, the built environment: those intersections include labor, sacred sites and housing as well as places of memory. Union Square was vital in this landscape of organizing; it's literally impossible to imagine the advent of the 8 hour day without the countless rallies there that supported this local demand driven by sweatshop immigrant labor which increasingly commanded support from across the nation. Everyone who was someone was located in Union Square; critical mass meant not only rallies but demanded an organizational presence.

The landmarking of the IWO's erstwhile headquarters will mark a turning point in the visibility of one of the most important narratives of immigrant labor and interracial activism in the United States. The IWO had almost 200,000 members at its height and the JPFO had 50,000. The larger fraternal organization, which included 14 other separate groups such as the Douglass-Lincoln Society and the Cervantes (Latino/a) Society, was initially founded by the JPFO, its Yiddish speaking branch. Briefly, the current lack of landmarking allows the stirring radical history of Union Square to basically go unremarked while allowing those who orchestrated or supported the Red Scare to think that they have won by having this history effaced as the area increasingly gentrifies.

80 Fifth Avenue, designed by Buchman and Fox is an elaborately-detailed Renaissance Revival style office building constructed in 1907-1908. Strikingly, it is in an immediate dialogue with Union Square, the focal point for New York City activism where the rights to freedom of speech and assembly found daily expression. Its elegant pilasters, elaborate cornices, and gracious windows all make the same point: a distinguished building had arrived in a district that was coming into its own not only for manufacturing, department stores, wholesalers and retailers, but as the center of New York's outdoor gatherings that advocated for issues of import to immigrant workers and many others. A number of left-wing organizations managed to stay in the Union Square area up until the 1980s. It is hardly surprising that a building with this history that commandingly overlooks Union Square was also the headquarters for the National Gay Task Force in the 1970s.

In the main those who rallied and worked with the IWO and the JPFO respectively were radicalized by mass migration, the Lower East Side's terrible living and working conditions, and the Great Depression. They worked hard to keep their immigrant cultures even as they forged ties across languages with other groups including through creating inter-racial lodges and promoting Black History Month. They arguably had the best health and life benefit package in New York City: they were the sole purveyor of such insurance to offer it to Black members without a markup. While they expanded to Chicago, Detroit, Boston, Philadelphia and small mining towns, they were true also to their Yiddish speaking origins and home city as their base. The time has come for the city that they labored in to adopt them for futurity in a way that is respectful of that history and allows for the launching of their inspirational if contested story.

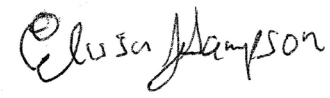
Storytelling is immeasurably amplified by the power of place. A landmark offers an encounter that lets passerbys and others know where something of import happened that affects them today. It allows us as New Yorkers to say that we remember what happened as we engage with that story. It offers a bridge to future generations so that the memory of those who died lives on in ways that matter now.

What story can be more important for New Yorkers to hear in these difficult times when we need to say that Black lives and immigrant lives matter and that allyship has precedents? Stories travel: this one needs to be moored to its home so that new heirs can encounter, interact and claim it. I have worked on a variety of preservationist projects that include landmarked buildings and deeply believe that the sensibility and footprint of 80 Fifth Avenue to be in keeping with the intent of landmarking law and its practice.

Union Square is the critical portal to our city's and country's immigrant history that points to the historic and ongoing global dynamics of labor, race, identity, health, protest and migration that shapes and often consumes lives today. Preserving its history should be a priority as should be identifying the anchor and supporting buildings that support these narratives.

We all want to allow this pivotal moment in the history of Lower Manhattan to become visible so as to appropriately engage new generations in a vital and inspiring ongoing dialogue across time. Right now, New York has a unique opportunity to re-envision what it should be as a more sustainable and racially just city. Its history, as seen through its built environment, allows us to launch a dialogue that teaches us about the past so as to create a better, more equitable future. I join the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation (GVSHP) in asking for your support for moving ahead as soon as possible on landmarking and rethinking what Union Square represents and should be.

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Elissa Sampson

cc: City Council Speaker Corey Johnson <SpeakerJohnson@council.nyc.gov>
Gale Brewer <gbrewer@manhattanbp.nyc.gov>
Margaret Chin <mchin@council.nyc.gov>
Alysha Lewis-Coleman <chair@cb3manhattan.org >
Carlina Rivera <CLrivera2@council.nyc.gov>
Pedro Carrillo <pcarrillo@council.nyc.gov>
Brad Hoylman <hoylman@nysenate.gov>
Harvey Epstein <epsteinh@nyassembly.gov>
Bob Gormley <bgormley@cb.nyc.gov>
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August 11, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

City Council Member Carlina Rivera
209 East 3rd Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 59 Fifth Avenue, former property and home of Jonathan Sturges and the William and Virginia Sturges Osborn family

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Council Member Rivera,

I am writing to express unqualified support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 59 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This ca. 1853 town house was built by James Lenox (1800-1880), one of the three pillars of the New York Public Library and the leading landholder in Manhattan, on the same block front as his own mansion, located at the corner of Fifth Avenue and East 12th Street.

The home was immediately bought by Jonathan Sturges (1802-1874), a prominent businessman and patron of the arts who moved in the same social and business circles as Lenox. Sturges, who lived nearby at 5 East 14th Street, bought the home for his new son-in-law, William Henry Osborn (1820-1894), and his eldest child, Virginia Reed Sturges Osborn (1830-1902). The Osborns lived there until ca. 1870. Like his father-in-law, W. H. Osborn was one of the country's foremost businessmen and an extremely generous supporter and patron of the arts and various social causes, joined in his philanthropic and artistic pursuits by his wife. This tradition would be continued by William and Virginia's son William Church Osborn (1862-1951), who spent his early years at 59 Fifth Avenue. William Church, an attorney who ran for governor of New York State against Al Smith, was a long-time trustee and president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and likewise a great supporter of various cultural and social organizations in New York City, serving as president of the Children's Aid Society, for instance. I have published and lectured extensively on both the Sturges and Osborn families; in April I lectured on the long-lived friendship that existed between Osborn, the leading American landscape painter Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900), and their families. In 2008 I published the cover article for the *Metropolitan Museum*

Journal on three generations of art patrons, Jonathan Sturges, W. H. Osborn, and William Church Osborn. My scholarly essay on Sturges as an art patron, commissioned by the Frick Center for the Study of Collecting, will be published in the coming months. Osborn was a brilliant and precocious businessman who started as an adolescent in the import-export trade in the Philippines and after marrying Virginia Sturges following his move to New York City around 1851, became allied with his father-in-law's business—Reed & Sturges, so named after the art patron Luman Reed, who took Sturges into partnership in the 1820s. Sturges was a founding director of the Illinois Central Railroad in the 1850s but soon found his financial health and sterling reputation threated as a result of the "Schuyler Fraud," the mid-1800s equivalent of the Bernie Madoff debacle. Osborn rescued both the railroad and his father-in-law by turning his fortune over to shore up the railroad's finances, putting it on a sound basis. He was then asked to direct the Illinois Central, making it into one of the country's largest and most successful railroads, both during the Civil War, when it was the leading road transporting Union troops and supplies, and after, as industry expanded in the West and South. Through their shared activity in the Illinois Central, Sturges and Osborn were closely associated with Ambrose Burnisde and George McClellan, leading officers in the railroad before the Civil War, and also to an unknown extent with Lincoln, the railroad's outside counsel. Both Sturges and Osborn were generous supporters of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the New-York Historical Society, donating funds and art to support these early cultural institutions. Both hosted leading American artists and collectors in their homes, not to mention establishing galleries that housed such gems of American art as Thomas Cole's *View on the Catskill, Early Autumn* (Metropolitan Museum of Art), Frederic Church's *Andes of Ecuador* (Reynolda House), and William Holbrook Beard's *Allsorts in Every Class* (Crystal Bridges Museum).

59 Fifth Avenue is one of several building in the area south of Union Square representing a vital and fascinating chapter in the development of American art and cultural institutions. I therefore urge you to forge ahead with designation of the proposed historic district south of Union Square, including 59 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Christine Isabelle Oaklander, Ph.D.

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson

Armenian Bar Association
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ArmenianBar.org
info@ArmenianBar.org

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Los Angeles, CA

Advisory Board
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San Diego, CA
Hon. Dickran Tevrizian (Ret.)
Los Angeles, CA

August 10, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

RE: **Support for landmark designation of 70 Fifth Avenue, former home of American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief, now Near East Foundation**

Dear Chair Carroll and Mayor de Blasio,

The Armenian Bar Association, a professional organization of legal scholars, judges and attorneys throughout the United States including a substantial presence in New York, writes to express its strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 70 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. For more than a century, this 1912, 12-story Beaux Arts-style office building holds extraordinary significance for the history of the United States and for the Armenian people.

It was the home for *The American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief*, presently known as the Near East Foundation. This organization is the oldest nonsectarian international development non-governmental organization (NGO) in the United States, and only the second humanitarian organization chartered by the United States Congress.

The walls of this grand edifice provided an environment for an extraordinary exchange of ideas and was the birthplace of the largest humanitarian effort the United States had undertaken up until that time in its history.

Henry Morgenthau, Sr. was the U.S. Ambassador to the Ottoman Turkey from 1913 through 1916, the era that encompasses one of the darkest periods in human history. Starting in 1914, the Turkish government initiated the systematic mass murder of Armenians and forced death marches to deserts in Syria, killing

1.5 million Armenians, destroying their culture that went back millennia, and expropriating their assets. This was the first Genocide of the 20th century.

Ambassador Morgenthau witnessed firsthand the unfolding of the Genocide and as expressed in his own words, contained in his 1918 memoir: “I am confident that the whole history of the human race contains no such horrible episode as this. The great massacres and persecutions of the past seem almost insignificant when compared with the sufferings of the Armenian race in 1915.” In the diplomatic cables, he repeatedly advised that a “campaign of race extermination” is underway and called for immediate urgent need for action to save one of the oldest nations and cultures from complete annihilation.

His cries for action were largely ignored, and then the Secretary of State, Robert Lansing, suggested that Morgenthau seek assistance from private entities. Morgenthau started working tirelessly with friends and colleagues and in 1915 founded the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief. The Committee not only played a prominent role in publicizing and recounting the Ottoman Turkish Government’s role in committing the Armenian Genocide, but also has raised millions of dollars to save as many Armenian children and lives as possible and help them grow as productive members of societies while cognizant of their own history and culture. In that process, the history of the Armenian people and the United States became inextricably intertwined.

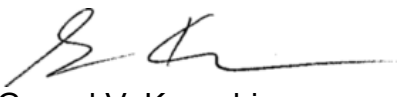
The Committee’s activities also played a crucial role in establishing the American philanthropic tradition that was widely emulated, and continues to be utilized by world’s leading development organizations. From the ashes of Genocide, generations of Armenians rose seeking justice and following the American philanthropic tradition of helping others.

The 70 Fifth Avenue building not only contains an important part of the New York City history, but also the history of the United States and of the Armenian people spread throughout the world. We are also very pleased to learn that the building and the surrounding neighborhood throughout the 20th century fostered the growth of many civil rights and social justice organizations.

The Armenian Bar Association strongly urges you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 70 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

ARMENIAN BAR ASSOCIATION



Gerard V. Kassabian
Chairman of the Board of Governors



Souren A. Israelyan
Member of the Board of Governors
Vice Chair of NY/NJ/CT Chapter

CC: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson
City Councilmember Carlina Rivera

Near East Foundation
110 West Fayette St., Suite 710
Syracuse, NY 13202
Tel: (315) 428-8670

July 29, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

RE: Support for landmark designation of 70 Fifth Avenue, former home of the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief, now the Near East Foundation

Dear Chair Carroll and Mayor de Blasio,

I write to you on behalf of the Near East Foundation Board of Directors and staff to express strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 70 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1912, 12-story Beaux Arts-style office building holds extraordinary significance as the site of a staggering array of political organizing and social activism. Notably, the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief, as the Near East Foundation was originally known, was located here. Our organization, initiated by Henry Morgenthau, Sr., is the oldest nonsectarian international development non-governmental organization in the United States, and only the second humanitarian organization chartered by Congress.

During World War I, millions of Armenians, Assyrians, Greeks, and members of other disenfranchised communities in the Ottoman Empire were displaced and killed. Over a million and half people died from deportation, forced marches, starvation, and execution between 1915 and 1923, in what became known as the Armenian Genocide. Throughout this horrific period, Henry Morgenthau, Sr., the American Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, reported the unfolding atrocities to the U.S. State Department. However, his concerns were largely ignored, and Secretary of State Robert Lansing suggested Morgenthau seek assistance from private entities instead. In turn, Morgenthau worked with a group of civic, business, and religious leaders – including President Woodrow Wilson, Cleveland H. Dodge, Dr. James K. Barton, Rabbi Stephen Wise, and Dr. Samuel T. Dutton - to develop the American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief. Dodge called the first meeting to order on September 16, 1915. The Committee adopted the battle cry "remember the starving Armenians," and proceeded to raise millions of dollars in a relief effort unprecedented for its time.

In his book *The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and the American Response*, Peter Balakian writes: “Ambassador Morgenthau went beyond the duty of his job as he became the crucial nexus between the killing fields and the American relief community and the press back home. A man of high moral conscience, Ambassador Morgenthau was most likely the first highranking diplomat to confront boldly the leaders of the

Ottoman government about its treatment of the Armenians." The Committee went on to expand its engagement throughout the Middle East and West Asia, renaming itself Near East Relief by 1919, the year it was chartered by Congress. The organization changed its name again to the Near East Foundation in 1930, as we are known today, reflecting a shift in emphasis away from relief efforts to long-term, development-oriented involvement in the Middle East, Africa, and the Caucuses.

The Foundation's Near East Relief Digital Museum commemorates America's historic response to the Armenian Genocide by preserving, reconstructing, and sharing the rich history of the relief effort. This history is also showcased in the documentary film *They Shall Not Perish*, for which Shant Mardirossian, a member of the Near East Foundation's Board of Directors, served as Executive Producer.

