The MacDowell colony

Artists

Executive Director
Cheryl A. Young

Quotable

"I fell in love with MacDowell; the sheer beauty of the surrounding countryside and nearby lakes; the long, tranquil hours in the library; the privacy of one’s own work space; and the sense of community and warmth at meals. For any writer or artist, this provides a much-needed opportunity to hear oneself think, to work undistracted, with a sort of focus that is almost impossible in the outside world."

—Writer Oliver Sacks on his recent MacDowell Fellowship, during which he revised a book in progress about vision and the brain, to be published by Knopf in 2011. His most recent book, Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain, recently inspired a NOVA documentary called Musical Minds.

Prized Poets

September brought great news for two MacDowell poets who received major awards for their work. The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation named poet Jean Valentine as one of its 24 MacArthur Fellows for 2009. The five-year fellowship, which comes with a “no strings attached” pursuit of $500,000, is given to “exceptional men and women of all ages and in all fields who dream, explore, take risks, invent, and build in new and unexpected ways in the interest of building a better future for all of us,” according to MacArthur President Robert Gallucci. A three-time MacDowell Fellow, McHugh—who has authored eight volumes of poetry—has been the Millman Distinguished Writer-in-Residence at the University of Washington in Seattle since 1984.

MacDowell poet Jean Valentine was selected as the recipient of the 2009 Wallace Stevens Award from the Academy of American Poets. Recognizing “outstanding and proven mastery in the art of poetry,” the award comes with a monetary prize of $100,000. The author of 11 books of poetry, Valentine has received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Bunting Institute, and the Rockefeller Foundation. She has had a total of 12 residencies at MacDowell, the most recent of which concluded in June.

Jean Valentine

NATIONAL CHILDREN’S MUSEUM GOING GREEN

Colony Fellow Fred Clarke’s architectural firm, Pelli Clarke Pelli, has been chosen to design the new National Children’s Museum at National Harbor in Prince Georges County, Maryland. Scheduled to open in 2013, the 150,000-square-foot, LEED-certified building will, according to museum representatives, “serve as an active teaching tool by highlighting the accomplishments of children, using recycled and sustainable materials, and celebrating the natural environment.” Plans for the new building include a wind turbine, a sun reflector, a “green” roof system, and an outdoor courtyard. The museum— which will house exhibits related to the environment, health, play, civic engagement, and the arts—is projected to attract roughly 400,000 visitors annually.

1 The Pelli Clarke Pelli-designed National Children’s Museum will provide seamless interaction between exhibits, programs, and activities.
Screen Shots

After opening the Film Comment Selects series at Lincoln Center in February, Michael Almereyda’s latest film, Paradise — a documentary comprised of footage captured over a span of 10 years in nine different countries — was presented at MoMA in September. A four-time MacDowell Fellow, Almereyda worked on a screenplay about social psychologist Stanley Migran during his 2009 residency.

Monadnock as Muse

MacDowell Fellows often gain inspiration from the Colony’s serene and peaceful setting. This is perhaps one reason why they also frequently return to the Monadnock region to share their work. A total of seven MacDowell composers made their way back to New Hampshire this summer to participate in concerts and offer lectures as part of this year’s Monadnock Music Festival season. On July 9th, Joan Tower was the guest speaker at a free concert held at the United Congregational Church in Sullivan. George Tsontakis offered commentary at the Jaffrey Center Meetinghouse on July 12th (where his Third Piano Quartet was also played), while Melissa Wagner did the same at a concert that featured her Four Settings at the Peterborough Town House on July 25th. At the same location the following day, Jonathan Elliott, Stephen Jaffe, Caroline Mallonee, and Eric Moe shared new songs they’d composed based on poems by 1992 MacDowell Medalist, Richard Wilbur.

MacDowell’s local contacts provided an abundance of subject matter for photographer Maria Levitsky during her residency last fall. Driven by her self-professed “long-standing interest in historical industrial architecture,” Levitsky took photographs of a number of historic buildings in the region, many of which she located with the help of MacDowell staff members. “I’m always on the lookout for interesting sites offering intriguing photographic opportunities,” says Levitsky, who photographed the Jaffrey and Harrisville mill buildings during her previous residency in 2005. “This time, she mapped shots inside numerous local barns, as well as the Pandora Mill in Manchester and Frye’s Measure Mill in Wilton. “My photography is very hands-on, using techniques and processes of the 20th century, so I feel a very strong connection and affinity with the relics of the industrial and farming era of this country,” explains Levitsky. “Because so many of these structures that are still standing are being transformed for other uses, there is an urgency to catch them in the in-between state — when they are empty and the true astonishing beauty of their construction is revealed. ” An exhibit of Levitsky’s work, Chimney Dance and Other Photographic Compositions, was held from May to September at Deborah Bere & Partners Architects in New York.

New and Notable

We gratefully accept donations of Fellows’ artwork, books, music, films/videos, photographs, and other work for the Colony’s Savidge Library collection. Below is a selection of some works that were recently donated and/or created in whole or in part at the Colony.

