

MacDowell

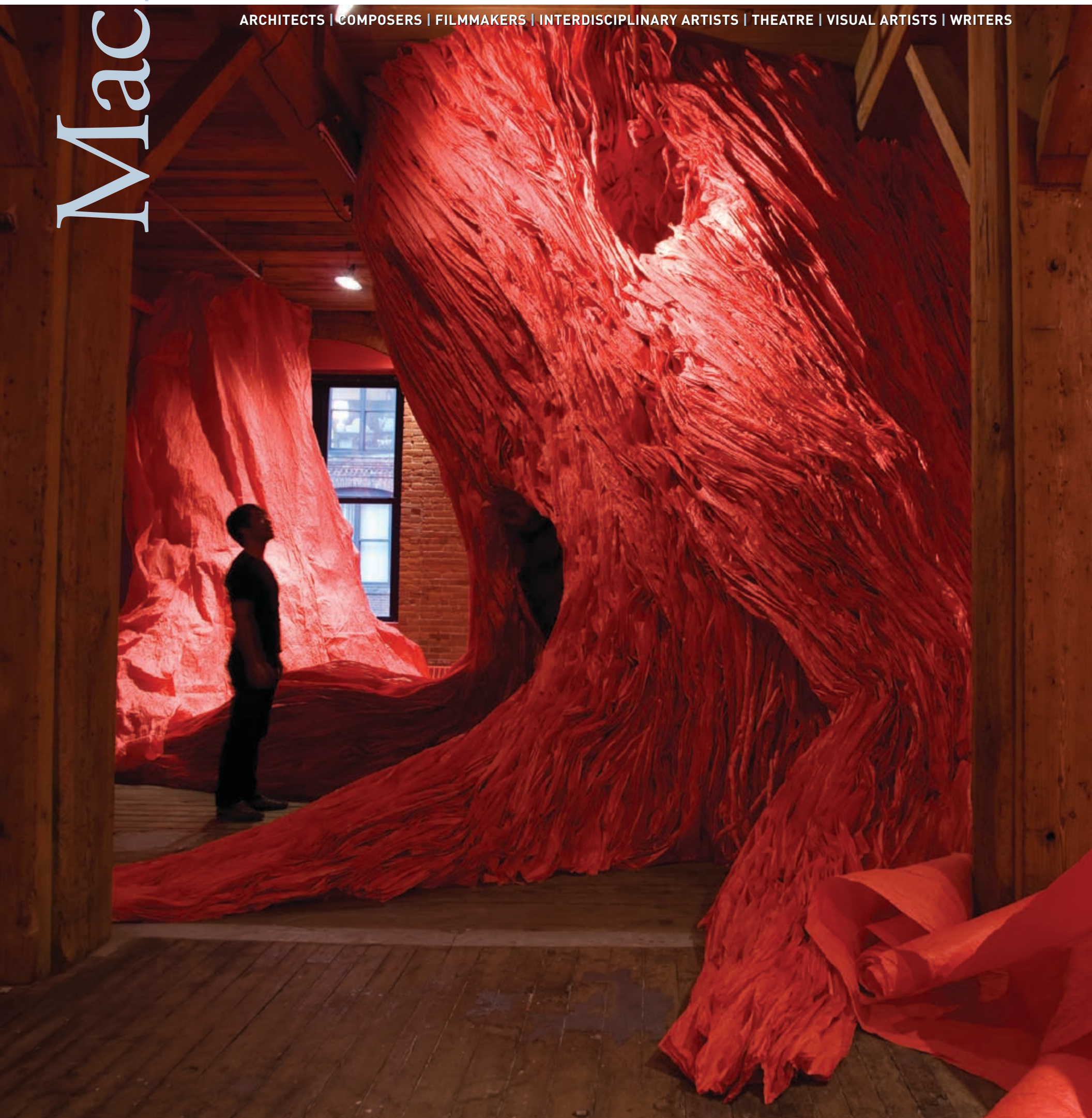
FREEDOM TO CREATE

Vol. 38, No.2 Winter 2009

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ARCHITECTS | COMPOSERS | FILMMAKERS | INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTISTS | THEATRE | VISUAL ARTISTS | WRITERS



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Artists

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Lines of Communication



WILL THE WORLD GO PAPERLESS AND WIRELESS? READERS AND AUTHORS ALIKE WONDER WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE PRINTED WORD, and everyone, not just those involved with the media, are looking to transform themselves and the way they communicate. MacDowell is no different. We are working hard to adapt in order to get the best out of technology. To that end, after much research and thought, MacDowell established pages on Facebook and Twitter. Along with our e-News, which is delivered directly to the in-boxes of more than 5,000 subscribers each month, our online communications are multifaceted, informative, and “green.” These tools also allow us to engage readers with current news and reach new audiences.

