

RESOLUTION NUMBER 82
HONORING THE LATE LARRY GILES

WHEREAS, Larry Giles contributed to the spirit of St. Louis as a pioneering historic preservationist, self-taught architectural historian, community radio host on KDNA FM, anti-Vietnam War and anti-racist activist, rehabber of historic buildings, employer and dear friend to many, and teacher to even more; and

WHEREAS, Giles personally rescued several vacant historic buildings in Soulard and, through co-founding the Soulard Restoration Group, was a key contributor to preserving a neighborhood previously targeted for complete clearance; and

WHEREAS, Giles opened the St. Louis Architectural Art Company in 1973, and for the next thirty years recovered architectural artifacts from buildings of all sizes, making them available to restore and rehabilitate other historic buildings, and to both temporary and permanent displays at cultural institutions around the nation; and

WHEREAS, Giles amassed the largest collection of architectural artifacts ever assembled in the United States, inclusive of significant examples of ceramic art including brick and terra cotta, cast iron, shaped and decorated stone, stained glass, woodwork, structural steel and iron, machine tools and more; and

WHEREAS, through his salvage work, Giles became the nation's leading expert in recovering large assemblies of decorative and structural elements, including entire building elevations; and

WHEREAS, Giles also assembled a research library centered around architecture and all of its allied arts, creating a nationally-unparalleled study center where a researcher can study all aspects of a building from design to extracting materials from the earth; and

WHEREAS, Giles donated his artifact and library collections to found the National Building Arts Center in 2002, which finally fulfilled the idea for a museum of American architecture in St. Louis first proposed by historian Charles Peterson in 1933 and included in Eero Saarinen's original plan for the Gateway Arch in 1947; and

WHEREAS, because of Giles' efforts, the National Building Arts Center has become the nation's first architectural museum combining a research library with the actual material of the built environment, and has become a leading repository for materials from New York City, Chicago and other American cities.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by this Honorable Board of Aldermen of the City of St. Louis that we pause in our deliberations to recognize and acknowledge both the life of Mr. Larry Giles, and his significant work to preserve the exemplary architectural legacy of the City of St. Louis. We further direct the Clerk of this Board to spread a copy of this Resolution across the minutes of these proceedings and to prepare a commemorative copy to the end that it may be presented at a time and place deemed appropriate by the Sponsor.

Introduced this 30th day of August, 2021 by:
The Honorable Bill Stephens, Alderman 12th Ward
The Honorable Dan Guenther, Alderman 9th Ward

Adopted this 30th day of August, 2021 as attested by:

Terry Kennedy
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

Lewis Reed
President, Board of Aldermen