BOOKS

JESSICA ANTHONY

The Conventual, fiction

MICHAEL DENNIS BROWNE

What the Poem Wants: Prose on Poetry, nonfiction

ANDREA COHEN

Long Division, poetry

RICHARD CONNERNEY

The Upside-Down Tree: India’s Changing Culture, nonfiction

ROBIN CRESSWELL

The Visitor, fiction

JILL DOWNEN

Hard Hat Optional, nonfiction

DOUG DUBBS

All the Days and Nights, nonfiction

JUDITH DUPLAIX

Monuments: American Art in Memory, nonfiction

JULIE METZ

Perfection: A Memoir of Betrayal and Renewal, nonfiction

D. MURKSE

The Border Kingdom, poetry

MARY JO SALTER

Open Shutters, poetry

TAUKE SILVERMAN

Houses Are Fields, poetry

NOVA-REN SUMA

Dan Noir, fiction

LIZ WALDNER

Trust, poetry

DRAMA

ALAN BERKS

They Want, play

BARBARA FRASER

Dog Park Philosophy, play

MUSIC

DUBOSE HEYWARD

Dr. Seuss: Porgy and Bess, CD
As nine, each Colonist drifts off to a studio, a little house a quarter of a mile from most of the other studios, set in deep pine woods, with views of hills and mountains, and doesn’t see another human being until five o’clock. His lunch is brought by a cart and left on his doorstep without knocking. . . . One is caught by the contagion of concentration; a little routine is set up, and finally even I, the reluctant author, write a few pages daily.”

An Orchestral Engagement
In New York on June 18th, the work of three MacDowell Fellows was featured at the debut performance of the Orchestra of the League of Composers at Columbia University’s Miller Theatre. The concert — which featured the work of master composers alongside that of up-and-coming contemporary classical musicians — was hosted by WNYC’s John Schaefer, who interviewed the evening’s featured composers, including Alvin Singleton, Julia Wolfe, Charles Wuorinen, and 1983 MacDowell Medalist, Elliott Carter. The evening’s offerings included a performance of Wolfe’s Vermeer Room, along with the world premieres of Wuorinen’s Synaxis, and Singleton’s Alter Choice — the first piece to be commissioned by The League of Composers in decades. The League, which was founded in 1923, aims to “engage audiences by presenting performances of new music of the highest caliber written by emerging and established living composers.”
Artistic Airs

Mime, a new public artwork by noted collaborators Andrew Ginzel and Kristin Jones, was unveiled in early October at the Richmond Heights Metral.Ink Station in St. Louis, Missouri. Commissioned by the St. Louis Metro Arts in Transit program, the stainless-steel sculpture — which is 32-feet high and more than 22 feet in diameter — integrates three elements that operate together in response to shifting air currents and the changing light of its environment. “A fundamental sense of wonder at the perception of time and the natural world motivated us to construct a contemplative work aimed at magnifying a sense of place and present,” the artists explain. “Mime explores the intersection of time and natural phenomena . . . It celebrates the spirit and energy of the site as it reflects and reveals its surroundings.”

Mime, stainless steel, 32’ high x 22’ diameter, 2009, by Andrew Ginzel and Kristin Jones.

Craig Arnold. In May, the search for 41-year-old poet Craig Arnold was called off in Japan after authorities tracked him to the edge of a dangerous cliff. Reported missing in late April, he is presumed to have died as the result of a tragic hiking accident. An assistant professor at the University of Wyoming, he was the author of two books of poetry: Shells (1999), which was selected for the Yale Series of Young Poets, and Made Flesh (2008). At the time of his death, Arnold was in Japan with the U.S.–Japan Creative Artists Exchange. He had a residency at MacDowell in 2004.

Merce Cunningham. Renowned choreographer and 2005 MacDowell Medalist Merce Cunningham died on July 26th in Manhattan. Credited with revolutionizing modern dance theatre, he was widely considered one of the world’s greatest choreographers. A dancer first and foremost, he studied modern dance and theatre at the Cornish School in Seattle, and ballet at the School of American Ballet. The main dancer of his own choreography for decades, he founded the Merce Cunningham Dance Company in 1953. Heavily influenced by such things as the nature of change, the idea of independence, and Zen Buddhism, his collaborative work with composer John Cage and painter Robert Rauschenberg was revolutionary, with the music, dance, and visuals created separately, and the dancers knowing little about their costumes or sets until the dress rehearsal or opening night. Known even in his final years as an avant-garde artist, Cunningham enjoyed staging performances in unconventional spaces and using elements outside of their original contexts. In 1999, at the age of 80, he danced a duet with Mikhail Baryshnikov at Lincoln Center. He was 90.

Joseph Packales. Two-time MacDowell Fellow Joseph Packales died on September 30, 2008, at the age of 60. A composer whose work was performed at various venues internationally, he taught music at Skidmore College, Cleveland State University, the University of Texas, and the University of Southern Maine. He also taught private courses on music composition and theory. In 2007, the 86-member Borusan Philharmonic Orchestra performed his symphony Tour/Retour in Istanbul, Turkey. He had residencies at MacDowell in 1972 and 1973.

George Perle. Composer George Perle died in Manhattan on January 23rd. A composer for chamber ensembles, orchestra, solo instruments, and voice, he was most widely known as a theorist and an authority on 12-tone and serial methods of atonal composition — a subject he wrote about frequently. Heavily influenced by the work of Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern, and Alban Berg, he won the Pulitzer Prize in Music for his Wind Quintet No. 4 in 1986. A three-time MacDowell Fellow in 1958, 1959, and 1969, he was also the recipient of a MacArthur Foundation fellowship. He was 93.