The American Committee for Armenian and Syrian Relief, under the leadership of Henry Morgenthau, Sr., not only played a major role in confronting the Armenian Genocide; it also established a philanthropic model that was widely emulated, and continues to be used, by leading development organizations internationally. Today, the Near East Foundation continues to help improve the livelihoods of the most vulnerable people in the region. Our focus remains to empower local communities and build their capacity to become the agents of their own development.

Without a doubt, the long history of the Near East Foundation is inextricably linked to 70 Fifth Avenue and the surrounding neighborhood, which throughout the twentieth century fostered the growth of many civil rights and social justice organizations. The Near East Foundation therefore strongly urges you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 70 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Charles Benjamin
President & CEO, Near East Foundation
110 Fayette Street, Suite 710
Syracuse, NY 13202 USA

cc: Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer
City Council Speaker Corey Johnson
City Councilmember Carlina Rivera

July 27, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 55 Fifth Avenue, former home of Columbia Records

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 55 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1912, 18-story neo-Renaissance style office building played a pivotal role in the development of twentieth century American music and culture as the home of the Columbia Phonograph and OKeh Phonograph recording studios, which merged and became known as Columbia Records. These studios launched the careers of many enormously important jazz and blues musicians, and were the site of some of the first integrated musical recordings.

Beginning in 1926 the Columbia Phonograph recording studios were located here, and some time not long after the OKeh Phonograph recording studios operated at this building as well. Some of the most significant recordings of 20th century American music were made in these studios, both of which remained at 55 Fifth Avenue until mid-1934. The Columbia Phonograph Company, founded in 1887 and now known as Columbia Records, is the oldest surviving brand name in the recorded sound business and only the second major company to produce records. OKeh Records, founded in 1916 by Otto K.E. Heinemann, eventually merged with Columbia, but initially established a strong reputation for producing “race records,” i.e. recordings by and for African Americans. Some of the musicians who worked with OKeh Records were early greats of jazz and blues, such as Louis Armstrong, Bix Beiderbecke and long time Greenwich Village resident and legend, Eddie Condon. Eddie lived for the last thirty years of his life at 27 Washington Square, North.

Significantly, the renowned record-producer, civil rights activist, Rock and Roll Hall of Fame-inductee and my longtime friend and business partner, John Hammond, made his very first recordings at 55 Fifth Avenue. John was also a long time resident of Greenwich Village. He lived on McDougall Street for many years and would go on to play a significant role in launching the careers of Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Harry James, Count Basie, Big Joe Turner, Pete Seeger, Babatunde Olatunji, Aretha Franklin, Leonard Cohen, and Stevie Ray Vaughan, as well as in reviving the music of delta blues artist Robert Johnson. While working at 55 Fifth Avenue, John accomplished several historic firsts and I was involved with urging him to pursue his last, the aforementioned Stevie Ray Vaughan.

John's first recordings at 55 Fifth took place with jazz pianist Garland Wilson, and big band and swing pianist, arranger and composer Fletcher Henderson. Henderson is considered along with Duke Ellington one of the most influential arrangers and bandleaders in jazz history, and one of the progenitors of what would come to be called 'swing.' Notably, Henderson recorded his "New King Porter Stomp" at this location. About the same time John also discovered Billie Holiday singing at a Harlem speakeasy at 133rd Street, and brought her down to the Columbia studios to cut her very first records at 55 Fifth in 1933.

John had established a close relationship with a young Benny Goodman, who recorded one of his first hits, including "Ain't Cha Glad?," with Hammond at 55 Fifth Avenue in 1933. While Goodman is often credited with integrating American music by working with African American musicians and vocalists, Goodman himself would credit John, who made it his personal mission to advance the integration of the music industry. At the same time, however, John would often tell me that his fellow Villager, Eddie Condon, was really the first, hiring African American musicians for recording sessions as early as 1929 and also appearing on records with Louis Armstrong and Fats Waller. It may well be that Eddie's appearance with Louis Armstrong's on his OKeh recording of March 5, 1929 at 55 Fifth was the first integrated recording session at the studio. The song was "I Can't Give You Anything But Love". Eddie also led integrated bands that recorded at 55 Fifth as late as October 1933, a month before John brought Billie downtown to record with Benny.

John suggested and indeed pushed Goodman to record music with African American musicians, and arranged many of the first integrated recording sessions. After initial resistance from Goodman, John not only convinced him to record but also encouraged him to hire the great African American swing pianist Teddy Wilson to work with him and a year or so later Teddy and Billie joined forces to record a series of legendary records together; in what were among the first long time series of integrated musical recording sessions. John also used the 55 Fifth Avenue studio to record the legendary jazz saxophonist Benny Carter, blues singer Bessie Smith, and jazz vocalist Ethel Waters. A number of the records produced in these studios are in the Grammy Hall of Fame at the headquarters of the National Academy of Recording Arts and Science is Los Angeles.

Without a doubt, 55 Fifth Avenue's very important place in American music history is inextricably linked to the area south of Union Square. The studios in this building reshaped the music market of the twentieth century, brought new genres of music into mainstream consciousness, transformed the opportunities available to African American artists, and promoted the growth of some of our most beloved musicians and bands. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 55 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Hank O'Neal
chiarohank@aol.com
http://www.hankoneal.com

THE COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

COREY JOHNSON
SPEAKER

CITY HALL
NEW YORK, NY 10007

TELEPHONE
(212) 788-7210

July 14, 2020

Sarah Carroll
Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
1 Centre Street, Floor 9
New York, NY 10021

Dear Chair Carroll:

As the Speaker of the New York City Council and the Council representative for District 3, I write to express my strong support for the proposed landmark designation of 60 through 80 Fifth Avenue in Manhattan.

These eight buildings, designed by some of the 19th and early 20th century's most distinguished American architects, including Albert Wagner, Buchman and Fox, Cleverdon & Putzel, Maynicke & Frank, Charles Alonzo Rich, R.H. Robertson, Carrère & Hastings, and Shreve Lamb & Blake, are almost entirely intact and are illustrations of Beaux Arts, Romanesque Revival, and Renaissance Revival architectural style.

Moreover these buildings represent an important and comparatively underrepresented slice of New York and American history, especially as it relates to the African American and LGBTQ civil rights movements, the peace movement, international human rights efforts, and the arts. The connection to African American and LGBTQ civil rights, particularly to the oldest national organizations dedicated to both causes, is especially important.

As you know, 70 Fifth Avenue housed the headquarters of the NAACP, the nation's oldest and largest civil rights organization, from just after its founding in 1914 to around 1925. W.E.B. DuBois also launched *The Crisis* magazine there which featured the early writings of Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes, among others, as well as *The Brownie Book*, the US' first magazine for Black children.

80 Fifth Avenue housed the first headquarters of the National Gay Task Force (now the National LGBTQ Task Force) from 1973 to 1985, the country's first national gay rights organization.

70 and 80 Fifth Avenue also was home to organizations which led American efforts to stop the Armenian Genocide, spearheaded the women's peace movement, and organized labor's fight to end Jim Crow and discrimination against immigrants and others in mid-20th century America.

Adding to the social and cultural significance of these buildings:

- 64-66 Fifth Avenue housed the Fifth Avenue Playhouse, one of the country's first art movie house, and the studios of dance pioneer Martha Graham;
- 72 Fifth Avenue was the home of several notable left-wing political magazines like *The Nation* and also the headquarters of the Philip Morris Co.; and
- 74 Fifth Avenue housed Adelphi Hall, a center for left-wing political causes frequently investigated by the House Un-American Activities Committee and frequented by the likes of Paul Robeson.

Furthermore, nearly all of these buildings had prominent connections to the publishing industry.

This is just the beginning of the critical story of this collection of buildings, which seems especially relevant at this time. I therefore strongly support moving ahead with the designation of these buildings.

Thank you for your attention to this request and for the LPC's ongoing commitment to preserving our city's history.

Sincerely,

COREY JOHNSON
Speaker

Dorothy M. Ehrlich
DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ACLU

July 7, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker and Councilmember, 3rd District
224 West 30th Street, Suite 1206
New York, NY 10001

AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
NATIONAL OFFICE
125 BROAD STREET, 18TH FL.
NEW YORK, NY 1004-2400
T/212.549.2500
WWW.ACLU.ORG

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS
SUSAN N. HERMAN
PRESIDENT

ANTHONY D. ROMERO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ROBERT B. REMAR
TREASURER

RE: Support for landmark designation of 70 Fifth Avenue, former home of the
National Civil Liberties Bureau, now the American Civil Liberties Union

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Speaker Johnson,

As the Deputy Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 70 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1912, 12-story Beaux Arts-style office building holds extraordinary significance as the site of a staggering array of political organizing and social activism. Notably, while here, leaders of the American Union Against Militarism (AUAM) founded the National Civil Liberties Bureau (NCLB), now known as the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

The American Union Against Militarism, headquartered in Washington, opened its New York office at 70 Fifth Avenue in March of 1916. Led by Crystal Eastman, Lillian Wald, Oswald Garrison Villard, Norman Thomas, and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, the group advocated for peace policies while organizing public demonstrations to challenge mainstream opinions around peace.

In 1917, Roger Baldwin began working with the AUAM, where he was responsible for developing legal defense for conscientious objectors. That same year, as the AUAM faced extreme pressure following the United States' entrance into World War I, both Eastman and Baldwin worked to organize a separate legal bureau that would protect democratic rights throughout the wartime period. The Civil Liberties Bureau of the AUAM was formed in July 1917, becoming the National

Dorothy M. Ehrlich
DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ACLU

Civil Liberties Bureau, a separate organization with its own executive committee and staff by October.
The NCLB operated out of the same building as the AUAM, at 70 Fifth Avenue, where it worked to protect free press, free speech, freedom of assembly, and liberty of conscience. In 1920, the NCLB adopted a new name: the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

Baldwin went on to serve as the director of the ACLU for its first thirty years of existence. In this position, he directed the ACLU's litigation in the landmark Scopes Monkey Trial, the Sacco and Vanzetti Case, and the challenge to the ban on James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Baldwin also headed the American Fund for Public Service, another one of the many organizations located at 70 Fifth Avenue.

Without a doubt, the history of the ACLU is inextricably linked to 70 Fifth Avenue and the surrounding neighborhood, which throughout the twentieth century fostered the growth of many civil rights and social justice groups. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 70 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Dorothy M. Ehrlich
Deputy Executive Director
American Civil Liberties Union
125 Broad Street, 18th Floor
New York, NY 10004

July 4, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker and Councilmember, 3rd District
224 West 30th St, Suite 1206
New York, NY 10001

RE: Support for landmark designation of 70 Fifth Avenue, former home of the Woman's Peace Party of New York, the American Union Against Militarism, and the predecessor organization to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), organizations founded, led, or spearheaded by Crystal Eastman

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Speaker Johnson,

As the author of *Crystal Eastman: A Revolutionary Life,* I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 70 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1912, 12-story Beaux Arts-style office building holds extraordinary significance as the site of a staggering array of political organizing and social activism. Notably, the Woman's Peace Party of New York, founded by Crystal Eastman in 1914, was located here. This was the first formal feminist peace organization in the United States, which launched a new peace movement across the world. That building was also home to the American Union Against Militarism, the organization that, through Eastman's urging and engineering, gave birth to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

The Woman's Peace Party had its roots in the August 1914 Woman's Peace Parade which followed the beginning of World War I and intended to call attention to the horrors of the European conflagration. Following the parade, the Woman's Peace Party of New York was established in November of 1914. This was followed by a January 1915 convention of feminists and peace activists from across the country held in Washington D.C., which resulted in the formation of the Woman's Peace Party (WPP) by Jane Addams, Carrie Chapman Catt, and Fanny Garrison Villard (the daughter of William Lloyd Garrison). The Woman's Peace Party of New York (WPP-NYC), founded first, remained the most trailblazing regional chapter of the national body. From its 70 Fifth Avenue offices, the WPP-NYC operated a nationwide press service; organized innovative demonstrations, open air meetings, and congressional hearings;

and published its periodical *Four Lights*. From its doorstep, Eastman led rallies drawing hundreds of people and called on the nation to claim its destiny as the prime mover of permanent international peace. Under her leadership, the WPP-NYC's membership grew to fifty thousand by 1916.

The American Union Against Militarism (AUAM) opened its New York office in the building in March of that year. Powered by leaders including Eastman, Lillian Wald, Oswald Garrison Villard, Norman Thomas, and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise, the organization coordinated with their existing headquarters in Washington to press for peace policies in the corridors of power while simultaneously mobilizing public opinion through demonstrations in the streets. The group's most renowned mass campaign, organized by Eastman and her husband, Walter Fuller, was their spectacular "War Against War" Exhibition, a traveling peace pageant that began in New York City and was seen by more than 170,000 people nationwide. It culminated in a White House meeting with President Wilson in May 1916. When the United States entered the war in 1917, however, the national climate shifted dramatically when it came to protests for peace. With the mission of the AUAM under intense pressure, Eastman engineered a plan to form a separate legal bureau to protect democratic rights in war time – free press, free speech, freedom of assembly, and liberty of conscience. The new bureau, operating out of the same building at 70 Fifth Avenue, became the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

For Eastman, the peace movement was a convergence of the many efforts in which she was already involved as a feminist, socialist, and reformer. Through these organizations, she and her circle hoped not only to rally against the war, but to develop an altogether new kind of peace movement. The WPP and AUAM departed from prior peace organizations that limited themselves to more genteel behind-the-scenes lobbying and attempts to influence public opinion in print and oratory; it also abandoned contemporary capitalist peace groups that argued against war because of its high costs and economic disruptions. Instead, both organizations intended to establish a left-leaning coalition that harnessed the energy and insight of Progressive reform, labor unionism, suffrage, and antiwar struggles. Utilizing direct action tactics and modern publicity strategies, they hoped to achieve the dual objectives of peace and justice both locally and globally. In doing so, Eastman believed, it could introduce a new world order.

