

NATIVE ARTS AND CULTURES FOUNDATION TO GAIN OWNERSHIP OF YALE UNION BUILDING IN HISTORIC REPATRIATION OF PROPERTY; AFTER ONE DECADE OF PUBLIC PROGRAMMING, YALE UNION TO DISSOLVE IN 2021

The Native Arts and Cultures Foundation (NACF) and Yale Union (YU) are proud to announce the transfer of ownership of the land and historic Yale Union building at 800 SE 10th Avenue in Portland, Oregon, from YU to NACF.

“Together, the NACF board and staff believe that this free land and building transfer will set an example for recognizing the value of Native ownership of property in urban areas across the nation,” says NACF President/CEO Lulani Arquette. “It’s liberating and encouraging to witness this kind of support for First Peoples of this country. The potential for local community and national partnerships around shared interests through Indigenous arts and cultures is wide open. We are deeply grateful for this transformative opportunity afforded NACF by YU board and staff, and stand united with all to reclaim Native truth, engage anti-racism, and address important issues we face today.”

NACF is a Native-led national organization committed to mobilizing Native artists, culture bearers, communities, and leaders to influence positive social, cultural, and environmental change. As such, it focuses on strengthening Native arts, providing artists and the creative community with the resources and tools they need to be successful, and expanding awareness and access to Native knowledge and truth. NACF is accepting this special property with great appreciation for what came before. We honor and respect the elders past and present, and acknowledge the land that this building sits on and the previous Native tribes and peoples who inhabited the land.

“I am proud of what we have accomplished with Yale Union over the last decade. Having been able to fulfill our mission through the unearned privilege of property ownership, it’s now time that we hand over the keys!” says Flint Jamison, President, Board of Directors of Yale Union. “I am inspired by NACF’s leadership, unwavering commitment to their mission, and capacity to operate on a large scale. I am eager to listen and learn from them as they use the land and historic building to fulfill their vision.”

The new national headquarters for NACF will be called the Center for Native Arts and Cultures, and the property will continue to be a site of contemporary artistic and cultural production. The building will benefit the local community and be a strong cultural asset for the city of Portland. NACF has just completed a planning process that determines its national programming and includes a vision for how it plans to maximize opportunities in the new space. The building will be a vibrant gathering place for Indigenous artists and local partnerships. It will provide space to present and exhibit, places to practice culture and make art, and areas for cultural ceremony and celebration. There will be opportunities for broad community learning, including workshops and seminars covering pertinent issues relative to decolonizing space, anti-racism, and environmental justice.

The process to transfer Yale Union’s historic property to NACF began in mid-2018 with

discussions between YU's then Executive Director, Yoko Ott, and YU's Board President, Flint Jamison, regarding art institutions' potential for proposing models of restorative social change. Ms. Ott then made initial contact with NACF's President/CEO, Lulani Arquette, which led to NACF conducting a thorough feasibility study. In December 2019, NACF's Board of Directors approved to move forward with taking ownership of the property. Both NACF and YU would like to acknowledge Ms. Ott's vision and leadership in initiating this transfer of ownership.

YALE UNION BACKGROUND

Since opening to the public in 2010, Yale Union has presented the work of hundreds of artists through the labor of its dedicated board and staff, and the incalculable support of its donors, volunteers, colleagues, and friends. It has created and fostered a cultural community by hosting countless events, providing subsidized studio space to dozens of local artists, and facilitated numerous community programs. It has preserved its historic building and used its 9,400 square-foot exhibition space to present the work of internationally-recognized and under-represented artists in Portland. Through its publishing imprint, YU has published ten books, and it has housed a unique and publicly accessible art library.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Yale Union has suspended in-person events for 2020, but it will collaborate with NACF to co-present artistic programming in 2021. Later that year, Yale Union will dissolve its nonprofit. The property transfer to NACF will serve as a natural culmination of Yale Union's decade-long mission to support artists, propose new modes of production, and stimulate an ongoing public discourse around art. Yale Union's board and staff sincerely thank all of those who helped in achieving its mission and building a community of artists around the Yale Union building and beyond.

For further information, please contact:

Native Arts and Cultures Foundation

Barbara Soulé

Communications Specialist

barbara@nativeartsandcultures.org

www.nativeartsandcultures.org

For Media Kit click [here](#)

Yale Union

Flint Jamison

President, Board of Directors

Yale Union

flint@yaleunion.org

www.yaleunion.org