Nan Robertson. Writer and reporter Nan Robertson died on October 13th in Rockville, Maryland. She was 83. Recognized for her honesty and candor in writing about personal struggles, she won a Pulitzer Prize in 1983 for her feature “Toxic Shock,” an article published in The New York Times Magazine about her battle with toxic shock syndrome. She was the author of two books: Getting Better: Inside Alcoholics Anonymous (1988), a narrative about her recovery from alcoholism; and The Girls in the Balcony (1992), which detailed the fight for equality in the workplace by female employees of The New York Times, where Robertson had worked as a reporter since 1955. She was a two-time MacDowell Fellow.

John Updike. Acclaimed writer and 1981 MacDowell Medalist John Updike died on January 27th in Danvers, Massachusetts. He was 76. As diverse as it was prolific, his work includes short stories, poetry, essays, criticism, and novels — the best-known being his quartet of novels about Harry Rabbit: A distilled version of The Centaur and Two Pulitizer Prizes: one in 1981 for Rabbit Is Rich and another in 1991 for Rabbit at Rest. His 1984 novel, The Witches of Eastwick, was made into a film starring Jack Nicholson, Cher, Susan Sarandon, and Michelle Pfeiffer. In all, he published a total of 60 books in his lifetime, the most recent being My Father’s Tears and Other Stories, which was released in June.


Pew’s for Two

MacDowell visual artists Marc Brodzik and Daniel Heyman were both awarded a 2009 PEW Fellowship in the Arts in early June. Aiming to provide economic freedom to Philadelphia-area artists so they can “focus on their individual practices over a consider- able period of time,” the PEW fellowships — which run from a minimum of one year to a maximum of two — each come with a cash award of $60,000. Brodzik (who received a fellowship in media arts) and Heyman (who applied in the works on paper category) were selected from a pool of nearly 400 applicants this year for a PEW — the largest grant of its kind in the United States for which individual artists can apply.
Over a century of evolving aesthetics and movements, The MacDowell Colony has nurtured the innovations and talents of more than 1,700 visual artists. These talented printmakers, photographers, painters, sculptors, and installation artists have all come to the Colony for singular and collective reasons: the unusual New Hampshire light; the particular privacy of its spacious studios; or the community of peers from other disciplines, which serve to directly enrich their own work. Since Achsah Barlow Brewster painted her first canvas in 1908, Benny Andrews, Milton Avery, Robert Cottingham, Heide Fasnacht, Qin Feng, Glenn Ligon, Faith Ringgold, and Stephen Shore, among many others, have followed, each defining and contributing to this artistic laboratory for the sake of the culture outside it.

This Medal Day, MacDowell awarded its Medal in visual arts to another pioneer who has redefined the culture: Kiki Smith. Said Lynne Tillman — writer, critic, MacDowell Fellow, and this year’s Medal Day presentation speaker: “Kiki Smith’s influence on contemporary art and culture is immeasurable. In under 30 years, Smith has invented an identifiable language all her own. She has touched materials and forms and transformed them, their grammar. Her art, its ideas, her commitment to art’s necessity and the process of making it, is formidable and astonishing and revelatory. Her impact was immediate and is enduring. Her art has shaken things up — especially received ideas — and keeps doing so.”

It is perhaps unsurprising but no less appropriate that the Colony shares this aim with its 50th Medalist: a commitment to not only art’s necessity, but also to art that shakes things up and endures.

We invite you to read through our Medal Day section, which features Tillman’s and Smith’s remarks, as well as a stirring speech given by MacDowell President Carter Wiseman. We also include special coverage of the visual artists who were in residence during Medal Day, and profile a few whose work first saw the light of day at the Colony before appearing in current venues around the world. Enjoy!
THANK YOU. I want to thank the MacDowell community very much for giving me this award, and I want to thank Lynne Tillman, also, for her beautiful words and her beautiful friendship. One of the titles of one of her books was Living With Contradictions, which has been my motto for trying to assemble my life. I thought getting a medal — it puts you in the lineage of other creative people, and that’s something. Many artists are living in their own heads, in their own houses, and their own hearts, so it’s very nice to be reminded that we are in a lineage. We are in a community, all of us, in the lineage of creativity and the world, and that’s something that we all can access freely at any time in our lives.

I just came from New Mexico, from working in a shop making prints, and I thought, well, as you’re sleeping in this bed where all these other people for 50 years have been sleeping in this bed, or some version of this bed, making prints . . . And I’m thinking, Oh, it’s like here. Like America was predicated on these utopian communities. Then I thought, it’s like, sleeping here, where you have this utopian community that’s based on temporariness, where people are transient, coming and going. So it’s like all these people sleeping in the beds of prior creative people, and maybe some of that’s rubbing off on them, or they’re accessing that. Then I think, New York is like that, too, or maybe it’s like the same thing. That you have a form that stays the same, but then there’s transience and movement within that form. That, maybe, is what makes it stable — is that it gets to be removed, like creativity, which generationally gets to be renewed and revealed.

The only thing I would say is that I hope that future recipients of this award are not only of European descent, because our creativity in America is much broader than that. But I’m very privileged and honored to be here, and very excited to be in New Hampshire.

Thank you very much.
for questions, doubt, ambivalence, and joy. The artist’s sense and sensibility, ideas, skill, psychology, beliefs, gender, religion . . . all of her life has led her toward what she wants to make and put into the world. Her artwork realizes itself when it appears before viewers whose vision and experience create its various meanings. The greatness of art has, historically, relied upon the range of interpretations viewers find in a work, each era redefining it on its own terms. And though art may hang on walls or sit on floors or be pasted on billboards, it functions in us. It works in us.