Without a doubt, the history of Eastman and these organizations is inextricably linked to 70 Fifth Avenue and the surrounding neighborhood, which throughout the twentieth century fostered the growth of many civil rights and social justice organizations. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 70 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Dr. Amy Aronson
Professor and Chair,
Department of Communication and Media Studies
Fordham University
Author of *Crystal Eastman: A Revolutionary Life*
amaronson@fordham.edu

June 25, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 30 East 14th Street, former home and studio of Virginia Admiral and Robert De Niro Sr., and surrounding area south of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 30 East 14th Street and its surroundings as part of a historic district designation for the area. From about 1940 until about 1943, No. 30 was the home and studio of painter Virginia Admiral, who lived here first with her friends and then with her husband Robert De Niro Sr. (and perhaps for a short time with their infant, who would become the great movie actor Robert De Niro Jr.). Admiral and De Niro Sr. were two people on an almost-unrivaled list of artists who called 30 East 14th Street home in the 20th century. The individuals who lived and worked in this building were part of a trailblazing community which drew the center of the American — and ultimately global — art world below Fourteenth Street.

After earning her Bachelor's degree from the University of California at Berkeley and working for a time on the Federal Arts Project in Oakland, Virginia Admiral moved into a loft at 30 East 14th Street, where she lived with her friends Janet Thurman and Marjorie McKee. Admiral was visited often by poet Robert Duncan and writer Anaïs Nin, both of whom documented her apartment in their respective journals. Around this time, Admiral received a scholarship to the Hans Hofmann School of Fine Arts, a Greenwich Village-based institution which played a pivotal role in the development of abstract expressionism. Here she met the emerging figurative expressionist painter Robert De Niro Sr., considered one of Hofmann's most promising students.

As I have written in my book, *Untouchable: Robert De Niro,* Admiral and De Niro Sr. began sharing the loft on 14th Street in 1941, were married by January of 1942, and gave birth to Robert De Niro Jr. on August 17, 1943. This was a formative period in the careers of both artists,

when they developed friendships with now-esteemed literary and artistic figures including writer Henry Miller and playwright Tennessee Williams, along with Duncan and Nin. Within a few years both Admiral and De Niro Sr. had exhibited at Peggy Guggenheim's "Art of This Century" gallery, where many artists of the era launched their careers. Today, Admiral continues to be known for her art, which was heavily influenced by her activism — particularly in the anti-war movement — and is now part of the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice. De Niro Sr. also taught and exhibited throughout his career, and is honored comprehensively by The Estate of Robert De Niro, Sr. and in the 2019 monograph *Robert De Niro, Sr.: Paintings, Drawings, and Writings: 1942-1993*.

Other notable artist residents of 30 East 14th Street include "Fourteenth Street School" painter and Art Students League teacher Kenneth Hayes Miller, who was known particularly for his depictions of the sales girls and shoppers that filled the 14th Street and Union Square neighborhood. By 1940, social realist painter Yasuo Kuniyoshi also had a studio at 30 East 14th Street, and in 1945 modernist Howard Daum moved into Studio K on the second floor, living and working here for the rest of his life and frequently painting from the rooftop. While Daum was here, painter Carl Ashby and painter, activist, and poet Helen DeMott had studios in the building. Painter, printmaker, and cartoonist Charles Keller had a studio at 30 East 14th Street from 1945 to 1953, formerly occupied by sculptor Arnold Blanch, which he shared with muralist and printmaker Harry Sternberg, who stayed here from 1945 to 1967. Realist and surrealist painter Andrée Ruellan and representational painter Edwin Dickinson had studios here as well.

Without a doubt, Virginia Admiral and Robert de Niro Sr.'s very important place in American art history is inextricably linked to the area south of Union Square, and particularly to the artists' haven at 30 East 14th Street. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 30 East 14th Street and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Andy Dougan, PhD
Film Lecturer
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
100 Renfrew St, Glasgow, G2 3DB

June 3, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker and Councilmember, 3rd District
224 West 30th St, Suite 1206
New York, NY 10001

RE: Support for landmark designation of 70 Fifth Avenue, former home of the Woman's Peace Party of New York

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Speaker Johnson,

As the author of *The Women's Peace Union and the Outlawry of War, 1921-1942* and *Peace as a Women's Issue: A History of the U.S. Movement for World Peace and Women's Rights*, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 70 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1912, 12-story Beaux Arts-style office building holds extraordinary significance as the site of a staggering array of political organizing and social activism. Notably, the Woman's Peace Party of New York, founded by Crystal Eastman in 1914, was located here. This was the first formal feminist peace organization in the United States, which launched a new peace movement across the world.

The Woman's Peace Party had its roots in the August 1914 Woman's Peace Parade which followed the beginning of World War I and intended to call attention to the horrors of the European conflagration. Following the parade, the Woman's Peace Party of New York was established in November of 1914. This was followed by a January 1915 convention of feminists and peace activists from across the country held in Washington D.C., which resulted in the formation of the Woman's Peace Party (WPP) by Jane Addams, Carrie Chapman Catt, and Fanny Garrison Villard (daughter of the great abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison). The Woman's Peace Party of New York (WPP-NYC) became a regional chapter of the national body. From its 70 Fifth Avenue offices, the WPP-NYC operated a nationwide press service; organized demonstrations, meetings, and congressional hearings; and published its periodical *Four Lights*. Under Eastman's leadership, the WPP-NYC's membership grew to fifty thousand by 1916.

For Eastman, the woman's peace movement was a convergence of the many efforts in which she was already involved as a feminist, socialist, and reformer. Through this organization, Eastman and her circle hoped not only to rally against the war, but to develop an altogether new kind of peace movement. The WPP departed from prior peace organizations that limited themselves to more genteel behind-the-scenes lobbying and attempts to influence public opinion in print and oratory; it also abandoned contemporary capitalist peace groups that argued against war because of its high costs and economic disruptions. Instead, the WPP intended to establish a left-leaning coalition that harnessed the energy and insight of Progressive reform, labor unionism, suffrage, and antiwar struggles. Utilizing direct action tactics and modern publicity strategies, the WPP hoped to achieve the dual objectives of peace and justice both locally and globally. In doing so, Eastman believed, it could introduce a new world order.

The WPP eventually became the American chapter of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, which has chapters in 37 countries, and is the oldest women's peace organization in the United States. Without a doubt, the history of the Woman's Peace Party is inextricably linked to 70 Fifth Avenue and the surrounding neighborhood, which throughout the twentieth century fostered the growth of many civil rights and social justice organizations. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 70 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Harriet Alonso
Professor Emerita of History
City College of New York
http://harrietalonso.com
alonsoharriet@gmail.com

May 7, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 86 University Place, former home of the Bagatelle

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

From 1951 until 1959, the c. 1842 row house at 86 University Place was home to the lesbian bar the Bagatelle. The Bagatelle played a significant role in Greenwich Village's LGBTQ life, especially for women, throughout its years of operation. As a frequent visitor to the Bagatelle, and the author of a number of books concerning this neighborhood's history, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 86 University Place as part of a historic district designation for the area.

"Danny's Bagatelle," as it was originally called, moved into 86 University Place in 1951. Initially the establishment had a floor show, much like the previous business at this site – Barney Gallant's restaurant "The Royalist." Quickly, however, it became a lesbian hangout, and the name "Danny" was dropped. The first floor of the building was closed, and the raised basement level was transformed to accommodate a club, with a bar at the front and a small dance floor at the rear. The Bagatelle soon became known as "the Bag," and emerged into one of the most popular lesbian bars in Greenwich Village, with a clientele of mostly white working-class women. Saturday night was the main attraction at the Bag, but it is also remembered for its Sunday afternoon gatherings.

Like many other gay and lesbian bars in Greenwich Village at the time, the Bag was run by the Mafia, since such establishments were considered illegal, and frequently raided by the police. Employees at the Bag would switch on a red light when the police were entering for a raid, so patrons knew to scatter or try to hide any activity for which they could be arrested: dancing with someone of the same sex, wearing clothing considered inappropriate for one's gender, or any other subjectively determined "disorderly conduct."

The lesbian writer and activist Audre Lorde wrote extensively about the Bagatelle, memorializing its complex history. In her book *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*, Lorde describes being consistently carded at the door even though her white companions never were, and encountering a bouncer who would not let black women into the club. Lorde's writings illuminate the business' hostility toward black patrons, despite the fact that it was one of the few spaces where lesbians could congregate in this neighborhood at this time. Her words recall the era of the Bag in all its intricacy.

I was also a frequent visitor to the Bagatelle, and made many trips to Greenwich Village and the area south of Union Square while writing my pulp novel series *The Beebo Brinker Chronicles*. The pre-Stonewall neighborhood, a vibrant, invaluable hub for members of the LGBTQ community, serves as a backdrop for the stories depicted in these pages.

Ironically, the name "Bagatelle" means "a thing of little value." But the name meant just the opposite to us. The value of a place to gather, to be with friends, to share a little happiness, rare as it was, was precious in those days. We treasured this modest little island of warmth and friendship, and it has become a storied part of our history.

Without a doubt, the history of the Bagatelle and the many who found community at 86 University Place during the 1950s is inextricably linked to the neighborhood south of Union Square. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 86 University Place and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Ann Bannon
annbannon@annbannon.com

May 4, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 86 University Place, former home of the Bagatelle

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As a longtime Greenwich Villager, and the author of two books concerning this neighborhood's history, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 86 University Place as part of a historic district designation for the area. From 1951 until 1959, this c. 1842 row house was home to the lesbian bar the Bagatelle. The Bagatelle was frequented by several venerated literary figures, and played a significant role in Greenwich Village's LGBTQ life, especially for women, throughout its years of operation.

"Danny's Bagatelle," as it was originally called, moved into 86 University Place in 1951. Initially, it had a floor show, much like the previous establishment at this site – Barney Gallant's restaurant "The Royalist." Quickly, however, it became a lesbian hangout, and the name "Danny" was dropped. The first floor of the building was closed, and the raised basement level was transformed to accommodate a club, with a bar at the front and a small dance floor at the rear. The Bagatelle soon became known as "the Bag," and throughout the 1950s emerged into one of the most popular lesbian bars in Greenwich Village, with a clientele of mostly white working-class women. Saturday night was the main attraction at the Bag, but the business is also remembered for its Sunday afternoon gatherings.

Like many other gay and lesbian bars in Greenwich Village at the time, the Bag was run by the Mafia, since such establishments were considered illegal, and frequently raided by the police. Employees at the Bag would switch on a red light when the police were entering for a raid, so patrons knew to scatter or try to hide any activity for which they could be arrested: dancing with someone of the same sex, wearing clothing considered inappropriate for one's gender, or any other subjectively determined "disorderly conduct."

Notably, the Bag was frequented by "The Queen of Lesbian Pulp Fiction" Ann Bannon and the lesbian writer and activist Audre Lorde. Both of these remarkable individuals have memorialized the complex history of the Bagatelle in their literature and speaking. Lorde's writings in particular illuminate the establishment's hostility toward black patrons, despite the fact that it was one of the few spaces where lesbians could congregate in this neighborhood at this time. In her book *Zami: A New Spelling of My Name*, Lorde describes being consistently carded at the door even though her white companions never were, and encountering a bouncer who would not let black women into the club. It is thanks to Lorde and Bannon, whose voices continue to be absolutely vital for the LGBTQ community, that we recall the era of the Bag in all its intricacy.

Without a doubt, the history of the Bagatelle, Ann Bannon, Audre Lorde, and the many others who found community at 86 University Place throughout the 1950s, is inextricably linked to the neighborhood south of Union Square. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 86 University Place and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Lisa E. Davis, PhD
davislisae12@gmail.com

School of Music

College of Fine and Applied Arts
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May 1, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd
District 254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 55 Fifth Avenue, former home of Columbia Records, recording studio of Fletcher Henderson and his band

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the author of *The Uncrowned King of Swing: Fletcher Henderson and Big Band Jazz*, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 55 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1912, 18-story neo-Renaissance style office building played a pivotal role in the development of twentieth century American arts and culture as the home of the Columbia Phonograph Company, now known as Columbia Records. This recording studio launched the careers of enormously important jazz and blues musicians, including Fletcher Henderson, and fostered the first integrated musical recordings. Henderson is considered along with Duke Ellington one of the most influential arrangers and bandleaders in jazz history, and one of the progenitors of what would come to be called "swing."

Founded in 1887, Columbia Records was the second major company to produce records and has become the oldest surviving brand name in the recorded sound business. In 1923 and 1924, Henderson's band recorded at Columbia, a prestigious opportunity that marked the group's rising success. In fact, Henderson's band was at the cutting edge of the music industry for a number of reasons. At a time when black bands commonly relied on performing, composing, and publishing to make a living, Henderson's band was the first black orchestra to make recording the central focus of its work. It was also one of the first black bands to market its arrangements not as "race records," the period's term for music for and by African Americans, but as mainstream or "general" music. Columbia encouraged the diversity of the Henderson band's style and

repertory, recording its blues and jazz material in addition to its Tin Pan Alley songs. These recordings were then determined to be commercially viable in a white market, a highly unprecedented decision that resulted in the band's increasing appeal across a broad audience. Significantly, Henderson recorded one of his best-known works, "New King Porter Stomp," while at 55 Fifth Avenue. Today, that recording stands among the monuments of the swing era.

It should also be noted that renowned record-producer, civil rights activist, and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame-inductee John Hammond made some of his first recordings at 55 Fifth Avenue with Henderson. In his autobiography, Hammond called Henderson "one of my earliest enthusiasms," stating that his band was "the greatest band in the country." Hammond would go on to have a major influence on the careers of Billie Holiday, Benny Goodman, Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Harry James, Count Basie, Big Joe Turner, Pete Seeger, Babatunde Olatunji, Aretha Franklin, Leonard Cohen, and Stevie Ray Vaughan. Hammond also gathered Benny Goodman, Billie Holiday, and swing pianist Teddy Wilson to record together at 55 Fifth Avenue, in what was the very first integrated musical recording session.

The history of blues, jazz, and swing is inextricably linked to 55 Fifth Avenue and to the surrounding neighborhood. The studios in this building played a pivotal role in reshaping the music market of the twentieth century, bringing new genres of music into mainstream consciousness, transforming the opportunities available to black artists, and promoting the growth of some of our most legendary musicians and bands. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 55 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Magee
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Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, College of Media
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University of Massachusetts Amherst

College of Humanities and Fine Arts
History Department
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April 28, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker and Councilmember, 3rd District
224 West 30th St, Suite 1206
New York, NY 10001

RE: Support for landmark designation of 70 Fifth Avenue, former home of the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Speaker Johnson,

As the author of *Monitoring the Movies: The Fight over Film Censorship in Early Twentieth-Century Urban America*, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 70 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1912, 12-story Beaux Arts-style office building housed the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures from the 1910s until at least 1949. Over the course of its 111-year existence, the Board played a profound role in shaping the motion picture industry in America, single-handedly deciding what content would or would not appear in film by either granting or denying their stamp of approval for movies: "passed by the National Board of Review."

