New York February 1900

To the Trustees of Fine Arts

Dear Sirs,

We propose to turn to you
by Will the estate of Jasso, together
with the residuary estate of Spencer
Trask & Katrina Trask, subject only
to a life use thing of some one person
in Case we may hereafter designate
such one. Jasso we are glad to

think has come to be a source
of fruitful help and inspiration

to many, and especially to those

gifted with creative power who have

had the impulse to use it for their

fellow men.
This feeling has been not only the delight of our enthusiasm in the place, but the almost universal verdict of all who have come within its gates. Poets, Artists, Sculptors, Musicians have said that they could not work here as nowhere else than found at Gassho, the inspiration for some of their best work. They have grown around Gassho legend and romance so that it has become far more than an estate and in its varied forms upon men and women far more than a home.

The trust that long, long ago in shall be gone, the ideals which have become traditional at
Yaddo and an deep in its very fabric shall be pressed as a living and practical force which we venture to hope may grow from year to year.

Since God in His infinite wisdom has seen fit to take all our children to a larger place, I cannot believe it right that we should limit the possession of Yaddo to any one individual or family, for then it would be breaking the kin our care for our immediate — as an expression of which we have made other provisions — we shall not leave Yaddo to any one of them except possibly for a life use.
In order to secure for Yaddo
a larger influence and a more
permanent continuity of
the aims and ideals which we have
held for it, I in the hope that it
may continue as a practical force
in the world for all time.
We desire to found here a permanent
Home to which shall come from
time to time for rest and refreshment
Artists, painters, sculptors, musicians
and other artists both men and women
for in number and character for creative
Gifts and besides that less for the
power of the Will and the purpose to
make these Gifts useful to the world.

Those who in working for their Art
have not laid up material possessions
for themselves & those who starting in life are making a brave fight to guard and augment the sacred fire within them and meantime earn their bread by labor praise and oppression are so often unable to obtain the rest and refreshment so sadly needed. It is such as these whom we would have enjoy the hospitality of Yaddo their sole qualification being that they have done, are doing or give promise of doing good & earnest work. We do not intend this as a home for those who would lead a life of ease or for those who in the common parlance are “in want.”
Spencer Trask, New York.

We hope that Yaddo will not minister to the mere material conflict or advantage of men or women. Except as it shall prove their helpfulness in the domain of creative work, we do not here set forth in more detail the manner or way in which in fact Yaddo is the endowment which the trust may go with it to be used.

It is desired that there shall rest with you as a Board of Trustees (whose number you may deem wise to increase, as also to change your Corporate name to The Trustees of Yaddo) the legal custody and business control of the entire property both real and personal.
You are to fill all vacancies in your own Board, to be members of the Corporation, and to add such other members as you shall deem proper, to adopt and from time to time amend by-laws and rules of administration to yourselves determine the use of the property, whether by general regulation or as you deem such regulation necessary or in specific detail, from time to time, and in all other matters to exercise General complete power, availing yourselves, however, so far as you shall deem it practicable and helpful.
at the advice of an Advisory Committee, you should nevertheless appoint such Committee.

It should consist of men who fairly represent the field of intellectual and aesthetic activity in which we hope that Yaddo shall be a continuing and permanent force.

Such a Committee might well be chosen from among the persons who have served or the time to:

The Bishop of the Diocese of Albany in the Protestant Episcopal Church

The Rector of Bethesda Church (Epis.) in the Village of Saratoga
The President of the National Academy of Design in the City of New York.
The President of the Architectural League.
The President of the Sculpture Society.
The President of the National Arts Club.
The President of the Century Association.
The President of the Author's Club.
All in the City of New York.

The Dean or head professor in the Department of Music in Columbia University.
The President of the National Institute of Arts and Letters.
The Presidents of Princetun (alma mater) [incomplete]
Harvard and Columbia Universities.

And other persons occupying like and representative positions.
Mr. Van Namel two persons occupying certain ecclesiastical positions but not with any intention or wish on our part to sin ecclesiastical character to the work at Yaddo but because of their especial associations with Saratoga and because the occupants of those places are likely to be men of wide and earnest sympathy with the kind of purpose which Mr. Trife may make the Supreme Lord at Yaddo.

It is our wish that no manner of personal, sectarian, aesthetic, or intellectual sympathy shall limit or distort its usefulness or even make of it a kind of hypocrisy.
other than we have intended.

With the above explanation of our plan and views and in full confidence that you will carry out and realize this hope of yours more dear to us than to me in words express in clear and so to you and your successors.

Spencer Trask

Julia Trask