Kiki Smith’s influence on contemporary art and culture is immeasurable. In under 30 years, Smith has invented an identifiable language all her own. She has touched materials and forms and transformed them, their grammar. Her art, its ideas, her commitment to art’s necessity and the process of making it, is formidable and astonishing and revelatory. Her impact was immediate and is enduring. Her art has shaken things up — especially received ideas — and keeps doing so.

Smith’s work is frank and tender, brutal and compassionate. It seeks to communicate without having any particular message. Her application of a material is unique, almost mysterious, as if Smith is discovering its special properties as she works like an alchemist with paper, glass, bronze, papier-mâché. In her hands — and she is a very hands-on artist, her hands are always at work — glass becomes sperm, a teardrop, a drop of blood. A sculpture of a human body turns light as a sparrow in papier-mâché, or heavy as a black hole in bronze. She innovates in textiles and others of the so-called homely arts, and remakes their missions. By incorporating them into her practice, she challenges the division between domestic and public spaces, between high and low art. Her work is tactile and tangible and solid, and also nearly invisible and fragile and ephemeral.

In 1980, I think it was, Kiki showed me some paintings from a series she called Severed Limbs. She’d painted an arm, a leg, each separate on a board — separate limbs in hard, bright colors. Weird, severe, and charming, Severed Limbs gave me a hint of what was to come. In 1982, at The Kitchen, an alternative music space in New York, she produced work for a small show entitled Life Wants to Live. That sentence, “Life wants to live,” also augured things to come. It contained her philosophy about human endurance, about all of nature facing multitudes of obstacles. The body, she says, makes incessant demands. It has cycles independent of a person’s will and attitudes. And what we do is try to survive.

Smith’s first solo gallery exhibition in New York was in 1988 at The Fawbush Gallery. I attended the opening. The gallery was crowded; everyone was very excited — something new was happening. In a way, Smith had gone back to basics, peeling away and revealing the body, focusing on its interior spaces. Things were inside out. Two pieces especially come to mind. Called Untitled, though it relies
But before Kiki decided to be an artist, almost as if to ward off the inevitable, she learned plumbing, EMT, carpentry, and electrical work. And parts of that knowledge are also in her art. And her house is often under construction.

With her Fawbush show, Smith mapped her territory — the body — and for some years afterward, she revamped, reimagined, and newly represented, in particular, the female body. She took on the female subject as it had been portrayed in all previous art history. Her female figures were abject; they crawled on the floor, one with dark glass beads trailing from her rectum, one with yellow glass beads splayed on the floor from her urethra, glass urine pooling everywhere. They were melancholy, blessed, ethereal. They were neither heroes nor victims. They were survivors of all kinds of wars, internal and external.

Two sculptures from 1992 demonstrate Smith’s canny and uncanny approaches. One called Virgin Mary is a flayed body made from beeswax and cheesecloth and wood. It stands about five-and-a-half-feet high. Mary’s arms hang slightly splayed on the floor from her urethra, glass urine pooling everywhere. They were melancholy, blessed, ethereal. They were neither heroes nor victims. They were survivors of all kinds of wars, internal and external.

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The MacDowell Colony

Under the Rainbow

This past spring, artist Jinnie Seo opened her impressive end of the Rainbow installation at the Mongin Art Center in Seoul, South Korea. But it was in the winter of 2008, in Alexander Studio, that this large-scale stunner began. “Being completely secluded in the midst of a monochromatically serene landscape at MacDowell, my creative mind also became devoid of cluttered thoughts,” writes Seo. “In the end — and through this lucid problem solving — I was left with the essence of my desire to explore space: spatial relationship and spatial movement.”

Seo’s treatment of space is striking indeed and offers a paradox of liberation and construction that both focuses one’s mind and frees it. The installation creates labyrinth-like passages where the diagonal lines of steel fence and curvaceous steel bands intersect, offering unusual entry into the temporal and spatial realms. These passageways then become points of encounter between what Seo calls “the artist’s and the viewer’s cognition.”

The viewer roams through, contemplating endlessly changing multiperspective views of intersecting spatial lines. Contrary to its title, which implies the traditional definition of a colorful presentation of a rainbow, the installation is purposely achromatic, emphasizing the elasticity of steel. Consequently, the perception of the material also becomes redefined. Moire-like effects and rhombus shapes offer an additional gravity-defying experience.

The rainbow as symbol is also intentional, reinforcing Seo’s exploration of perspective. As it turns out, an actual rainbow will seem farther away the more one tries to reach its end. And two people standing in two different spots never see the same rainbow because the phenomenon depends on the relationship between the viewer’s position and the sun. These playful oppositions provoke a point: “We cannot ever reach the end of a rainbow to discover a golden pot,” says Seo. “and similarly, it is doubtful that there is such an answer waiting at the end of the Rainbow. But it is always the human progression towards the unattainable that is laudable.”

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sculpture, Getting the Bird Out, is a bronze head that lies on the floor, a piece of string coming from its open mouth, at the end of which is a bronze bird. It’s a little wicked. Both works are handled very differently, formally and conceptually. Mary is more than naked; she is stripped of flesh. The bronze head is spitting out a secret, or vomiting a burden, or realizing a kind of renewal. I think of the head as a haiku.

Kiki Smith is thoroughly engaged in art history, the history of iconography, and the language of materials, and also in words and narratives. She has used poems by Emily Dickinson and collaborated with contemporary poets, such as MeiMei Bersenbrugge. She plays with fairy tales.