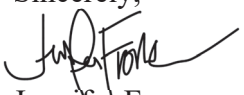
The New York Board of Censorship of Motion Pictures, as it was originally named, was founded in 1909 by a coalition of Progressive social activists to fight government intervention in the rapidly developing film industry. The self-described "trained, volunteer, disinterested citizen organization" became the National Board of Censorship shortly thereafter, when it absorbed the responsibilities of local boards across multiple cities. Then, in 1916, following a 1915 Supreme Court decision upholding the constitutionality of state censorship of motion pictures, it became

the National Board of Review of Motion Pictures. This name change represented a major shift in the Board's policy. Rather than regulating the standards of morality in motion pictures as it previously had, it would work to enhance the education of public viewers and represent the public opinion. The Board went on to recommend movies, release reviews, and publish the *National Board of Review Magazine* - in 1950 replaced by *Films in Review.* Today the organization is known simply as the National Board of Review.

Significantly, the Board shared its office building at 70 Fifth Avenue with the NAACP, and the two organizations had several executive board members in common. When the NAACP launched its 1915 campaign to ban D.W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation*, it contacted the Board to register a formal objection to the film. In response, the Board overturned its Review Committee's original decision regarding the motion picture and requested that the General Committee conduct a rescreening. The General Committee proceeded to "pass the first half of the picture subject to minor changes," and condemn parts of the second half that "might create race hatred and prejudice." The wildly successful but acutely racist film, credited with the rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan and an increase in violence against African Americans, was a major part of the individual and shared history of the NAACP and the Board. In all likelihood, the organizations' negotiation in its confrontation of this and other matters took place largely in person, further emphasizing the importance of 70 Fifth Avenue as a historically and culturally significant site.

Without a doubt, the National Board of Review's history is inextricably linked to 70 Fifth Avenue and the neighborhood south of Union Square. Throughout the 20th century, this area fostered the growth of arts, culture, and civil rights organizations, as well as the connections between them. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 70 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Fronc
Herter Hall 721
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April 26, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair

New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission

One Centre Street, 9th Floor

New York, N.Y. 10007

Re: Information regarding historic significance of 80 Fifth Avenue, within proposed historic district south of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll,

I am writing to support designation of the **Union Square** area as an historic district. As an historian of immigration and the U.S. labor movement, I have long regarded Union Square as one of the bedrocks of progressive labor activism in the U.S., the soapbox of the left. In this letter I wish to call your attention to the historical, cultural and political significance of **80 Fifth Avenue**, which for twenty-four years was the headquarters of the **International Workers Order**, one of the most progressive mutual-benefit, fraternal organizations the U.S. has ever seen. The IWO provided quality health coverage for members, but also was a forward-thinking advocate of racial equality and progressive social programs for all Americans. In addition, the IWO offered a broad array of theater, music and other recreational programs to its members, the full "Bread and Roses" its leaders believed all Americans deserved.

The International Workers Order (IWO) was a consortium of left-wing ethnic self-insurance societies born in 1930 in the "languages division" of the Communist Party USA. The IWO offered low-cost accident and life insurance to its interracial membership, at a time when New Deal reforms such as Social Security were not yet enacted. The IWO was born out of a split in the Jewish **Workmen's Circle**, and grew to encompass 188,000 members from many political and ethnic and racial groups. It offered a broad array of low-cost medical, dental and optical clinics, opening medical clinics in underserved working-class neighborhoods such as East Harlem and Brownsville, Brooklyn; it even offered a Birth Control Clinic "in the interests of the membership of the IWO and all of its friends." This New York clinic was under the direction of a woman doctor who had worked with **Margaret Sanger** and stayed open evenings to accommodate working-class New Yorkers. The IWO offered affordable, quality medical care to its members at a time when the safety net still had many holes, and dissemination of birth-control information was still criminalized.

The IWO's leaders were determined there would be "No Jim Crow in the IWO," and as early as the 1930s it was an interracial organization. Fifteen language federations such as the Jewish Peoples Fraternal Order, the Italian Garibaldi Society and the Slovak Workers Society sheltered under the IWO umbrella, and its magazine, *Fraternal Outlook*, featured text in English, Spanish, Polish, Italian and other languages. The IWO also supported foreign-language newspapers such as Polish *Głos Ludowy* (People's Voice.) But the IWO, unique for the 1930s-40s, embraced far more than white-ethnic workers. Puerto Rican and other Spanish-speaking members also organized the IWO's **Cervantes Fraternal Society** (headed by Brooklyn's **Jesús Colón**) and African Americans founded the **Lincoln-Douglass Society**, which in addition to offering African Americans quality health insurance at a time when many private insurance companies refused to cover them, remained a forceful lobbying organization on behalf of black civil rights. English-language IWO lodges enrolled black and white members side by side, at a time when Jim Crow ruled the land. Activists such as Harlem's **Louise Thompson Patterson** (an IWO vice president) worked to champion racial equality through the Order. There were even Arabic-speaking lodges in Detroit and other locales.

The Order envisioned its mission as more capacious than writing accident and death policies, and at its height enlisted 188,000 black, white, Hispanic and Arabic members for whom it forcefully advocated in every way possible. The IWO was a militant champion of interracial solidarity, civil rights, strong industrial unions and rigorous social security programs for working-class Americans. In 1940, an IWO publication, "Our Plan for Plenty," called for federally funded health insurance, a guaranteed income and generous provision of health clinics as key to securing **President Franklin Roosevelt's** Four Freedoms. Well-placed IWO allies worked with the Order to improve working people's lives. **Congressman Vito Marcantonio** of East Harlem, protégé of **Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia**, was an IWO vice president and leader of its Garibaldi Society. He introduced IWO-drafted legislation calling for federal workplace-safety laws, universal health care and other progressive social measures.

When the IWO was founded in 1930, there was no Social Security or other government programs to aid the unemployed, aged or destitute, so there was a real need for the IWO even on the most instrumental level, to provide members a modicum of security. Indeed, early Depression lobbying by the IWO was an important component of the political pressure that resulted in enactment of the Social Security Act, National Labor Relations (Wagner) Act and other New Deal reforms. Until its demise, however, the IWO pushed to expand the safety net to protect all Americans. The Order's General Secretary Max Bedacht shortly after World War II told his members, "In the field of social legislation and social insurance some first steps have already been made," but added, "Health insurance is still merely a dream. We must make it an imperative demand."

International Workers Order members were forceful organizers in the struggle for collective-bargaining rights. **Philip Murray**, president of the **Steel Workers Organizing Committee** and later the **Congress of Industrial Organizations**, wrote Bedacht congratulating the "patriotic" work the IWO was doing in recruiting members into industrial unions. The IWO's efforts were "helping the entire nation," Murray added, as the increased purchasing power and comfort union members enjoyed would spread prosperity throughout Depression-plagued America. The IWO republished Murray's missals as "Two Letters About One Cause," and IWO leaders such as Thompson Patterson worked to organize workers black and white in the packinghouses, steel mills and other places throughout the country. Marcantonio spoke at Order-sponsored rallies on behalf of striking steel and auto workers, praising the IWO as "the advance guard of democracy," a label with which thousands of Depression-era sit-down strikers agreed. Interracial IWO meetings in Chicago heard speeches in Polish and English on the need for solidarity across the color line if decent wages and working conditions were to be won. The IWO was instrumental in building a broad-based middle-class lifestyle for America's workers, and 80 Fifth Avenue was where it all was coordinated.

The IWO and its headquarters building are of historical significance, too, because the Order was one of America's earliest and most forceful advocates of interracial solidarity. Beyond advocating interracial socializing – itself anathema to many conservative Americans – the IWO also campaigned for civil-rights measures such as a federal anti-lynching bill, permanent Fair Employment Practices Committee (FEPC), integration of the armed forces, end to Jim Crow segregation of public facilities, and protection of black voting rights. Before it was a year old, the International Workers Order was organizing rallies to defend the "**Scottsboro Boys**," the nine black teenagers falsely accused of rape and facing the electric chair in 1931 Alabama. During World War II the IWO organized to defeat hate strikes by white workers seeking to bar blacks from war work, and in 1946 the Order participated in the American Crusade Against Lynching, demanding enactment of a federal anti-lynching bill. The Order shortly thereafter led the campaign to integrate New York's **Stuyvesant Town** co-ops.

In all of these campaigns, the IWO had a vocal ally in its vice president, Congressman Marcantonio. The *Baltimore Afro-American* applauded an IWO anti-discrimination rally and Marcantonio's introduction of a bill barring discrimination against blacks, Jews and Italians in war work. The IWO's Jewish section similarly demanded that Army base recreational facilities be integrated.

Marcantonio also decried the wartime internment of Japanese Americans, for which he received letters of thanks from Nissei – including a letter from a War Relocation Camp internee. His advocacy mirrored denunciation of the camps by grassroots IWO members, who defended Japanese Americans enrolled in the Order and condemned "the persecution the Japanese Americans had been subjected to." IWO officer Marcantonio proposed a bill to remove the bar

on Asian naturalization, earning congratulations from the Japanese American Committee for Democracy. The Order's notable, atypical defense of Japanese Americans surely renders the IWO headquarters of historical significance.

The IWO significantly was one of the first organizations to push for the integration of Major League Baseball. The Order's own sports leagues were integrated, with black, white and Hispanic baseball players competing in IWO leagues as early as the 1930s. During these games, petitions demanding integration of the Major Leagues passed through the stands. The African American *Chicago Defender* publicized these tournaments, in one of which an interracial New York team, the **Lincoln Brigadiers**, publicized members' service to Republican Spain. In passing, it should be mentioned the IWO is of historical significance because its members organized some of America's earliest anti-fascist demonstrations, with members donating money, blood, medical equipment and even their lives to the defense of the Spanish Republic besieged by Franco, Hitler and Mussolini in the 1930s.

The IWO persistently agitated for baseball's integration, distributing leaflets making these demands. **Paul Robeson** and IWO officials in 1943 presented a petition to baseball Commissioner **Kenesaw Mountain Landis** "urging abandonment of Jim Crow in the big leagues;" Thompson Patterson met with **William Wrigley**, owner of the Chicago Cubs, to lobby for the same cause. In 1945, Eastern Pennsylvania lodges demanded an investigation into "Jim Crow Baseball," while in New York, Jewish lodges were represented on the Metropolitan Interfaith & Interracial Coordinating Council, which orchestrated an End Jim Crow in Baseball campaign. This campaign planned interracial demonstrations outside the **Polo Grounds** and **Ebbets Field** on game days. In a similar vein, the IWO held interracial swim-ins to challenge segregated beaches on Chicago's Lake Michigan. In ways large and small, the International Workers Order was an historic champion of racial equality.

With its commitment to union and civil-rights activism, the International Workers Order offered more to its members than life insurance. But when they put down their picket signs, members also could spend almost all their leisure time at their local IWO lodge. The IWO sponsored workers' schools, summer camps such as **Camp Kinderland**, and various other recreational activities for its members, such as painting classes, sports teams, theater troupes and choirs and mandolin orchestras, so it's perhaps not surprising to discover a prominent artist such as painter **Rockwell Kent** as the national IWO president. Congressman Marcantonio supported the IWO in its development of ethnic festivals and dance troupes, singing groups, orchestras and theaters for its members. In his East Harlem congressional district he often attended IWO musical galas for Italian and "Spanish" (primarily Puerto Rican) IWO members. **Pete Seeger** sang his celebrated "Banks of Marble" as part of an IWO play, "Let's Get Together," and Order member **Paul Robeson** often performed at the organization's rallies and concerts. Working-class ethnic Americans, too, won local glory in groups such as the Russian Radischev Dancers, or the

Cervantes Society's annual crowning of a young "Reina de la Victoria de la Sociedad Fraternal Cervantes" ("Queen of Victory of the Cervantes Fraternal Society") at a gala ball in the Bronx. The IWO celebrated often denigrated ethnic cultures throughout its existence.

The Order supported its own workers' schools, where courses in painting, sculpture and music supplemented classes in working-class history, Marxism and union organizing. The IWO likewise financially supported other leftist schools, such as the **Jefferson School for Social Science**, located in a historically significant building at 575 Sixth Avenue (at Sixteenth Street, just north of Union Square.) At the Jefferson School, members of the IWO could take courses in writing the detective story with **Dashiell Hammett** of "Maltese Falcon" fame or painting classes with **Philip Evergood** or **Anton Refregier**. As even the government's wartime Office of Strategic Services noted, the IWO "pursued a diversified program of social-cultural activities." These cultural offerings were a historically important program of adult education for "workers of hand and brain."

Of particular note was the IWO's **Harlem Suitcase Theater**, which Thompson Patterson organized to bring socially relevant theater to African Americans during the Depression. The Suitcase Theater's 1938 debut production was "Don't You Want to be Free?" by **Langston Hughes**. The IWO had already published chapbooks of Hughes' "Revolutionary Verses" and included his poems in its publications such as *The New Order*; now Thompson Patterson recruited her friend to lend his talents to the Order's people's theater. "Don't You Want to be Free?" gave the first acting experience to **Butterfly McQueen** and **Robert Earl Jones** (father of James Earl Jones), who were both members of the IWO's Solidarity Lodge in Harlem. The Suitcase Theater took plays to Atlanta, Nashville and other cities, and also presented an opera by **James P. Johnson**. Many of its plays dealt with lynching, racism and industrial workers' poverty. The Suitcase Theater and other troupes such as the IWO Freedom Theater were some of the earliest proponents of experimental community theater. "When you give people a chance at self-expression," the IWO concluded in a *Daily Worker* article, "you are doing a valuable thing for them, a thing they appreciate."

