



Broadens 'Where Women Made History' Initiative—

Historic Artists' Homes & Studios Program Names Four New Sites

STOCKBRIDGE, MASS. — The National Trust for Historic Preservation announced today that four new sites have been accepted into their prestigious Historic Artists' Homes and Studios (HAHS) program. All four sites — Hilltop House, The Victor D'Amico Institute of Art, Pond Farm and Saarinen House — are the preserved homes and studios of significant American women artists and are open to the public.

HAHS is deeply committed to representing the full breadth and diversity of our country's artistic legacy through preserved places nationwide. The sites selected also capture the spirit of the National Trust's larger initiative, Where Women Made History, a national campaign to identify, honor and elevate places across the country where women have changed their communities and the world. With the recent centennial celebration in 2020 of the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment that granted women the right to vote, it was an important moment for HAHS to increase its representation of sites dedicated to the legacy of women artists. With the addition of these four sites, HAHS is proactively ensuring that it will tell a fuller story of those artists who have traditionally been under-represented for their contributions to our cultural heritage, including people of color, indigenous, self-taught and women artists.

"These sites preserve the com-



Saarinen House dining room, 2015, James Haefner photo, Courtesy Cranbrook Center for Collections and Research.

D'Amico House, glass room, Jenny Gorman photo, 2016, Courtesy Victor D'Amico Institute of Art.

plex stories of four women artists who were groundbreaking in art and arts education, each contributing not only through their own artwork, but through the mentorship, opportunity and influence they provided to younger and upcoming artists," said HAHS senior program manager, Valerie Balint. "By placing these women's inspiring stories at the forefront, HAHS and the National Trust are helping to fulfil a vital need for more gender equity in how we frame artistic heritage and hierarchy. We will continue to expand the membership in 2021 to bring on other sites whose compelling stories increase racial diversity and social equity."

The introduction of these four new sites also increases the geo-

graphic representation of HAHS to include 22 states in the nation and expand the portfolio of Twentieth Century sites within the network, creating a rich and balanced representation of Nineteenth Century artist spaces.

Hilltop House is the artist-designed house, landscape and sculpture park of ceramicist, sculptor, author and preservation activist Dorothy Riester (1916-2017) in Cazenovia, N.Y. Constructed in the late 1950s to the early 1970s on a 23-acre parcel, the house was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2014 for its significance "under Criterion C as a highly intact example of a mid-Twentieth Century modern house and artist studio...the building exemplifies midcentury house design with its use of common, ready-made materials and prominent front-gable massing, large expanses of windows and open interior plan. However, unlike a typical midcentury house, the building also incorporates elements of Dorothy Riester's sculptural background and her desire to integrate nature into her art."

Sarah Tietje-Mietz, director of Hilltop House, says, "Having Dorothy's creative life examined as part of the larger dialog of artists' homes and studios will develop a more profound understanding of the importance of a life lived in art — especially one lived by a Twentieth Century woman artist. We are honored and beyond excited to be part of a community that both celebrates the range of environments shaped by artists and challenges itself to expand the traditional notions of historical importance."

The Victor D'Amico Institute of Art is the Long Island home, and retired Navy barge that artist couple Mabel D'Amico (1909-1998) and Victor D'Amico (1904-1997) transformed into an arts school to advance their philosophies of progressive arts education. The Mabel and Victor D'Amico Studio and Archive is a testament to the D'Amico's modernist roots with permanent and rotating exhibitions in the D'Amico House featuring early modernist furnishings and found objects; artworks, assemblages, jewelry, and clothing by Mabel D'Amico; and photos, documents, books and ephemera pertaining to Victor D'Amico's pioneering work in arts education.

Christopher Kohan, president of the Victor D'Amico Institute of Art, says, "Our inclusion in HAHS reinforces an enduring mission pioneered by Mabel and Victor D'Amico to advance art and creative education as a human necessity. The preservation of diverse historic structures and artistic legacies is an invaluable gift to this country and confirms Mabel and Victor's belief that 'the arts are a humanizing force and their major function is to vitalize living.'"

Pond Farm is the art colony in California's Russian River Valley, founded by author, influential ceramicist Marguerite Wildenhain (1896-1985). Born in Lyons, France, Friedlaender was trained at the famous Bauhaus school in Germany. After the Nazis rose to power, she moved to Holland where she met Gordon and Jane Herr, United States citizens who shared a dream of building an artist's colony in Northern California. Friedlaender was moved by a vision of isolation in nature, where she could pursue her art, and immigrated to the United States in 1939.

After a brief period of teaching in New York City and Oakland, Calif., she moved to the Guerneville, Calif., area to help the Herrs run Pond Farm. By 1947, a special pottery studio had been built to her specifications. Within two years, other potters were coming to learn from her extensive Bauhaus training.

Other artists associated with this colony include Frans Wildenhain (1905-1980), Trude Guermonprez (1910-1976), Victor Ries (1907-2013), Jean Varda (1893-1971), David Stewart (1930-2019), Claire Falkenstein (1908-1997), Lucienne Bloch (1909-1999) and Stephen Dimitroff (1910-1996).

Michele Luna, executive director of Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods, said, "Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods and California State Parks is honored to be accepted into the Historic Artists' Homes and Studios network. This designation is especially meaningful during a year when the Walbridge fire swept through Austin Creek State Recreation Area where Pond Farm is located. Due to the dedication of our State Park partners who impressed upon fire fighters the importance of saving this historic site, Pond Farm was saved."

Saarinen House is the iconic modernist home on the campus of Cranbrook Academy of Art (in Bloomfield Hills, Mich.), that was designed and furnished by artist couple, textile designer and sculptor Loja Saarinen (1879-1968) and architect and painter Eliel Saarinen (1873-1950). Designed in the late 1920s, the interior, now restored, features Saarinen's original furnishings, including Eliel's delicately veneered furniture and Loja's sumptuous textiles, as well as early furniture designs by their son, Eero Saarinen (1910-1961).

Gregory Wittkopp, director of Cranbrook Center for Collections and Research, says "My colleagues and I at Cranbrook are honored by this opportunity, one that will not only help us share the story of Saarinen House and the makers that lived and worked there with curious people from around the world, but also help us foreground the story of Loja Saarinen, who is often overshadowed by her husband, the architect Eliel Saarinen."

Donna Hassler, administrator for HAHS and executive director at Chesterwood, says, "These institutions, centered around the riveting stories of the groundbreaking women who lived and worked at these sites, offer immersive experiences for their visitors and expand knowledge about diverse artistic perspectives," said, "We are delighted they have accepted our invitation to be part of the program and look forward to working with them."

Historic Artists' Homes and Studios network is a peer-to-peer coalition of sites that brings these museums together to conserve the legacy of creativity in the visual arts in the United States. Since its establishment by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1999, HAHS has developed into a successful community of practice, working with 48-member sites that has seen more than one million visitors in nearly every part of the United States. This network of sites leverages the knowledge and experience of individual members to benefit the entire coalition in critical areas, including historic preservation, visitor and community programming and communications.

For additional information, www.artistshomes.org.



Hilltop house and studio, garden room with installation utilizing artist collection, Courtesy Stone Quarry Hill Art Park.



Pond Farm, interior of the studio barn, Courtesy Stewards of the Coast and Redwoods and California State Park.