In 2001, Smith made an installation for the International Center for Photography in New York City based on the fairy tale Little Red Riding Hood. She sculpted a wolf in bronze; its head raised up; a small, red, cloth glove gripped in its mouth. There was a sculpture in papier-mâché of Little Red Riding Hood in a red cape, her face bearded.

Humans and animals, part animal/part human creatures, Little Red Riding Hood in a red cape, her face bearded.

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Animal Energies

It may seem odd to keep expired birds in your freezer, but Kate Javens has resorted to this as a way of getting it right. The “it” in this case is her Named For series, which takes obscure but pivotal figures in American history and endows their spirits or essences, if you will, into paintings of animals. Take Andrew Fursest, a labor leader of the 1930s, immortalized on canvas as a crow. Or Benjamin Drew, an abolitionist who interviewed former slaves who had come through the Underground Railroad — he is painted as a horse swimming in (against?) the ocean.

Though Javens lives in New York, her husband’s family owns a farm outside Bath, Maine. It is this locale, and others, that have provided barn swallows and other inspirations, first for her camera (she often photographs an animal hundreds of times to study its features), then for her needle and thread (to position the subject for her brush), and finally for her canvas, where the animals are re-animated and often reborn in haunting fashion.

As it happens, the only living person Javens has painted for the Named For series is legal scholar Derrick Bell, whom she met at MacDowell. Next for Javens is setting up her own studio in Harlem, where a small bit of MacDowell might inspire new installments in a series that combines art and history with the aim of making art history.
but the danger has not passed. Only eight years ago, the Taliban blew up the 1,500-year-old Buddhas of Bamiyan in Afghanistan because they offended the group’s interpretation of Islam. And in recent months, the leaders of Iran have threatened writers who oppose them with the usual “appropriate measures.”

You are, by your presence at MacDowell, helping to protect art from such threats, even if that art may be confusing or offensive. If you are not sure of your role here, remember that virtually every important artist in history confused or offended someone in power — whether a dictator, a congressman, or an ayatollah. But when we measure the stature of a nation’s culture, we inevitably turn to the works of those formerly confusing and offensive artists.

When I was working on a book about the architect I. M. Pei, a former MacDowell Medalist, he was overseeing the construction of his Bank of China building in Hong Kong. In the middle of it all, the students of Beijing rebelled, and many were shot down by tanks. I asked Pei, as a native of China, how he felt about working for a government that had turned murderous. With deep sadness in his voice, he replied, “Regimes come and go; culture endures.”

MacDowell endures to help artists perpetuate the culture to which Pei referred. In these woods, they are free from outside influence and pressure. Because of this protection, the artists who work at MacDowell may well produce the works by which future generations measure us as a nation.

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AboUt thE ARtiSt:

Ju-yeon Kim

ABOUT THE WORK: Recently, Nick Lamia has been working on a series of maps, which he regards as visual records of the discoveries of man. “While most of the earth’s surface has been mapped,” he says, “there still remain vast expanses of unknown around us — in science, in nature, and in thought.” Of particular interest to Lamia are the uncharted spaces where technology and nature overlap and where the relationship between nature and society is in flux. He sees these unknown territories as pivotal to a sustainable future. “As we confront a worldwide environmental crisis of our own making,” writes Lamia, “the importance of exploring and sharing our findings cannot be overstated.”

ABOUT THE ARTIST: Lamia’s work has appeared in numerous solo and group shows. Most recently, he was included in The Brand New Deal at Caren Golden Fine Art in New York and Midnite Snacks at Ghostprint Gallery in Richmond, Virginia. A graduate of the University of California-Berkeley and Boston University, he received a Guggenheim fellowship in 2003 and is currently a fellow at the Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop in New York. He is also a director at Von Lintel Gallery in New York. Lamia is a first-time MacDowell Fellow.

AboUt thE ARtiSt:

Ju-Yeon Kim

ABOUT THE WORK: Ju-Yeon Kim is currently working on a series of enclosed room installations with a recurring theme of bardo, a Tibetan word for an in-between state. There are three intermediate bardo states that a person undergoes right before and after death. “It is the second state — where reality reveals itself, when one’s body, including sensations, perceptions, and emotions, disintegrate — that interests me,” she writes. “In this process of the spirit separating from the body, one experiences differing psychological states and moments of extreme clarity.”

ABOUT THE ARTIST: Kim has shown in both solo and group exhibitions nationally and internationally in such places as New York, Washington, D.C.; Shanghai, China; and Seoul, South Korea. She has been the recipient of several prestigious residencies, including the Triangle Artists’ Residency Program and the Roswell Artist-in-Residence Fellowship. Kim has also held several positions as a visiting artist and professor. She is currently working on installations for the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C., and Savannah College of Art and Design in Georgia. She lives in Brooklyn, New York, and is a first-time MacDowell Fellow.
GILLIAN PEARS

ABOUT THE WORK: Gillian Pears’s work focuses on the breach of boundaries between the familiar and imagined, revealing conditional human emotions. “I am focusing on a body of work that intends to evoke the elusive nature of place and metaphor,” she says. “During my residency at MacDowell, Alexander Studio provided the needed space to further develop the use of light, color, and materials in my photographic work. Through intensive exploration of these elements within that space, I discovered new ways to intertwine physical space with metaphor.”