Sadly, the International Workers Order proved a little too progressive in Red Scare America. The Order in 1947 was placed on the Attorney General's List of Subversive Organizations, at least in part for its forceful advocacy of union rights and racial equality. Foreign-born IWO members were deported, while those who worked for government agencies – even the post office – were required to sign loyalty oaths and interrogated on their suspect affiliations. In 1951, the New York State Insurance Department used the IWO's placement on the Attorney General's List as a pretext to revoke its insurance license, declaring it a "hazard." When IWO officers pointed out that in insurance law "hazard" referred to a financially unsound or fraudulent company, and that New York's own insurance auditors had for twenty-one years consistently declared the IWO's solvency to be impeccable, Albany devised a new – and in 2020 still unique –

interpretation of "hazard," suggesting the IWO was a "moral and political hazard." The Order's very solvency was held against it, since the department speculated its funds *might* be used to support the Kremlin. No evidence this was ever done or even contemplated was presented. In Red Scare America, speculation was as good as conviction when it came to progressives.

The IWO vigorously combated the campaign to strip the Order's insurance license and liquidate it, noting, "Very few fraternal organizations … can match the 146 percent solvency of the IWO and the A-plus excellent condition of its insurance funds." Such arguments, though, were mocked by the conservative *New York World-Telegram and Sun*, which scoffed, "Their Books Balanced, But Politics Were in Red." In 1954, New York State's Supreme Court affirmed the liquidation order, and the International Workers Order was disbanded. The IWO, with its bands, choirs, and militant advocacy of workers' rights and racial justice, was done.

The IWO's Polish paper, *Głos Ludowy*, defiantly celebrated the Order's accomplishments in an article headlined "IWO Helped Blaze Trail in Fight for Democracy." Perhaps this is the final verdict on the historical importance of the International Workers Order, a pioneering champion of racial equality, social justice and interracial entertainment. I urge the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission to honor this historically significant organization by designating 80 Fifth Avenue and other buildings on lower Fifth Avenue near Union Square a historic district.

Yours, sincerely,

Dr. Robert M. Zecker

Professor of History, Saint Francis Xavier University

P.O. Box 5000 Antigonish, NS B2G 2W5 Canada

(902) 867-3009 (office); rzecker@stfx.ca

cc: Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor, New York

Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker and Councilmember

Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation

April 24, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 55 Fifth Avenue, former home of Columbia Records, recording studio of Billie Holiday

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the author of *With Billie: A New Look at the Unforgettable Lady Day*, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 55 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1912, 18-story neo-Renaissance style office building played a pivotal role in the development of twentieth century American arts and culture as the home of the Columbia Phonograph Company, now known as Columbia Records. Columbia launched the careers of enormously important jazz and blues musicians, including the legendary vocalist Billie Holiday. Here, Holiday cut her first records and participated in the first integrated musical recording session.

Founded in 1887, Columbia was the second major company to produce records and has become the oldest surviving brand name in the recorded sound business. The renowned record-producer, civil rights activist, and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame-inductee John Hammond made his very first recordings here, and would go on to play a substantial role in launching the careers of Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Harry James, Count Basie, Big Joe Turner, Pete Seeger, Babatunde Olatunji, Aretha Franklin, Leonard Cohen, and Stevie Ray Vaughan. Perhaps even more significantly, Hammond is credited with discovering Billie Holiday singing at a Harlem speakeasy, and inviting her to the recording studios at 55 Fifth Avenue in 1933. Holiday's recordings here were her first, and marked the beginning of her long musical recording career. By the time of her death, Holiday had completed over a dozen albums.

Also upon Hammond's invitation, Holiday participated in a recording session with jazz clarinetist and bandleader Benny Goodman and swing pianist Teddy Wilson at 55 Fifth Avenue.

While black and white musicians were known to play together at clubs, this would come to be understood as the very first integrated recording session, and but one of Holiday's civil rights efforts. Not long after her Columbia recording sessions, Holiday rose to even greater prominence by introducing the song with which she is most closely associated, "Strange Fruit," at Café Society in Greenwich Village. The song, originally written as a poem by Abel Meeropol in 1937, is a searing protest of American racism, state-sanctioned violence, and systemic indifference.

Today, Billie Holiday is considered one of the preeminent jazz vocalists of all time. She sold out concerts at Carnegie Hall, starred in hit movies, and gave voice to the civil rights movement at a critical time in its development. Without a doubt, Holiday's history is inextricably linked to 55 Fifth Avenue and the neighborhood south of Union Square. The studios in this building reshaped the music market of the twentieth century, brought new genres of music into mainstream consciousness, transformed the opportunities available to black artists, and promoted the growth of some of our most beloved musicians and bands. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 55 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Julia Blackburn
juliablackburnbooks@gmail.com

April 24, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 55 Fifth Avenue, former home of Columbia Records, recording studio of Billie Holiday

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the author of *Billie Holiday: The Musician and the Myth*, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 55 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1912, 18-story neo-Renaissance style office building played a pivotal role in the development of twentieth century American arts and culture as the home of the Columbia Phonograph Company, now known as Columbia Records. Columbia launched the careers of enormously important jazz and blues musicians, including the legendary vocalist Billie Holiday. Here, Holiday cut her first records and participated in the first integrated musical recording session.

Founded in 1887, Columbia was the second major company to produce records and has become the oldest surviving brand name in the recorded sound business. The renowned record-producer, civil rights activist, and Rock and Roll Hall of Fame-inductee John Hammond made his very first recordings here, and would go on to play a substantial role in launching the careers of Bob Dylan, Bruce Springsteen, Harry James, Count Basie, Big Joe Turner, Pete Seeger, Babatunde Olatunji, Aretha Franklin, Leonard Cohen, and Stevie Ray Vaughan. Perhaps even more significantly, Hammond is credited with discovering Billie Holiday singing at a Harlem speakeasy, and inviting her to the recording studios at 55 Fifth Avenue in 1933. Holiday's recordings here were her first, and marked the beginning of her long musical recording career. By the time of her death, Holiday had completed over a dozen albums.

Also upon Hammond's invitation, Holiday participated in a recording session with jazz clarinetist and bandleader Benny Goodman and swing pianist Teddy Wilson at 55 Fifth Avenue.

While black and white musicians were known to play together at clubs, this would come to be understood as the very first integrated recording session, and but one of Holiday's civil rights efforts. Not long after her Columbia recording sessions, Holiday rose to even greater prominence by introducing the song with which she is most closely associated, "Strange Fruit," at Café Society in Greenwich Village. The song, originally written as a poem by Abel Meeropol in 1937, is a searing protest of American racism, state-sanctioned violence, and systemic indifference.

Today, Billie Holiday is considered one of the preeminent jazz vocalists of all time. She sold out concerts at Carnegie Hall, starred in hit movies, and gave voice to the civil rights movement at a critical time in its development. Without a doubt, Holiday's history is inextricably linked to 55 Fifth Avenue and the neighborhood south of Union Square. The studios in this building reshaped the music market of the twentieth century, brought new genres of music into mainstream consciousness, transformed the opportunities available to black artists, and promoted the growth of some of our most beloved musicians and bands. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 55 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,



John Szwed
Center for Jazz Studies, Prentis Hall
Columbia University
632 West 125th Street
New York, NY 10027
jfs54@columbia.edu

MEGAN FOX KELLY
ART ADVISORY

March 20, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 30 East 14th Street, former home of Robert De Niro, Sr. and Virginia Admiral, and surrounding area south of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

As the Advisor to the Estate of Robert De Niro, Sr., I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 30 East 14th Street as part of a historic district for the area south of Union Square. From 1941 until about 1943, No. 30 was the home of the figurative expressionist painter Robert De Niro, Sr. and artist Virginia Admiral (and perhaps for a short time their infant child, who would become the great movie actor Robert De Niro, Jr.). De Niro and Admiral were two among an almost-unrivaled list of artists who called 30 East 14th Street home in the 20th century. The individuals who lived and worked in this building were part of a trailblazing community who drew the center of the American art world, and ultimately the global art world, below 14th Street.

Virginia Admiral moved into the loft at 30 East 14th Street around 1940, originally living here with her friends Janet Thurman and Marjorie McKee. Admiral was visited often by poet Robert Duncan and writer Anaïs Nin, both of whom documented her apartment in their respective journals. Around this time, Admiral received a scholarship to the Hans Hofmann School of Fine Arts, a Greenwich Village-based institution which played a pivotal role in the development of abstract expressionism. Here she met the emerging painter Robert De Niro. He was considered one of Hofmann's most promising students, and Hofmann's teachings would have an enduring influence on the development of De Niro's style for the rest of his career.

Admiral and De Niro began sharing the loft on 14th Street in 1941, were married by January of 1942, and gave birth to Robert De Niro Jr. on August 17, 1943. This was a formative period for both artists, when they developed friendships with now-esteemed literary and artistic figures including writer Henry Miller and playwright Tennessee Williams, along with Duncan and Nin. Within a few years, both Admiral and De Niro had exhibited at Peggy Guggenheim's "Art of This Century" gallery,

where many great artists of the era launched their careers. In 1946, the twenty-four-year-old De Niro received an even more prestigious honor when Guggenheim awarded him his first solo show. By the mid-1950s, De Niro was deeply involved in the New York art scene, and his work was included in venerable group exhibitions including the Whitney Annual, the Stable Annual, and the Jewish Museum. Today, The Estate of Robert De Niro, Sr. honors the life and work of this distinguished artist and art professor through ongoing research and exhibits.

Admiral also continues to be known for her art, which was heavily influenced by her activism - particularly in the anti-war movement - and is part of the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, and the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice.

Other notable artist residents of 30 East 14th Street include "Fourteenth Street School" painter and Art Students League teacher Kenneth Hayes Miller, who was known for his depictions of the sales girls and shoppers that filled the 14th Street and Union Square neighborhood. By 1940, social realist painter Yasuo Kuniyoshi also had a studio at 30 East 14th Street, and in 1945 modernist Howard Daum moved into Studio K on the second floor, living and working here for the rest of his life and frequently painting from the rooftop. While Daum was here, painter Carl Ashby and painter, activist, and poet Helen DeMott had studios in the building. Painter, printmaker, and cartoonist Charles Keller had a studio at 30 East 14th Street from 1945 to 1953, formerly occupied by sculptor Arnold Blanch, which he shared with muralist and printmaker Harry Sternberg, who stayed here from 1945 to 1967. Realist and surrealist painter Andrée Ruellan and representational painter Edwin Dickinson had studios here as well.

Without a doubt, Robert De Niro, Sr. and Virginia Admiral's very important place in American art history is inextricably linked to the area south of Union Square, and particularly to the artists' haven at 30 East 14th Street. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 30 East 14th Street and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Megan Fox Kelly Art Advisory

Advisor to the Estate of Robert De Niro, Sr.

NATIONAL LGBTQ TASK FORCE

1325 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20005
P: 202.393.5177
F: 202.393.2241

February 18, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker and Councilmember, 3rd District
224 West 30th St, Suite 1206
New York, NY 10001

RE: Support for landmark designation of 80 Fifth Avenue, former headquarters of the National LGBTQ Task Force

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Speaker Johnson,

As the Executive Director of the National LGBTQ Task Force, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 80 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1908 Renaissance Revival style office building served as the original headquarters of the National LGBTQ Task Force, then known as the National Gay Task Force. As the first national LGBTQ rights organization in the United States, the Task Force accomplished a number of groundbreaking changes in the dozen or so years it was located here, initiating battles for civil rights that are still being fought today.

The National Gay Task Force was founded by Dr. Howard Brown, Martin Duberman, Barbara Gittings, Ron Gold, Frank Kameny, Natalie Rockhill, and Bruce Voeller in 1973. Among its early accomplishments, the Task Force helped get the federal government to drop its ban on employing gay people, and pushed the American Psychiatric Association to remove homosexuality from its Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. It also advocated for the

ultimately successful ruling by the U.S. Civil Service Commission eliminating the longtime ban upon gay people serving in federal government, ending decades of witch hunts against government workers suspected of being gay. In 1977, the Task Force arranged the first meeting between the White House and a gay advocacy group.

Also, during its time at 80 Fifth Avenue, in the late 1970s the Task Force staff conducted the first national survey of corporate hiring policies (called Project Open Employment) to determine whether U.S. employers explicitly barred discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. This was followed by another survey of municipal police departments, laying the groundwork for ongoing campaigns to secure protections by government and private employers against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation (and eventually gender identity as well). The Task Force was further instrumental in drafting and securing the introduction of the very first federal gay rights bill in Congress in 1975 by local Congressmembers Bella Abzug and Ed Koch, as well as several other representatives. While the bill did not pass then and still has not passed the entire Congress, it has been consistently reintroduced in various forms – most recently as the Equality Act - in the forty-five years since, gaining increasing support. It has become the basis for non-discrimination laws passed by 22 states and the District of Columbia, as well as hundreds of cities, counties, and localities throughout the United States. While headquartered here the Task Force also secured the first federal funding for AIDS education, approval of the first HIV test, and a change of the name "Gay Related Immune Deficiency Syndrome" to "Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome."

The National LGBTQ Task Force remains a social justice advocacy non-profit organizing the grassroots power of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer community and advancing a progressive vision of liberation. Without a doubt, the history of the organization is inextricably linked to this area, which throughout the mid-to-late 20th century fostered the growth of many civil rights and social justice organizations, notable among them the NAACP and the New York Woman's Suffrage League. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 80 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,



Rea Carey
Executive Director

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF COLORED PEOPLE
Mid-Manhattan Branch
500 7th Avenue, 14th Floor · New York, NY 10018
Telephone: (212) 749-2323
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February 14, 2020

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Corey Johnson, Speaker and Councilmember, 3rd District
224 West 30th St, Suite 1206
New York, NY 10001

RE: Support for landmark designation of 70 Fifth Avenue, former headquarters of the NAACP and The Crisis Magazine

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Speaker Johnson,

As the 1st Vice President of the New York State NAACP and the President of the NAACP Mid-Manhattan Branch, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 70 Fifth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area. This 1912 Beaux Arts style office building is significant as the former headquarters of the NAACP and The Crisis magazine. These organizations were based here from 1914 until the mid-1920s, a critical, seminal period in their history when their agendas were highly controversial and faced widespread opposition. While here, the NAACP undertook groundbreaking, successful campaigns which affected the lives of millions and altered the course of history in our country.