Paperless communications also offer fiscal advantages. Given the current economy, and because the Colony is always looking for ways to conserve funds, we weighed whether we could sustain a printed newsletter. In the end, however, we decided we couldn’t afford *not* to. For those who want to know what MacDowell is doing and appreciate an in-depth look at how we are doing it, the biannual newsletter remains a much-anticipated touchstone. Indeed, Mrs. MacDowell issued regular print reports replete with information about the Colony’s work so that the fledgling organization gained credibility and understanding, and attracted the support it needed to transform how artists work in this country. The MacDowell newsletter is a report, but it is also a glimpse into the vitality of art, even during tough times.

This issue takes a closer look at visual art at MacDowell, and it is quite amazing to see the power and richness generated from simple materials such as paper, glass, bits of string, or paint. Not all that different, when you think about it, from the power and richness that comes from words and images printed on a page. We hope you enjoy reading about the wide range of creative accomplishments by MacDowell artists made possible with your help. For all the other news items that we couldn’t include here, join us on Facebook!

CM Y 7

Cheryl A. Young
Executive Director

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 **Heather McHugh** as one of its 24 MacArthur Fellows for 2009. The five-year fellowship, which comes with a “no strings attached” purse 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 Galluci. 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

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 Milgram during his 2009 residency.



Julie Reichert (center) and Steve Bogнар (right) filming *The Last Truck*.

Steve Bogнар and **Julia Reichert** put the finishing touches on their most recent project, *The Last Truck*, earlier this year. A short documentary about the closing of a General Motors plant in Ohio, the film — which has gained staunch support from the country’s displaced auto workers — was broadcast on Labor Day as part of HBO’s Summer Documentary Series. It also screened at the Telluride Film Festival in early September.

HBO has also laid claim to another narrative created by a MacDowell Fellow: The cable network has optioned *Middlesex*, the Pulitzer Prize-winning book by **Jeffrey Eugenides**, with the intent of developing a one-hour series based on it.

And the nonfiction book *East to the Dawn*, written by Colony Fellow **Susan Butler**, is credited as one of the inspirations behind *Amelia* — the feature film about Amelia Earhart that was released in theaters in October. Starring Hilary Swank, Ewan McGregor, and Richard Gere, the biopic was directed by acclaimed filmmaker and former MacDowell board member, Mira Nair.

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 **Melinda 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 Mallonée**, and **Eric Moe** shared new songs they’d composed based on poems by 1992 MacDowell Medalist, Richard Wilbur.

MacDowell’s local environs 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 snapped 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 Berke & Partners Architects in New York.

Top: The Pandora Mill in Manchester.
Bottom: Frye’s Measure Mill in Wilton.



MARIA LEVITSKY (2)



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, LED-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 600,000 visitors annually.

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



NATIONAL CHILDREN’S MUSEUM

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	<i>The Convalescent</i> , fiction
MICHAEL DENNIS BROWNE	<i>What the Poem Wants: Prose on Poetry</i> , nonfiction
ANDREA COHEN	<i>Long Division</i> , poetry
RICHARD CONNERNEY	<i>The Upside-Down Tree: India’s Changing Culture</i> , nonfiction
ROBYN CRESSWELL	<i>The Visitor</i> , fiction
JILL DOWNEN	<i>Hard Hat Optional</i> , nonfiction
DOUG DUBOIS	<i>All the Days and Nights</i> , nonfiction
JUDITH DUPRE	<i>Monuments: American’s History in Art and Memory</i> , nonfiction
JULIE METZ	<i>Perfection: A Memoir of Betrayal and Renewal</i> , nonfiction

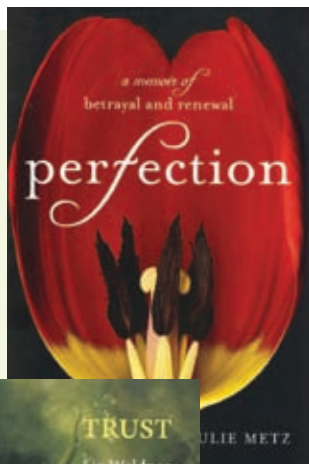
D. NURKSE	<i>The Border Kingdom</i> , poetry
MARY JO SALTER	<i>Open Shutters</i> , poetry
TAJJE SILVERMAN	<i>Houses Are Fields</i> , poetry
NOVA REN SUMA	<i>Dani Noir</i> , fiction
LIZ WALDNER	<i>Trust</i> , poetry