ABOUT THE ARTIST: Pears holds an MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art, and an M.S.Ed from the University of Pennsylvania. She has been the recipient of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Graduate Fellowship and the Merit Scholarship at Cranbrook Academy of Art. She is a first-time MacDowell Fellow.

BILL JACOBSON

ABOUT THE WORK: In 2007 and 2008, Bill Jacobson traveled to several desert locations in the American West. His interest was neither landscapes nor deserts, but rather to look for places in nature where he could create, photographically, something approximating two equal rectangles. “The relationship between the symmetry of geometry and the asymmetry of nature had always intrigued me,” he says. “During my recent stay at MacDowell, I spent most days placing a 30 x 40-inch piece of foam core at different points in the woods, using the camera to record the resulting patterns of light and shadows.”

ABOUT THE ARTIST: Jacobson began taking photographs as a teenager. Since graduating from Brown University and the San Francisco Art Institute, he has had numerous solo shows throughout North America and Europe. His work is included in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the Victoria and Albert Museum, and many others. There are three monographs of his work: A Series of Human Decisions (Decode Books, 2009), Bill Jacobson Photographs (Hatje Cantz, 2005), and 1989-1997 (Twin Palms Publishers, 1998). In 2010, Jacobson will be included in an exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery in Washington, D.C. He is represented by the Julie Saul Gallery in New York, and is a five-time MacDowell Fellow.

The MacDowell colony

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STE菲ANIE SNIDER

ABOUT THE WORK: Stephanie Snider’s work often takes the form of drawings, paintings, collage, and sculpture, and deals with personal memory and history, as well as social and cultural space through the lens of fictional architecture and design. In her recent works, she has created fictional landscapes that draw from fairy tales, historical decorative arts, literature, and theatre. These fictional places evoke a physical landscape as well as a psychological state. “Much of the imagery that I use is present in both my two-dimensional and three-dimensional work, and each process inspires the other. The ‘back and forth translation/conversation’ explores notions of depth, layering, composition, and space,” writes Snider.

ABOUT THE ARTIST: Snider lives and works in New York. She received her MFA from the Yale School of Art, and her BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD). In 2000-2001, she was the recipient of the Berlin Prize/Philip Morris Emerging Artist Prize in cooperation with the American Academy in Berlin. She is the recipient of a Guggenheim fellowship for 2009-2010. Her work has been exhibited widely at such venues as the Bronx Museum and the Hudson River Museum in New York, and Galerie Thomas Schulte in Berlin, Germany. She has taught at RISD, Princeton University, Maryland Institute College of Art, Ohio University, and Yale. She is a first-time MacDowell Fellow.
Since Delta Omicron generously funded its construction in 1927, the studio has served more than 100 Delta Omicron members, including the fraternity's board of directors. Under the proposed renovation, the studio will evolve to accommodate the spatial and acoustical needs of contemporary composers and will be updated to serve another century of artists.

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Hargest and Kron Join Board

In May, Tana Hargest was elected president of the Fellows Executive Committee and joined MacDowell's board of directors. An interdisciplin- ary artist whose work "uses humor, technology, and the language of consumer culture to investigate the hierarchies of power, race, and class," Hargest has received a Rockefeller Foundation Media Arts Fellowship, an NYSCA Individual Artist Grant, a Jerome Foundation Grant, and a Creative Capital Grant, among other awards. Her work has been shown around the world at such venues as the Walker Art Center, MassMoCA, and MIT's List Visual Art Center. A 2003 MacDowell Fellow, she has worked as an arts educator and administrator for more than a decade at such organizations as the Bronx Museum of the Arts, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Art121, and the Elizabeth Foundation for the Arts.

Lisa Kron also joined MacDowell’s board this fall. Kron has been writing and performing theatre since coming to New York from Michigan in 1984. Among her plays are the Tony-nominated Well and the Obie Award-winning 2.5 Minute Ride. She is a founding member of the OBIE and Bessie Award-winning theatre company, The Five Lesbian Brothers, and has received awards, fellowships, and grants from such organizations as the Guggenheim and Creative Capital Foundations, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Sundance Institute, the New York Foundation for the Arts, and the CalArts/Alpert Foundation. Kron, who had a residency at MacDowell in 1995, is currently a lecturer in playwriting at the Yale School of Drama.
MacDowell Downtown

6.9.09
Writers Sara Marcus and Lara Vapnyar shared excerpts of their writing, including Marcus’s work-in-progress Riot Grrrl: Feminism, Culture Wars, and the Punk Rock Birth of Girl Power and Vapnyar’s latest collection of stories, Broccoli, and Other Tales of Food and Love.

7.26.09
Writer and illustrator Brian Selznick presented his Caldecott Medal-winning book, The Invention of Hugo Cabret, and offered a fun and thought-provoking talk on visual storytelling.

9.4.09
Architect and artist Fritz Haeg presented his recent work: Edible Estates, an ecological movement that aims to transform residential lawns into edible landscapes; and Animal Estates, an initiative that creates dwellings for animals displaced by humans.

10.2.09
Nancy Kates screened her work-in-progress Regarding Susan Sontag, a feature-length documentary examining the life of the famed essayist, novelist, and activist.

11.6.09
MacDowell screened an annual favorite, the 1954 Hallmark Hall of Fame film about the genesis of the Colony, Lady in the Wings.