From its 70 Fifth Avenue headquarters, the NAACP opposed President Wilson's imposition of segregation upon the federal workforce, protested the demeaning portrayals of African Americans and the glorification of the Ku Klux Klan in the film The Birth of a Nation, and called for federal anti-lynching legislation to stem the rising tide of race-based violence in the country. The organization worked to propose new legislation prohibiting race-based discrimination in housing and employment, and demanded fair and equal treatment for black soldiers in World War I, securing the right of African Americans to become commissioned officers and to join the American Bar Association. The NAACP successfully advocated for Supreme Court rulings striking down "grandfather" clauses that disenfranchised black voters and "white only" primaries which prevented black candidates from running for office. Documentation indicates that it was here the organization began its iconic campaign of hanging a flag printed with the words "A MAN WAS LYNCHED YESTERDAY" outside its office window to call attention to these acts of racist terror.

At the same time, 70 Fifth Avenue housed The Crisis Magazine, the oldest black magazine in the world which became a vital voice in the Civil Rights movement and showcased noteworthy writing and art for over a century. W.E.B. DuBois and Augustus Granville Dill's publishing house, which printed The Brownies' Book, the very first magazine published for African American children, operated out of 70 Fifth Avenue as well. The Brownie's Book, along with The Crisis, featured the writings of now-revered authors including Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and Countee Cullen, among many others. Several of these authors' works were published for the first time in the pages of these publications.

Without a doubt, the rich history of the NAACP and The Crisis is inextricably linked to this area, which throughout the mid-to-late 20th century fostered the growth of many civil rights and social justice organizations, notable among them the National LGBTQ Task Force and the New York Woman's Suffrage League. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 70 Fifth Avenue and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Geoffrey E. Eaton
President
NAACP Mid-Manhattan Branch
500 7th Avenue, 8th Floor
New York, NY 10018

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

Consulate General of the
Kingdom of the Netherlands

666 Third Avenue, 18th floor
New York, NY 10017
www.nederlandwereldwijd.nl/en

Contact

Joost Taverne
Cultural Attache
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Sophie van Doornmalen
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Shared Cultural Heritage and
Dutch Old Masters
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E sophie-
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Date 15 January 2020
Betreft Support for landmark designation of 88 East 10th Street and surrounding area south of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 88 East 10th Street and its surroundings as part of a historic district designation for the area. From 1952 to 1959, 88 East 10th Street was the home and studio of Dutch-American painter Willem de Kooning, one of the most significant abstract expressionists who redefined the international art world. While de Kooning's history here warrants designation on its own, the blocks around his former home boast an even deeper Dutch-American history, as the land was long owned by the Brevoorts and Stuyvesants. Both families played a major role in the early development of New York City, including the area south of Union Square.

De Kooning lived and worked at 88 East 10th Street during some of his most important years as an artist. He and his contemporaries formed an artists' enclave on East 10th Street, which drew a larger movement of artists from Greenwich Village to the more affordable East Village. 88 East 10th Street was the first place where de Kooning combined his working studio with his residence – a trend for artists in the mid-20th century which transformed nearby neighborhoods like SoHo and NoHo, of which this was an early example.

In his studio at East 10th street, de Kooning completed many of his major works, such as the *Women* series (1950-53). *Women I* was bought by The Museum of Modern Art, *and Women II* by John D. Rockefeller III and Blanchette Rockefeller. One of De Kooning's most famous abstract urban landscapes, *Backyard on 10th Street* (1956), depicts the backyard of 88 East 10th Street.

After World War II, New York supplanted Paris as the center of the art world, and following the death of Jackson Pollock in 1956, de Kooning was considered the master of abstract expressionism. In the 1950s artist-run galleries began to flourish, particularly on de Kooning's block. Examples are Tanager in 1952, at 90 East 10th Street, and Camino, Brata, March, and Area Galleries. These galleries stood in contrast to the conservative uptown galleries and functioned within a collaborative spirit among the artists. They not only served the 'old guard' of

artists such as de Kooning, Jackson Pollock and Franz Kline, but also new artists coming to New York City. Though de Kooning found a new, larger studio space by 1958 or early 1959 at 831 Broadway, he continued to work in his East 10th Street studio while a renovation of the new space occurred, and rented out No. 88 until 1963.

Date
15 January 2020

Today, it is undeniable that de Kooning and the artists' enclave on East 10th Street transformed New York City and the broader art world. However, very few of the structures housing the former galleries and artists' studios central to this abstract expressionist school of the 1940s and 1950s remain from this period. 88 East 10th Street, by contrast, is nearly intact to its appearance during de Kooning's time. It is nothing short of remarkable that this most significant structure is still extant, and landmark protections would not only recognize this significance, but ensure its preservation.

The highly-significant Dutch-American history of the area goes back even further. The Stuyvesant family, descendants of Director-General of New Amsterdam Petrus Stuyvesant (1610-1672), continued to own the land of the family's original farm into the first half of the 19th century. Petrus Stuyvesant (1727-1805) was credited with the original layout of the streets of the area, which led to the urban development of this neighborhood and remains visible in the still extant Stuyvesant Street. Peter G. Stuyvesant (1777-1847) owned land sold for the development of a number of extant buildings that give the area south of Union Square its distinctive architectural and cultural character.

The Brevoort family also owned land south of Union Square. Henry Brevoort Sr. (1747-1841) was so influential that he is the reason why Broadway swerves to the northwest at 10th Street – to avoid demolishing his orchard located where Grace Church stands today. The younger Henry Brevoort Jr. (1782-1848), a patron of the arts and literature known for his close association with writers Washington Irving and Sir Walter Scott, exerted no less of an influence upon New York's development. Like his father, the younger Brevoort had designs upon shaping New York real estate, and did so extensively.

Without a doubt, Willem de Kooning's very important place in American and Dutch-American art history is inextricably linked to the area south of Union Square. The deep Dutch-American roots of the neighborhood and its development connect to some of the most important facets of New York's development. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 88 East 10th Street and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Joost Taverne
The Netherlands Cultural Attaché to the United States

JANICE P. NIMURA

December 9, 2019

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carolina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 80 University Place, former home and office of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, Councilmember Rivera,

I am a fourth-generation New Yorker and the author of a forthcoming biography of the groundbreaking sister doctors Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell. Elizabeth Blackwell was the first woman in America to receive a medical degree, in 1849. Emily Blackwell, eternally eclipsed, was the third, in 1854. Together, they founded the New York Infirmary for Indigent Women & Children, the first hospital staffed entirely by women. The book will be published by W.W. Norton in early 2021, to coincide with the bicentennial of Elizabeth Blackwell's birth.

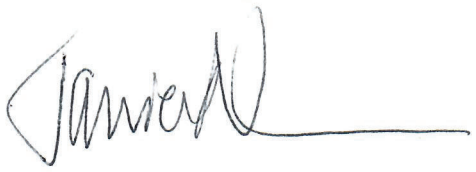
I am writing to add my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 80 University Place as part of a historic district designation for the area. This former row house, originally 44 University Place, served as the home and medical office at the beginning of Dr. Blackwell's medical career in New York City, in 1851.

Elizabeth Blackwell's initial efforts to serve within the medical community in the United States were met with resistance. Seeing a need among the women and children within the poorer communities of the Lower East Side, she set up a dispensary to serve that population. This effort was furthered in 1857 when along with two other female physicians, her sister Dr. Emily Blackwell and Dr. Marie Zakrzewska, she established the New York Infirmary for Indigent Women and Children at the former James Roosevelt house on Bleecker Street. This was the first hospital for, staffed by, and run by women in the United States. The Blackwells promoted innovations in hygiene critical in preventing disease, and also launched a "Sanitary Visitor" program to visit the needy in their homes.

In 1868, Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell founded the Woman's Medical College of the New York Infirmary to educate aspiring female doctors. Ahead of its time, it offered a more rigorous program than any existing medical college for men. In its thirty-one years of successful operation, the Women's Medical College educated more than 350 female physicians.

The significance of the pioneering work of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell—both in promoting hygiene and in opening the medical field to women—cannot be overstated. It is fitting that such work began in an area of New York City which over the years has born witness to other innovations in the areas of civil rights—particularly women's rights—the labor movement, the arts, and publishing. I strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district for 80 University Place and its surroundings.

Sincerely yours,



515 East 89th Street, #2B ~ New York, NY 10128

December 6, 2019

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 204 East 13th Street, former home of

NEA Jazz Master Dr. Randy Weston, and environs

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, Councilmember Rivera,

I am the widow of NEA Jazz Master Dr.Randy Weston and I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 204 East 13th Street, which was his home during the 1960s, as part of a historic district designation for the area.

NEA Jazz Master Dr.Randy Weston was not only a gifted jazz pianist compared with the likes of Duke Ellington and Thelonious Monk, but he was also an innovator and visionary in his compositions exploring the connections between African and American music. His contributions to the American history of jazz music constitute a significant chapter in that history and he has profoundly influenced generations of musicians to follow.

The area south of Union Square of New York City has a number of sites that are part of the American Jazz story, as many prominent blues and jazz musicians lived and worked in this area during the mid-20th century. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district including 204 East 13th Street and its surroundings.

Sincerely,

Fatoumata Weston

December 5, 2019

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of 80 University Place, former home and office of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, Councilmember Rivera,

As the great, great niece of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell, the first woman trained as a medical doctor in the United States, I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 80 University Place as part of a historic district designation for the area. This former row house, originally No 44 University Place, served as the home and medical office at the beginning of Dr. Blackwell's groundbreaking medical career in New York City starting in 1851.

Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell's initial efforts to serve within the medical community in the United States was met with resistance and her first patients were primarily local Quaker women. Seeing a need among the women and children within the poorer communities in the Lower East Side, she set up a series of dispensaries there to service those populations. These efforts were furthered in 1857 when she established The New York Infirmary for Women and Children at the former James Roosevelt house on Bleecker Street. This was the first hospital for women, staffed by women, and run by women in the United States and patients were cared for free of charge. The hospital was responsible for innovations in hygiene critical in preventing disease and in educating the public on those benefits, such as bathing ailing patients and encouraging them to keep clean. Blackwell also launched a "Sanitary Visitor" program to visit the needy in their homes in the slums and improve hygiene.

In 1868, she along with two other female physicians, Dr. Marie Zakrzewska and Dr. Emily Blackwell (Elizabeth's sister), opened and operated the Women's Medical College of the New York Infirmary to provide both training to aspiring female doctors and medical care for poor women and children. This institution was the first to offer women medical training, to prioritize female medical care and, like its precursor of the New York Infirmary, it was also staffed entirely by women. The Women's Medical College of the New York Infirmary was also ahead of its time in that it offered four year educational programs during a time in which medical schools, catering almost exclusively to men, only offered two year programs. In its thirty-one years of successful operation, the Women's Medical College educated more than 350 female physicians.

The significance of the pioneering work of Dr. Elizabeth Blackwell cannot be overstated. She changed the face of medicine promoting hygiene and preventative medicine among both lay persons and professionals and the promotion of medical education and opportunities for women physicians. It is fitting that such work began in an area of New York City which over the years has born witness to other innovations in the areas of civil rights – particularly women's rights - , the labor movement, the arts, and publishing. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district for 80 University Place and its surroundings.

Sincerely,



Jane Carey Blackwell Bloomfield

The Anais Nin Trust

November 5, 2019

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

Re: Support for landmark designation of 17 East 13th Street, former home of Anais Nin's Gemor Press

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, and Councilmember Rivera,

The Anais Nin Trust was created in 1975 to manage the literary estate of Anais Nin. The Trust is dedicated to preserving Anais Nin's legacy through the promotion of Nin scholarship, productions, and publications. We maintain copyrights over text, images, and recordings of or by Anais Nin, as well as Henry Miller's letters to Anais Nin and Ian Hugo's engravings.

I am writing today to express our strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 17 East 13th Street, the former home of Anais Nin's Gemor Press, via historic district designation for the area.

Nin was a singularly important figure in 20th century literature and in the development of the female voice in western culture. Her work, which emanated from this building, had a profound effect upon the direction of her career and her success as a writer. Works produced here such as *This Hunger* were key to her recognition as a writer and her development of an audience for her work. The design and printing of these works of literature – which were actually works of art as well – was directly overseen by Nin, and reflected her unique and revolutionary approach to literature. As noted in the submission by Village Preservation, Nin was drawn to this area because it was a center of publishing as well as radical thought, which she combined in her work.

The Anais Nin Trust

That this building is virtually entirely intact to the time period when Nin's press was located here is extraordinary. This tiny building housed many printers, though none as significant as Nin's, but it speaks to the intimacy of the process involved and the personal involvement of Nin in this aspect of the production of her work. To lose this building almost eighty years after Nin's remarkable time here would be a tragic loss, and preventable.

Given Nin's significance, the role this building played in her work and life, and the connection which her location here bore to the related activities going on around her, I strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district designation for this and surrounding buildings.

Sincerely,

Tree

Tree L. Wright
Author's Representative, the Anais Nin Trust
Secretary, the Anais Nin Foundation
treeleya@me.com
ph: 323-491-5776
fax: 323-443-3533

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of sites associated with the history of Reginald Marsh

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, Councilmember Rivera,

I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status 11 East 12th Street, 11 West 12th Street, and 4 East 12th Street as part of a historic district designation for the area.

All of these sites are significant due to their association with Reginald Marsh, and a host of other urban artists who lived and worked in nearby studios and residences attached to the vibrant Union Square and Fourteenth Street neighborhood of the 1920s and 1930s. In the history of Urban development coming from the presence of artists and their documentation of neighborhood social and cultural histories, Marsh and his peers continued a vital precedent for today that drew its own past from nineteenth-century New York.

As I wrote in my 1993 book, *The 'New Woman' Revised: Painting and Gender Politics on Fourteenth Street*, Urban Realist painter Reginald Marsh (1898–1954) lived at 11 East 12th Street and 4 East 12th Street in the 1930s. Marsh was of the key figures of the 'Fourteenth Street School' of painters, an influential group of artists in the 1920s and 30s all of whom lived and worked in the area Village Preservation is seeking to landmark.

