

# The MacDowell Colony

100 High Street  
Peterborough, NH 03458  
603-924-3886  
fax 603-924-9142

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New York, NY 10028  
212-535-9690  
fax 212-737-3803

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Dear Friend,

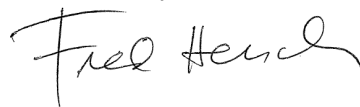
In the late 90's, I heard The MacDowell Colony spoken about with a sense of awe by many of my composer friends. They described an ideal environment to create without distraction while experiencing numerous sources of inspiration. But I was hesitant to apply as a composer because I work in the jazz idiom and jazz music is not as impressive on paper as is, say, a string quartet or a piece for orchestra. So I didn't rate my chances of getting in as particularly favorable. But I decided to give it a shot – and being accepted for the first time in 2000 was a real turning point in my life as an artist.

My friends who touted the Colony did not nearly do the place justice. Not only was I able to work uninterrupted away from the Internet, cell phone and responsibilities of daily life, but I was inspired tremendously by my interactions with my fellow residents. As a result of my times there, I have forged lasting relationships, some of which have led to cross-disciplinary collaborations. And when I had a less-than-productive day, it was comforting to hear over dinner that you were not the only one struggling. Going to the readings, open studios and presentations was fascinating and inspiring. Moreover, being accepted to MacDowell gave me confidence as a composer – and in the last 10 years I have done some of my best work at the Colony. The entire staff works seamlessly to provide perfect – and invisible – support to the creative process for all artist residents.

During this difficult year, the opportunity to work at the Colony is more vital than ever for creative artists. To continue MacDowell's practice of providing Fellowships at no cost to artists, the Colony must raise more than half of its annual operating expenses from individual donors and foundations, as well as from Colony Fellows who are able to contribute. MacDowell is currently experiencing a significant impact on both its endowment income and annual contributions; it is reducing or deferring expenditures wherever possible. Your commitment will help guarantee that artists can continue to enjoy the creativity and productivity of a MacDowell residency, which provides time, space, and financial assistance to those who need it most.

My musical, creative, artistic and personal life has been enriched immeasurably by my residencies at MacDowell. Please contribute whatever you can to help artists continue their life's work in this truly unique and magical environment.

Sincerely,



Fred Hersch  
Colony Fellow