Santa Fe Sojourn
On July 22–25, 2009, MacDowell board members and patrons visited Santa Fe, New Mexico — one of the world’s premier cultural destinations — to experience contemporary art and works by Colony Fellows, including the world premiere of Pulitzer Prize-winning composer Paul Moravec’s opera The Letter. In addition, collectors and patrons opened their homes for guests to view artwork in dynamic architectural settings surrounded by the area’s mountain scenery.

The MacDowell group also explored historical and contemporary Native American art at the School for Advanced Research. At the Georgia O’Keefe Museum Research Center, the Emily Fisher Landau Director, Barbara Buhler Lynes, discussed the work of Georgia O’Keefe, New Mexico’s most famous artist and the recipient of the 1972 Edward MacDowell Medal. Colony guests also toured O’Keefe’s Ghost Ranch, as well as her home and studio in Abiquiu. Trip participants met with Colony Fellows working in New Mexico at the Santa Fe Art Institute, where Executive Director Diane P. Karp and artists-in-residence joined them for a program featuring readings and a performance of contemporary indigenous dance by artist Rulan Tangan. Visual artists May Stevens and Harmony Hammond hosted visitors at their studios.

At the Santa Fe Opera, a backstage tour and opening night dinner preceded the premiere performance of The Letter, the first opera by Moravec, who collaborated with writer and librettist Terry Teachout.

For information about MacDowell’s 2010 national trip, please contact Director of Development Wendy Belser at 212-535-9690 or visit www.macdowellcolony.org.

MacDowell in the Schools

5.14.09
Sculptor John Bisbee invited art students from ConVal to visit Heinz Studio and interact with his works-in-progress. Art teachers Ben Putnam and Mary Goldthwaite also attended.

7.23.09
Composers Paul Brantley and Andrew Norman played selections of their work and answered questions for a group of aspiring composers from The Walden School.

10.5.09
Writer Cecil Castellucci offered a writing work-shop for ConVal High School creative writing and journalism students.

Other Outreach

5.7.09
Leadership New Hampshire met in Savidge Library before visiting John Bisbee in his studio.

5.20.09
Composer Yotam Haber visited with members from Leadership Monadnock and discussed the residency experience.

7.15.09
The Arts Satellite Network, a group of representatives from arts organizations throughout the state, met at MacDowell.

Fellowships

Clockwise from top left: architect David Serlin, writer Farnoosh Fathi, writer Eileen Myles, interdisciplinary artist Donald Byrd, playwright Frances Cowig, and composer Lisa White.

From May through October, 2009, The MacDowell Colony welcomed a total of 124 artists from 19 states and four countries. This group included 51 writers, 21 visual artists, 18 theatre artists, 13 composers, eight interdisciplinary artists, seven filmmakers, and six architects.