The Fourteenth Street School painters came to redefine urban realist painting, often focusing on their immediate and workaday surroundings on or near their namesake street -- sometimes called "The Poor Man's Fifth Avenue" – a center for bargain shopping and entertainment for average and working-class New Yorkers. Building on the work of the Ashcan School painters (Marsh was taught by John Sloan at the Art Students League, along with his mentor Kenneth Hayes Miller who lived and worked on

Fourteenth Street), they combined an interest in modern urban subjects with a knowledge of Renaissance art. The working and shopping women who were became their subjects continued an attention to the body informed by their experience of drawing from the nude at the Art Students League. In addition to Marsh and Miller, the group included Isabel Bishop (and her young clerical working girl subjects from area businesses like Con Edison), and Raphael Soyer (and his milleners and Shop girls from Kleins). All the artists focused on Union Square park and its unemployed men from the Depression, even supporting one who was a regular model.

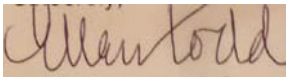
Marsh was born in Paris to expatriate artist parents who returned to the United States around 1900. In 1916, he entered Yale University, where he majored in art and drew illustrations for the Yale Record. Following graduation, he arrived in New York and soon established himself as a successful freelance illustrator, working for popular publications including the *New York Daily News*, the *New Yorker*, *Vanity Fair*, and *Esquire*. In 1921, Marsh began attending classes at the Art Students League, where he studied with other members of what would become the Fourteenth Street School, with whom he developed a lifelong relationship. After visiting Europe early in 1926, Marsh's interest in the Old Masters increased, as did his commitment to becoming a painter rather than an illustrator.

In 1928, he began working at a studio at 21 East Fourteenth Street (since demolished), where many of his fellow painters also worked. A careful though detached observer, Marsh excelled at representing crowds of New Yorkers, showing lively scenes of both the unemployed and the working class going about their daily activities. Burlesque shows, movie houses, elevated trains, Depression homeless encampments, and places of work all figured prominently in Marsh's paintings, often of scenes not far from his perch just off Union Square.

It was during the 1930s, when Marsh was on East 12th Street, that he gained his greatest prominence and his most celebrated works were produced. Marsh, who made linocuts, lithographs, drawings, engravings and etchings as well as paintings, also lived across the street at 4 East 12th Street. Marsh's etching 'Box at the Metropolitan' was printed on his press at 4 East 12th Street. In his later years Marsh would teach at the Art Students League, where a young Roy Lichtenstein, who would cite him as one of his most prominent influences, was one of his students. Marsh's murals grace the rotunda of the landmarked U.S. Customs House at 1 Bowling Green, and his work can be found in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Brooklyn Museum.

The area south of Union Square in the mid-to-late 20th century was one which attracted painters, writers, publishers and radical social organizations many of whom were challenging social and cultural American mores. Reginald Marshs's very important place in American art history is inextricably linked to the area south of Union Square. I therefore strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district for the sites associated with him and his work.

Sincerely,



Ellen Wiley Todd, Associate Professor Emerita
Department of History and Art History
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA. 22030-4444
etodd@gmu.edu
ellenwileytodd@gmail.com

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Bill de Blasio, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support for landmark designation of sites associated with the history of Hammacher & Schlemmer

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor de Blasio, Councilmember Rivera,

I am writing to express my strong support for the effort by Village Preservation to secure landmark status for 133 Fourth Avenue as part of a historic district designation for the area.

From 1904-1926 this 1897 building on the corner of 13th Street and 4th Avenue was home to our trailblazing hardware store, Hammacher & Schlemmer.

Hammacher & Schlemmer was the city's first hardware store, opened in 1848, and is the country's longest running catalog, first published in 1881.

The store originally opened in 1848 at 221 Bowery at a time when high-quality hardware was hard to find. Then just 12 years old, William Schlemmer would sell tools in front of his uncle's store. By 1867, he, along with newly acquired partner Alfred Hammacher (a fellow German immigrant), bought the business and renamed it Hammacher & Schlemmer. The two men turned this local shop into a national company, introducing American consumers to such items as the pop-up-toaster (1931), electric dry razor (1934), automatic steam iron (1948), microwave oven (1968), cordless telephone (1973), among many others.

In 1904, having outgrown its quaint Bowery location, Hammacher & Schlemmer moved to 133 Fourth Avenue (also known as 127-135 Fourth Avenue and 102-104 East 13th Street). Built in 1897 by Marsh, Israels & Harder, this building occupies a unique plot of land- picture a square corner lot with a little square cut out of the very corner.

The Fourth Avenue facade is more elaborate than its 13th Street counterpart, as it was the entrance to the store. This eclectic mash-up of styles makes this building extremely unique,

not dissimilar from our hardware store that earned the motto, "i*f you can't find it, try Hammacher & Schlemmer*," for its wide array of hard-to-find products.

By 1926, our company had once again grown too large for this home and moved to 147 East 57th Street, where we are today. 133 Fourth Avenue, however, remained in the family until 1936 under the ownership of William Schlemmer's daughter Ida S. Bruch, who owned several other properties in the area. The 57th Street location is still our company's flagship store today and the catalog continues to thrive.

The area south of Union Square in the mid-to-late 20th century was one which attracted painters, writers, publishers and bookstores and us, Hammacher & Schlemmer, New York City's first hardware store. We strongly urge you to move ahead with the proposed historic district for the sites associated with us and the other notable figures of history and examples of architecture.

Sincerely,

Richard W. Tuthill

President
Hammacher Schlemmer



Rosemarie Beck Foundation
34 Regent Street
Cambridge, MA 02140

December 2, 2024

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor, City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support of landmark designation for proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor Adams, and Councilmember Rivera,

The Rosemarie Beck Foundation writes in support of Village Preservation's campaign to designate a historic district in the area immediately south of Union Square.

This neighborhood, roughly located between Third and Fifth Avenues and East 14th and East 9th Streets, is home to many buildings of great historic architectural and cultural significance. I want to especially emphasize that throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the area was home to an unparalleled concentration of artists, who helped shift the center of the art world from Paris to New York City. These painters, muralists, sculptors, and more included such prominent figures as Isamu Noguchi, Joan Mitchell, Frank Stella, Jackson Pollock, and hundreds of others who have made significant contributions to the American art world.

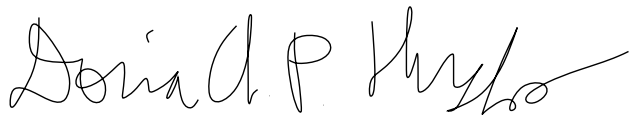
The neighborhood's rise as an artistic center began as early as the 1840s, when the National Academy of Design, the nation's first institution established by and for professional artists, was located there. From 1882-1892, the Art Students League

was located in the proposed historic district, and many of the prominent artists in the neighborhood had ties to the institution. By the 1950s the New York School, a groundbreaking collective of writers and artists that helped cultivate the growing Abstract Expressionist movement, was centered in the neighborhood. Many of its members lived and worked in the surrounding row houses and loft buildings that make up this unique section of New York City. It is also worth noting that many of these artists were women, during a time when the work of female artists was under recognized.

Rosemarie Beck is a key example of one of these artists. Beck was an Abstract Expressionist painter and member of the New York School who lived and worked in the proposed district for decades. She lived with her husband, Robert Phelps, in an apartment in the top floor of 6 East 12th Street, a Greek Revival rowhouse constructed ca. 1845-46. For many years she also rented studio space in the same building below the apartment. This building was also the site of art dealer Lou Pollack's Peridot Gallery, which opened in 1948 and was an important platform for Abstract Expressionism and other avant-garde art.

In addition to the area's unparalleled connections to artistic history, it holds ties to film and theater history; literary, publishing, and bookseller history; and civil rights and social justice history. I strongly urge you to move ahead with the designation of the proposed South of Union Square Historic District, to ensure that these important buildings and stories are protected for future generations.

Sincerely,



Doria Hughes
Collection Manager & Archivist
Rosemarie Beck Foundation
www.rosemariebeck.org
rosemariebeckfoundation@gmail.com

SHELBURNE MUSEUM

December 2, 2024

Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor
City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support of landmark designation for proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Mayor Adams, Chair Carroll, and Councilmember Rivera:

Shelburne Museum writes in support of Village Preservation's campaign to designate a historic district in the area immediately south of Union Square. This neighborhood, roughly located between Third and Fifth Avenues and East 14th and East 9th Streets, is home to many buildings of important historic, architectural, and cultural significance. I want to especially emphasize that throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the area was home to an unparalleled concentration of artists, who helped shift the center of the art world from Paris to New York City. These painters, muralists, sculptors, and more included such prominent figures as Isamu Noguchi, Joan Mitchell, Frank Stella, Jackson Pollock, and hundreds of others who have made significant contributions to the American art world.

The neighborhood's rise as an artistic center began as early as the 1840s, when the National Academy of Design, the nation's first institution established by and for professional artists, was located there. From 1882-1892 the Art Students League of New York was located in the proposed historic district, and many of the prominent artists in the neighborhood had ties to the institution. By the 1950s the New York School, a groundbreaking collective of writers and artists that helped cultivate the growing Abstract Expressionist

movement, was centered in the neighborhood. Many of its members lived and worked in the surrounding row houses and loft buildings that make up this unique section of New York City. It is also worth noting that many of these artists were women, during a time when the work of female artists was underrecognized.

Shelburne Museum is particularly interested in artist Ogden M. Pleissner's connection to the proposed district as we are the stewards of his studio and the major collection of his work. Pleissner (1905-1983) worked as a staff artist for LIFE magazine during WWII, and later became a nationally recognized landscape painter who chronicled sporting culture. For several years after WWII, he lived at 33-45 East 9th Street, a nine-story neo-Renaissance style apartment building constructed in 1925 and designed by Helmle, Corbett & Harrison.

In addition to the area's unparalleled connections to artistic history, it holds ties to film and theater history; literary, publishing, and bookseller history; and civil rights and social justice history. I strongly urge you to move ahead with the designation of the proposed South of Union Square Historic District, to ensure that these important buildings and stories are protected for future generations.

Thank you for your attention to this important chapter in the history of New York City.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas Denenberg, PhD
John Wilmerding Director and CEO

December 20, 2024

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor, City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support of landmark designation for proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor Adams, and Councilmember Rivera,

The Estate of James Rosati writes in support of Village Preservation's campaign to designate a historic district in the area immediately south of Union Square. This neighborhood, roughly located between Third and Fifth Avenues and East 14th and East 9th Streets, is home to many buildings of great historic architectural and cultural significance. I want to especially emphasize that throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the area was home to an unparalleled concentration of artists, who helped shift the center of the art world from Paris to New York City. These painters, muralists, sculptors, and more included such prominent figures as Isamu Noguchi, Joan Mitchell, Willem De Kooning, Franz Kline and many others who have made significant contributions to the American art world.

The neighborhood's rise as an artistic center began as early as the 1840s, when the National Academy of Design, the nation's first institution established by and for professional artists, was located there. From 1882-1892 the Art Students League was located in the proposed historic district, and many of the prominent artists in the neighborhood had ties to the institution. By the 1950s the New York School, a groundbreaking collective of writers and artists that helped cultivate the growing Abstract Expressionist movement, was centered in the neighborhood. Many of its members lived and worked in the surrounding row houses and loft buildings that make up this unique section of New York City. It is also worth noting that many of these artists were women, during a time when the work of female artists was underrecognized.

Sculptor James Rosati (1911-1988) had a studio in the neighborhood from approximately 1964 to about 1980. He was a WPA sculptor in the late 1930s, and later taught at Pratt Institute, Cooper Union, and Yale University. He was especially well known for his Cubist-inspired monumental sculptures, which were installed in museum gardens, corporate plazas and lobbies, including the plaza at the World Trade Center (1972).

In addition to the area's unparalleled connections to artistic history, it holds ties to film and theater history; literary, publishing, and bookseller history; and civil rights and social justice history. I strongly urge you to move ahead with the designation of the proposed South of Union Square Historic District, to ensure that these important buildings and stories are protected for future generations.

Sincerely,

The Estate of James Rosati

SUSAN TELLER GALLERY

P. O. BOX 1291 • NEW YORK, NY 10113 • USA

212-941-7335/917-282-3999 • info@susantellergallery.com

January 9, 2025

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor, City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support of landmark designation for proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor Adams, and Councilmember Rivera,

The Susan Teller Gallery writes in support of Village Preservation's campaign to designate a historic district in the area immediately south of Union Square. This neighborhood, roughly located between Third and Fifth Avenues and East 14th and East 9th Streets, is home to many buildings of great historic architectural and cultural significance. I want to especially emphasize that throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the area was home to an unparalleled concentration of artists, who helped shift the center of the art world from Paris to New York City. These artists, including Edward Laning, Kenneth Hayes Miller and Harry Sternberg – three painters, muralists, and long-time Art Student League Instructors, as well as Isamu Noguchi, Joan Mitchell, Frank Stella, Jackson Pollock, and hundreds of others who have made significant contributions to the American art world.

The neighborhood's rise as an artistic center began as early as the 1840s, when the National Academy of Design, the nation's first institution established by and for professional artists, was located there. From 1882-1892 the Art Students League was located in the proposed historic district, and many of the prominent artists in the neighborhood had ties to the institution. By the 1950s the New York School, a groundbreaking collective of writers and artists that helped cultivate the growing Abstract Expressionist movement, was centered in the neighborhood. Many of its members lived and worked in the surrounding row houses and loft buildings that make up this unique section of New York City. It

is also worth noting that many of these artists were women, during a time when the work of female artists was underrecognized.

We are particularly interested in the history of 30 East 14th Street, a loft building constructed in 1880 that for more than 40 years held studios of many different artists. In 1992, our gallery put on a show called “The Artists of 30 East 14th Street,” which showcased the work of twenty artists who held studios in the building. Please see the attached brochure that lists the artists included in the show and details their time at 30 East 14th Street.

In addition to the area's unparalleled connections to artistic history, it holds ties to film and theater history; literary, publishing, and bookseller history; and civil rights and social justice history. I strongly urge you to move ahead with the designation of the proposed South of Union Square Historic District, to ensure that these important buildings and stories are protected for future generations.

