



THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
CELEBRATES CENTENNIAL OF THE MACDOWELL COLONY
WITH SPECIAL EXHIBITION

For Immediate Release — Peterborough, NH — February, 2007.... Highlighting works from noted MacDowell Fellows, as well as featuring archival material from The MacDowell Colony's storied past, the Library of Congress presents *A Century of Creativity: The MacDowell Colony 1907–2007*, from February 22nd through August 18, 2007. The exhibition, which is drawn from across the Library's holdings, is part of a yearlong Centennial celebration of the Colony, the first and leading artist residency program in America. It includes historical, artistic, and personal documents created by such artists as composers **Aaron Copland** and **Leonard Bernstein**; playwright **Thornton Wilder**; novelists **Willa Cather** and **James Baldwin**; poet **Edwin Arlington Robinson**; visual artists **Milton Avery**, **Benny Andrews**, and **Janet Fish**; and others who have made profound contributions to the nation's creative legacy. The exhibition offers fascinating views into the creative process while illuminating the singular role the Colony has played in giving artists the time and space to produce a range of landmark works.

Letters, photographs, first editions, signed musical scores, fine prints, and historical documents chronicle the development of the Colony as a nurturing environment for talented artists across disciplines, and reveal its profound influence on creativity in America during the last century. Organized by the Library of Congress' Interpretive Programs Office and curated by Robin Rausch, a music specialist at the Library, *A Century of Creativity* is featured within the "American Treasures of the Library of Congress" exhibition, in the Southwest Gallery of the Thomas Jefferson Building, 10 First Street, SE, in Washington, D.C. Exhibition hours are 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday. The exhibition is also accessible online at www.loc.gov/exhibits.

The Library's relationship with The MacDowell Colony grew out of a friendship between Colony founder Edward MacDowell and the Library's Music Division Chief Oscar

Sonneck. In 1903 — four years before he and his wife, Marian, founded the Colony — MacDowell, an eminent composer, gave the Library the manuscript of his “Zweite (indianische) Suite, Op. 48,” a gift that inspired the Music Division to begin collecting original manuscripts and first editions of preeminent American composers. Sonneck’s successor, Carl Engel, continued the Library’s association with the Colony through Marian MacDowell, who worked prodigiously to support the Colony’s mission during her lifetime. In 1969, the official records of the Colony were given to the Library, making it the primary resource for researchers and scholars interested in the Colony’s history and development.

Librarian of Congress James H. Billington states, “As the repository for the nation’s creativity, the Library of Congress is pleased to mark The MacDowell Colony’s Centennial by featuring many of the artists who were in residence at the Colony over the course of a century. The documents on view provide intriguing glimpses of the creative energy and inspirations of a number of distinguished figures in American arts and letters.”

Cheryl Young, executive director of The MacDowell Colony, adds, “We are delighted that the Library of Congress, with its historical links to the Colony and its founders, organized this special tribute in honor of MacDowell and its far-reaching cultural impact. We hope visitors to the gallery and online presentation will enjoy the treasures, such as the letter to Mrs. MacDowell from a young Thornton Wilder, who wrote *Our Town* and sections of *The Bridge of San Luis Rey* at the Colony; stunning prints by Colony Fellows Janet Fish and Robert Cottingham; Aaron Copland’s original score for *Billy the Kid*, including a colophon showing that the composer worked on it while in Peterborough; and the script of *Porgy*, signed by its creators DuBose and Dorothy Heyward, who were among the first artists to collaborate on a work while at the Colony.”

For the exhibition, the Library has drawn from the Edward and Marian MacDowell Collection in the Music Division, the records of the Colony in the Manuscript Division, and unparalleled holdings of the Library’s Prints and Photographs and Rare Book and Special Collections Divisions. The exhibition is made possible through the generous support of Lehman Brothers.

Special Events, Publication

Throughout the run of the exhibition, the Library will present special complementary events celebrating MacDowell. These will include poetry readings, author talks, tours, a film series, and concerts.

On the occasion of its Centennial, the Colony has published a hardcover book, *A Place for the Arts: The MacDowell Colony, 1907–2007*, which explores the MacDowell legacy with personal perspectives on the Colony experience written by acclaimed MacDowell Fellows, an essay on the vital role of art in civil society written by MacDowell Chairman and noted broadcast journalist and author Robert MacNeil, and a history of the Colony from its origins to the present day by exhibition curator Ms. Rausch. Edited by architectural historian and MacDowell President Carter Wiseman, the 240-page book combines 14 diverse texts with approximately 140 vintage and newly commissioned photographs. The publication will be available in the Library's sales shop.

The MacDowell Colony

Founded by Edward and Marian MacDowell in 1907, The MacDowell Colony soon became a major force for creativity in America. Based on the simple idea that creative people work best when they have time, space, privacy, and the opportunity to interact with fellow artists, MacDowell has for the past century provided individual studios as well as living accommodations to more than 6,000 writers, visual artists, composers, playwrights, filmmakers, architects, and interdisciplinary artists who have gone on to chart the course of the nation's artistic life.

Located on 450 wooded acres in Peterborough, New Hampshire, MacDowell awards 250 Fellowships each year and has welcomed artists from 49 states and 50 nations. The sole criterion for acceptance is talent. In 1997, the Colony was given the National Medal of Arts, the country's highest honor, "for nurturing and inspiring many of this century's finest artists."

Throughout 2007, the Colony is marking its Centennial with a national celebration of creativity that, in addition to the Library of Congress exhibition and the book, includes an original film, a traveling film series, performances of Colony Fellows' work nationwide, and special events for Colony Fellows, friends, and supporters. For more information on The MacDowell Colony and the Centennial, please visit www.macdowellcolony.org.

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For information on MacDowell Centennial events and *A Place for the Arts*, contact Libby Mark, lmark@jcollinsassociates.com, or Lucy O'Brien, lobrien@jcollinsassociates.com, at Jeanne Collins & Associates, LLC, 646-486-7050.

For press information on the Library of Congress and its exhibitions and programs, contact Audrey Fischer, afis@loc.gov, 202-707-0022.

For additional press information on The MacDowell Colony, contact Brendan Tapley, Communications Director, The MacDowell Colony, btapley@macdowellcolony.org, 603-924-3886, ext. 108.