JONATHAN AARON, writer
CAMBRIDGE, MA

DONALD AUSTIN, writer
Brooklyn, NY

KRA APPLEYARD, architect
Brooklyn, NY

ANNE BAKER, theatre
Brooklyn, NY

DAVID BARKER, filmmaker
Brooklyn, NY

JAN BARTLETT, writer
Philadelphia, PA

ALAN BEERS, theatre
Mississippi, MS

CHANTAL BLEDIGUE, theatre
New York, NY

JOHN BISBE, visual artist
Brunswick, ME

ROBERT BLOUGE, writer
Indianapolis, IN

THERESA BLISS, visual artist
Brooklyn, NY

MATT BONDURANT, writer
Philadelphia, PA

PAUL BRANSTLER, composer
New York, NY

MATTHEW BURBINE, visual artist
Mesa, AZ

DONALD BYRD, interdisciplinary artist
Seattle, WA

DEREK BYNARD, visual artist
San Antonio, TX

JENNIFER CHANG, writer
Charleston, SC

ADAM CHASTIN, theatre
Berkeley, CA

LEON CHIESTE, visual artist
Troy, NY

CATHERINE CHUNG, writer
New York, NY

HENRY COB, architect
New York, NY

ANDRE COHEN, writer
Watertown, MA

PATRICIA COHEN, writer
New York, NY

FRANCES CONNIN, theatre
Austin, TX

DOUG COTE, theatre
New York, NY

GREG COTTON, artist
Austin, TX

BRIAN CULHANE, writer
Seattle, WA

NATHAN CURRIT, composer
Greenwood, VA

KRISTINE CURRITON, interdisciplinary artist
San Diego, CA

SHARON DILL, writer

STEPHEN DUNN, visual artist
Frederick, MD

JUDITH DURRE, architect
Mamaroneck, NY

DAVID EBBINGHAUS, writer
Chapel Hill, NC

BARBARA ESS, visual artist
San Diego, CA

ELIZABETH EVANS, theatre
Providence, RI

FARAH FATHI, visual artist
Mountain View, CA

MICHAEL FAULK, writer
Iowa City, IA

CHANDA FELDMAN, writer
San Francisco, CA

JENN FISG, visual artist
Richmond, VA

SAM FISHBACK, theatre
Brooklyn, NY

JOHN FITZ ROGERS, composer
Cape, SC

PETER FLAKELER, interdisciplinary artist
Brooklyn, NY

BARBARA FRASIER, theatre
San Jose, CA

HEINER FRAZER, theatre
Brooklyn, NY

ELISABETH TRIST, writer
New York, NY

JENNIFER GILMORE, writer
San Francisco, CA

ELIZABETH GRIENER, writer
Lincoln, NE

SAM GREEN, filmmaker
San Francisco, CA

OTAKU HABER, composer
Brooklyn, NY

FRED HAAS, architect
Los Angeles, CA

EMILIE HAUPTER, visual artist
Los Angeles, CA

BAND SEUL HAN, interdisciplinary artist
Royal Oak, MI

DANIEL HANDLER, writer
San Francisco, CA

LOU HAN, visual artist
Oslo, MN

LAURA HEST, filmmaker
Los Angeles, CA

KYTHE HELLER, writer
Somerville, MA

KEITH HENNESSY, interdisciplinary artist
San Francisco, CA

ELEANOR HODGON, writer
Nice Springs, Australia

MEREDITH HUGHES, filmmaker
Baltimore, MD

MIKE HULLIBUR, composer
South Nyack, NY

CATHERINE HONG, writer
New York, NY

BILL JACOBSON, visual artist
Brooklyn, NY

MAYA JAGADITY, writer
Cambridge, MA

CHIHO JOHANSON, visual artist
Detroit, MI

NICK JONES, theatre
Brooklyn, NY

ILYA KAMINSKY, writer
San Diego, CA

JOEL KATZ, filmmaker
Woodstock, NY

DAN KAUFMAN, composer
Brooklyn, NY

ELLEN KAUFMAN, writer
New York, NY

DAVID KEENEY, composer
Cuesta Mesa, CA

WILLIAM LASMON, interdisciplinary artist
Brooklyn, NY

ALLISON LANDA, writer
Berkeley, CA

JAMES LAYNE, theatre
New York, NY

JANINE LEWIS, visual artist
New Castle, DE

SAM LEECH, filmmaker
San Francisco, CA

YUHAN LIM, composer
Brooklyn, NY

MISSY MAZZZOLI, composer
Brooklyn, NY

MAUREEN MCLEAN, writer
New York, NY

SINTENIA MEDAS, performance artist
San Francisco, CA

SIMON MILLAR, architecture
Austin, TX

EILEEN MIYELS, writer
New York, NY

JU-JU REYNOLDS, writer
Brooklyn, NY

DOMINIC OLANDO, theatre
Minneapolis, MN

MEGAN D’OURRUE, writer
Brooklyn, NY

ED PAUL, writer
Athens, GA

GILLIAN PEARL, visual artist
Philadelphia, PA

JOHN PIEJMEJER, theatre
Garrard, NY

MARTIN RITMEYER, filmmaker
Buenos Aires, Argentina

MIRA ROSENTHAL, writer
Jacksonville, FL

OLIVER RANSON, writer
New York, NY

YUJI SAKATA, writer
Jaxson Heights, NY

ELISABETH SCHULMAN, writer
Camden, ME

CHRISTINA SEELER, visual artist
San Francisco, CA

BRIAN SELZNER, writer
Brooklyn, NY

DAVID SERLIN, architect
Los Jada, CA

MARINA SHIRVIN, theatre
New York, NY

JUDITH SHOREMAN, visual artist
New York, NY

STEPHANIE SNIDER, visual artist
Brooklyn, NY

HOUYN SON, interdisciplinary artist
Kitching, FL

SARA MARCUS, writer
Brooklyn, NY

LAURA MARRIOTT, writer
Brooklyn, NY

BRENDA MILLER, writer
Brooklyn, NY

HANS THOMASSA, composer
Wilton, CT

GREGORI TSONTARIS, composer
Istanbul, FL

CHRISTOPHER TURNER, writer
Brooklyn, NY

KEN URBAN, theatre
Cambridge, MA

JEAN VALENTINE, writer
New York, NY

RYAN VAN METER, writer
Iowa City, IA

LARA VANPAVAR, writer
Staten Island, NY

SUZANNE WALLS, visual artist
New York, NY

LIZA WHITE, composer
Jerusalem Plains, MA

DYLAN WILLUSCHER, writer
Studio City, CA

STEVEN WINTER, interdisciplinary artist
Long Island, NY


The MacDowell Colony awards Fellows to artists of exceptional talent, providing time, space, and an inspiring environment in which to do creative work. The Colony was founded in 1907 by composer Edward MacDowell and Marrian MacDowell, his wife. Fellows receive room, board, and exclusive use of a studio. The sole criterion for acceptance is talent, as determined by a panel representing the discipline of the applicant. The MacDowell Colony was awarded the National Medal of Arts in 1997 for its “nurturing and inspiring many of this country’s finest artists. Applications are available on our Web site: www.macdowellcolony.org.

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Associate Editor: Karen Sampson
Design and Production: John Half Design Group, Beverly, MA
All photographs not otherwise credited: Joanna Elkez-Masaryak
Printed: Swashbuckling Printing, Danvers, MA

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The names of MacDowell Fellows are noted in bold throughout this newsletter.

On the Cover…

The Experience of Green, red Kraft paper and wood, dimensions variable, 2009, by Wade Kavanaugh and Stephen Nguyen.

This Fall, Wade Kavanaugh, who co-created this work at the MacArt program (see page 8), and collaborator Stephen Nguyen filled the D.U.M.b.o. Arts Center (DAC) in Brooklyn, NY, with their installation, The Experience of Green. The exhibition transformed the organic and built environment of the area’s brick- and-glass setting against a fantastical forest of tree made from red paper. “The color persists as an optical after-image,” said the artists, “accentuating the relationship between experience and memory, landscape and longing, nature and the sublime.”

The Colony is grateful for the generous support of the following organizations:

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