

## **Fact Sheet**

### **THE RAGDALE FOUNDATION:**

The Ragdale Foundation is an artists' community that enriches the creative spirit and fosters artistic freedom. Built in 1897, Ragdale is located on the grounds of Arts and Crafts architect Howard Van Doren Shaw's summer home in Lake Forest, IL. Today the historic, timeless, and tranquil environment provides a sanctuary for artists-in-residence through the over 30-year old Foundation.

Ragdale welcomed its first residents in 1976, when Shaw's granddaughter, Alice Judson Hayes, transformed her family's summer home into a nonprofit artists' community. Ten years later, she donated the buildings and five-acre grounds to the city of Lake Forest. They agreed that the Ragdale Foundation could continue to operate its program and buildings on a 25-year rent-free lease, which has since been extended through the end of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **THE ARTISTS:**

Visual artists, writers, composers, and interdisciplinary artists from around the world apply for highly-regarded two to six-week residencies. These competitively selected artists live and work in studios or bedrooms and gather for a chef-prepared dinner each evening. Residents' uninterrupted time at Ragdale is their own, and they use it to create, write, experiment, research, plan, edit, collaborate, rejuvenate, brainstorm, and just plain work.

Ragdale operates on the tenet that time and space are not luxuries but necessary elements to creating important new work. Ragdale is proud to have offered time and space to generations of artists including bestselling authors Jane Hamilton, Audrey Niffenegger, Alex Kotlowitz, Nancy Horan, Anne LeClaire, and Lawrence Block, and visual artists E.W. Ross, Roland Kulla, Linda Lowe, Audrey Niffenegger, and Barbara Cooper.

### **IN THE COMMUNITY:**

Because the creative process can be a mysterious thing, Ragdale offers many public programs to engage the public with its mission. Ragdale artists and writers engage with students through school programs and lead public workshops, readings, and open studios.

Ragdale also offers public tours of its buildings and grounds. Docents share the details of Ragdale's history and architecture, and each tour also includes a studio visit with an artist-in-residence. Other major events include "Home Sweet Ragdale: A Family Open House," which features artist-led activities and live music; and, more recently, through its *Novel Affair*, an event that brings world-renowned, esteemed and bestselling authors such as Erik Larson, Ann Patchett, Richard Russo, Andre Dubus III, Elizabeth Strout and Wally Lamb to Lake Forest for dinner with the public in Lake Forest homes.

### **WHO WE ARE:**

The Ragdale Foundation is a nonprofit organization with a staff of seven full-time and two part-time employees, interns, numerous volunteers and active Board Members who work to provide time and space to over 200 artists-in-residence each year.

### **MEDIA CONTACT:**

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