Sincerely,

Susan Keller

23. *Leaving the Shop,* 1929
Etching, edition about 20, 8 x 9 7/8 in.
Signed in pencil.

24. *Three Shoppers,* 1929
Etching, edition about 20, 5 1/4 x 6 3/4 in.
Signed in pencil.
Stained in margin.

MARTIN PAJECK (born 1929)
Pajeck took over Robert Barrell's old studio around 1950.

25. *(Man in the Woods),* circa 1945
India ink drawing, sheet size 14 1/4 x 18 in.
Signed in crayon. Minor defects at edges.

ANDREE RUELLAN (born 1905)
For one year in the 1930s Ruellan and husband, John W. Taylor (1897-1983), had a studio at 30 East 14th Street.

26. *Sixth Avenue,* 1936
Drawing, sheet size 13 x 20 in.
Signed in pencil.

HARRY STERNBERG (born 1904)
In 1945 Sternberg joined Charles Keller in a large studio with a skylight at the back of the building. Keller left in 1953 and Sternberg stayed on until he left New York for California in 1967.

27. *Enough (also titled Bound Man),* 1947
Moore 191, etching and aquatint, edition of 250 published by Associated American Artists,
14 7/8 x 11 3/4 in.
Signed in pencil.

28. *Steel Workers,* 1950
Moore 198, color serigraph
Edition of 30, 21 1/2 x 11 in.
Signed in pencil.

NAHUM TSCHACBASOV (1899-1984)
Tschacbasov had a studio in the building in the late 1940s and possibly early 1950s.

29. *Profiles and Landscape,* 1951
Color intaglio, rare, 16 x 10 in.
Signed by the artist's widow, Irene Tschacbasov.

30. *Profile #2,* 1953
Intaglio, edition of 50, 15 3/4 x 1 2 in.
Signed in pencil.

Additional artists associated with 30 East 14th Street:
Howard Baer, Karl Fortess, Agnes Hart, Paul Jackell, Morris Kantor, Rico LeBrun, Marvin Meisels, Jules Pascin, Marc Perper, Michael Ponce de Leon, Joseph Presser, George Rickey, David Shapiro, Saria Sherman, Bertrum Silber (later Bertrum Stanley), Thomas Sullivan, and Whitney Darrell. There are doubtless many others.

SUSAN
TELLER
GALLERY

568 Broadway New York, NY 10012 • (212) 941-7335

THE ARTISTS OF



30 EAST 14TH STREET

November 14 through December 31, 1992

SUSAN
TELLER
GALLERY

THE ARTISTS OF 30 EAST 14TH STREET

30 East Fourteenth Street (south side), at the south-west corner of New York's Union Square, has been the site of artists' studios for the last seven decades. A Civil War-era structure, it was known as the Janice Building because of the Janice dress shop on the street level. Over the years within those walls countless friendships, connections, and influences have taken place among the artists. The following exhibition, with preference given to works on paper, is an overview of the work produced there.

CARL ASHBY (born 1914)
In 1941 Ashby took a studio that would later be Howard Daum's. In a few years Ashby moved one flight up.

1. *14th Street, NYC, 1943*
   India ink and watercolor, sheet size 15 x 11 in.
   Signed in pencil. Minor defects.

2. *Two Figures on a Beach, 1944*
   Intaglio, edition about 10, 6 x 8 3/4 in.
   Signed in pencil.

ROBERT BARRELL (born 1912)
An innovator of Indian Space abstraction, Barrell had a studio in the building throughout the 1940s. He also had a sketch class there.

3. *(Indian Space Composition),* circa 1945
   Gouache, 10 x 6 in.
   Signed ink.

4. *Two Figures,* circa 1945
   Ink and pencil, 6 1/4 x 8 in.
   Signed in ink.
   Mounted to green support sheet.

ARNOLD BLANCH (1896-1968)
Blanch was in the building in the 1930s.

5. *Country Scene,* circa 1930
   Lithograph, edition of 25, 9 x 12 3/4 in.
   Signed in pencil.

6. *(Woodstock Farm),* circa 1930
   Lithograph on chine colle
   Edition of 20, 8 3/4 x 12 1/2 in.
   Signed in pencil.

J. E. CAPRIANO (born 1930)
Capriano had a studio in the building in the 1980s.

7. *New York Firefighter,* 1985
   Silver point drawing, 9 1/2 x 12 in.
   Signed in silver point.

NICOLAI CIKOVSKY (born 1894)
Cikovsky was in the building in the 1930s and 40s.

8. *Gray Day,* circa 1945
   Lithograph, edition of 10, 12 1/2 x 15 in.
   Signed in pencil.

HOWARD DAUM (1918-1988)
Around 1945 Daum took the small studio where he worked and lived for the rest of his life. Daum learned intaglio printmaking at the New York branch of Stanley William Hayter's Atelier 17.

9. *Theresa,* 1944
   Etching, 8 3/4 x 5 7/8 in.
   Signed in pencil.

10. *(Indian Space Composition),* circa 1945
    Etching, soft-ground and aquatint, 6 x 8 3/4 in.
    Signed in ink.

11. *(Indian Space Composition),* 1947
    Etching, 2 7/8 x 2 in.
    Signed and dated 1945 in ink
    (dated 1947 in plate).
    Small traces of tape in margins.

TED DAVIES (born 1928)
Davies moved into Harry Sternberg's studio in 1966 and stayed until 1986.

12. *PS 66, 1962*
    Color woodcut, edition of 52, 28 x 32 in.
    Signed in pencil

Cover illustration: Kenneth Hayes Miller, *Leaving the Shop,* 1929

HELEN De MOTT
DeMott took her studio around 1949; she was next to Robert Barrell. After two years she sub-let it while she went to Europe. In the 1950s she returned to the studio for a few years.

13. *The Byzantine Court #2,* 1959
    Colored inks and gouache,
    sheet size 18 1/2 x 23 1/2 in.
    Signed in ink on the reverse.

EMIL GANSO (1895-1941)
Ganso was in the building in the 1930s.

14. *Manhattan Venus,* 1935
    Moser 39, color lithograph
    Edition of 20, 11 3/4 x 16 1/2 in.
    Signed in pencil. Restored loss in left margin.

JACK HENDERSON (born 1931)
In 1980 Henderson took over the studio that had been Nicolai Cikovsky's. Henderson worked on murals there with Edward Laning and is still in the building.

15. *Evening Star,* 1990
    Acrylic on board, 40 x 19 in.
    Signed lower left.

JACOB KAINEN (born 1909)
Kainen was in the building from 1934 to 1936.

17. *The Huckster,* 1936/42
    Lithograph, edition about 25, 10 x 15 in.
    Signed in pencil. With the stamp of the New York City WPA.

CHARLES KELLER (born 1914)
Keller took a studio in the building in 1945. Thinking it was too large for one artist, he shared it with his teacher from the Art Students League, Harry Sternberg. Keller left in 1953.

18. *Swing Shift,* 1942
    Color serigraph, edition of 35, 10 x 17 3/4 in.
    Signed in pencil.

19. *Peoples' Meeting,* 1943
    Color serigraph, edition of 25, 11 3/4 x 17 3/4 in.
    Signed in pencil.

LEON KOTKOFSKY (born 1924)
A close friend and student of Robert Barrell, in 1944 or 45 Kotkofsky had a studio which was taken over by Howard Daum. Kotkofsky also had a studio in the 1960s.

20. *Seated Nude,* 1975
    Collage, 8 x 3 1/2 in.
    Signed in ink on the reverse.

YASUO KUNIYOSHI(1889 or 1893 - 1953)
Kuniyoshi had a studio at 30 East 14th Street from the 1930s until his death.

21. *Fruit in White Bowl (also titled Bowl of Fruit),* 1927
    Davis L-10, lithograph
    Edition of 50, 13 7/8 x 16 1/4 in.
    Signed in pencil.

EDWARD LANING (1906-1981)
In 1952 Laning took over the studio of his Art Students League mentor, Kenneth Hayes Miller. In 1963 Laning took a second studio which he kept throughout his life, and in the 1970s he rented a third where he made the *Building of the Transcontinental Railroad Mural,* now in the Railroad Museum, Ogden, Utah. With Isabel Bishop, Reginald Marsh and the Soyer brothers, Laning was part of the "14th Street School." For Laning the neighborhood, and especially Union Square, were important themes.

22. *The Attic,* 1950
    Crayon and wash on board
    Sheet size18 3/4 x 24 3/4 in.
    Initialled in ink. The attic in this work represents the artist's memory-filled mind.

KENNETH HAYES MILLER (1876-1952)
Miller was a pivotal figure in the building from the 1920s throughout his career. The Fourteenth Street shoppers he drew in the late twenties captured both the era and the neighborhood. His studio afternoon open houses were an important meeting place for colleagues and students.

January 10, 2025

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor, City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support of landmark designation for proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor Adams, and Councilmember Rivera,

The Charles Keller Estate writes in support of Village Preservation's campaign to designate a historic district in the area immediately south of Union Square. This neighborhood, roughly located between Third and Fifth Avenues and East 14th and East 9th Streets, is home to many buildings of great historic architectural and cultural significance. I want to especially emphasize that throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the area was home to an unparalleled concentration of artists, who helped shift the center of the art world from Paris to New York City. These painters, muralists, sculptors, and more included such prominent figures as Isamu Noguchi, Joan Mitchell, Frank Stella, Jackson Pollock, and hundreds of others who have made significant contributions to the American art world.

The neighborhood's rise as an artistic center began as early as the 1840s, when the National Academy of Design, the nation's first institution established by and for professional artists, was located there. From 1882-1892 the Art Students League was located in the proposed historic district, and many of the prominent artists in the neighborhood had ties to the institution. By the 1950s the New York School, a groundbreaking collective of writers and artists that helped cultivate the growing Abstract Expressionist movement, was centered in the neighborhood. Many of its members lived and worked in the surrounding row houses and loft buildings that make up this unique section of New York City. It is also worth noting that many of these artists were women, during a time when the work of female artists was underrecognized.

As the estate of Charles Keller, we are particularly interested in his connection to the proposed district. Keller was a painter, printmaker and cartoonist who held a studio within the proposed district at 30 East 14th Street. This loft building was constructed in 1880 and for approximately 40 years, contained the studios of many different artists. Keller shared a studio in the back of the building with fellow artist and collaborator Harry Sternberg. The pair studied together at the Arts Students League and worked together on murals for the Lakeview Post Office in Chicago and for the 1939 Worlds Fair. The two of

them, along with Isabel Bishop, Minna Citron, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, and Raphael Soyer, who also held studios at 30 East 14th Street, formed a thriving artists community in the building.

In addition to the area's unparalleled connections to artistic history, it holds ties to film and theater history; literary, publishing, and bookseller history; and civil rights and social justice history. I strongly urge you to move ahead with the designation of the proposed South of Union Square Historic District, to ensure that these important buildings and stories are protected for future generations.

Sincerely,

Marthe Keller
Tracy Zungola, Charles Keller Estate Manager
Charles@keller-email.com , www.keller-arts.com

The Joan Silverman Russell and Alfred Russell Estate

January 8, 2025

Hon. Sarah Carroll, Chair
NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission
One Centre Street, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Eric Adams, Mayor, City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Hon. Carlina Rivera, City Councilmember, 2nd District
254 East 4th Street
New York, NY 10009

RE: Support of landmark designation for proposed historic district South of Union Square

Dear Chair Carroll, Mayor Adams, and Councilmember Rivera,

The Joan Silverman Russell and Alfred Russell Estate writes in support of Village Preservation's campaign to designate a historic district in the area immediately south of Union Square.

This neighborhood, roughly located between Third and Fifth Avenues and East 14th and East 9th Streets, is home to many buildings of great historic architectural and cultural significance. I want to especially emphasize that throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, the area was home to an unparalleled concentration of artists, who helped shift the center of the art world from Paris to New York City. These painters, muralists, sculptors, and more included such prominent figures as Isamu Noguchi, Joan Mitchell, Frank Stella, Jackson Pollock, and hundreds of other well-known people who have made significant contributions to the American art world.

The neighborhood's rise as an artistic center began as early as the 1840s, when the National Academy of Design, the nation's first institution established by and for professional artists, was located there. From 1882-1892 the Art Students League was located in the proposed historic district, and many of the prominent artists in the neighborhood had ties to the institution. By the 1950s the New York School, a groundbreaking collective of writers and artists that helped cultivate the growing Abstract Expressionist movement, was centered in the neighborhood. Many of its members lived and worked in the surrounding row houses and loft buildings that make up this unique section of New York City. It is also worth noting that many of these artists were women, during a time when the work of female artists was underrecognized.

As the estate of Alfred Russell, we are particularly interested in his connection to the proposed district. Alfred Russell (1920-2007) was a renowned abstractionist, and figurative painter, with an early reputation on both sides of the Atlantic. A founding member of the New York School of Abstract

Expressionist Painter's "The Club" on Eight Street. Between 1948-52 he lived and worked within the proposed district at 229 east 11th St. In 1953, he lived at 17 East 9th St. His historically important gallery, Peridot was located at 6 East 12th Street, a ca. 1845-1846 Greek Revival Rowhouse. This house was constructed along with no. 4 East 12th Street, for a prominent businessman and philanthropist John Schermerhorn Bussing. Louis Pollack's Peridot Gallery was responsible for the early careers of Alfred Russell, Louise Bourgeois, James Brooks, Philip Gustion, Esteban Vincente, James Rosati Rosemarie Beck, Ruth Asawa, Weldon Kees, Philip Pearlstein, among others. As Thomas Hess, long time editor and chief at Artnews and curator of 20th Century Art at the Metropolitan Museum of art wrote:

"The Peridot Gallery was a "must" on any New York itinerary. It kept to high standards in times when all standards were under attack, but never betrayed the shifting nature of the time itself."

The artist Rosemary Beck also lived and worked at this address.

In addition to the area's unparalleled connections to artistic history, it holds ties to film and theater history; literary, publishing, and bookseller history; and civil rights and social justice history. I strongly urge you to move ahead with the designation of the proposed South of Union Square Historic District, to ensure that these important buildings and stories are protected for future generations.

Sincerely,



David Carbone,

Director,

The Joan Silverman Russell and Alfred Russell Estate

www.alfredrussell.com