DRAMA

ALAN BERKS	<i>They Want</i> , play
BARBARA FRASER	<i>Dog Park Philosophy</i> , play

MUSIC

DUBOSE HEYWARD	<i>Gershwin: Porgy and Bess</i> , CD
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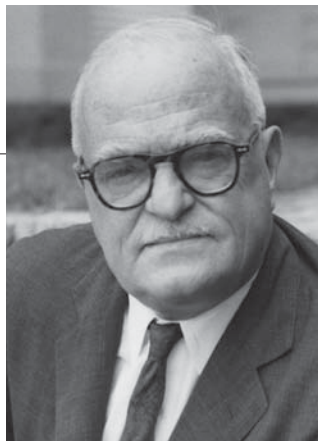
COURTESY PHOTOS (2)

Artists

QUOTABLE

“At 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.”

—Writer **Thornton Wilder**, July 24, 1929, talking about the experience of a MacDowell residency. Excerpted from *The Collected Letters of Thornton Wilder* (HarperCollins, 2008), edited by Robin G. Wilder and Jackson R. Bryer.



ARCHIVAL PHOTO



Composer **Alvin Singleton** outside Watson Studio in 2007.

An Orchestral Engagement

In New York on June 10th, 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 premiere of Wuorinen’s *Synaxis*, and Singleton’s *After 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.”

Artist Awards, Grants, and Fellowships

ANTHONY BARILLA	<i>Map Fund Grant</i> , Bluefinger
LESLEE BECKER	<i>Spirit of Moondance Short Story Award</i> ~ Moondance Film Festival, Wicked
STELLA BETTS	<i>Emerging Voices Award</i> ~ The Architectural League
JENNIFER CLEMENT	<i>Thornton Writer-in-Residence</i> ~ Lynchburg College
LISA D'AMOUR	<i>Map Fund Grant</i> , How to Build a Forest
BARBARA ESS	<i>Richard Florsheim Art Fund Studio Award</i> ~ The Space Program
EVAN FALLENBERG	<i>Barbara Stonewall Gittings Award for Literature</i> ~ American Library Association, Light Fell
	<i>Edmund White Award for Debut Fiction</i> ~ The Publishing Triangle, Light Fell
ANDREW SEAN GREER	<i>PEN/O. Henry Prize Story</i> , Darkness
MARILYN HACKER	<i>PEN Award for Poetry in Translation</i>
RICHARD HAYES	<i>Visiting Fellowship</i> ~ University of Cambridge Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences, and Humanities
ANNE LANDSMAN	<i>M-Net Literary Award for English Fiction</i> , The Rowing Lesson <i>Sunday Times Fiction Prize</i> , The Rowing Lesson
NAM LE	<i>Australia Prime Minister’s Literacy Award for Fiction</i> , The Boat
YOUNG JEAN LEE	<i>Map Fund Grant</i> , King Lear
DAVID LEVEN	<i>Emerging Voices Award</i> ~ The Architectural League
KIRSTEN SUNDBERG LUNSTRUM	<i>PEN/O. Henry Prize Story</i> , The Nursery
NAMI MUN	<i>Whiting Writers’ Award</i>
JASON NODLER	<i>Map Fund Grant</i> , Bluefinger
TOM PIAZZA	<i>Willie Morris Award for Southern Fiction</i> , City of Refuge
ANNE SANOW	<i>Drue Heinz Literature Prize</i> , Triple Time <i>Nelson Algren Short Story Award</i> , The Grand Tour
STEVEN SATER	<i>Map Fund Grant</i> , Prometheus Bound
SARAH SCHULMAN	<i>Kessler Prize</i> ~ Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies
SALVATORE SCIBONA	<i>Whiting Writers’ Award</i>
CLAIRE SHERMAN	<i>The Space Program Grant</i>
KAREN SHERMAN	<i>McKnight Artist Fellowship for Dancers</i> ~ The Southern Theater
ELIZABETH TUBERGEN	<i>American-Scandinavian Foundation Fellowship</i> <i>Fulbright Fellowship</i> ~ U.S. Department of State
FRANCES WHITE	<i>Map Fund Grant</i> , Tracing
NATASHA WIMMER	<i>PEN Translation Prize</i>
KARLA WOZNIAK	<i>The Space Program Grant</i>

EVERY YEAR, The MacDowell Colony delivers vital creative support to artists, filling them with a sense of affirmation that often leads to breakthroughs in their work and careers. Each Fellowship to the Colony holds this promise, whether the artist is emerging or widely acclaimed.

Now, artists are counting on MacDowell residencies in unprecedented numbers. Applications to the Colony this calendar year are up 20 percent from 2008. This increased demand reflects the stress the slumping economy has placed on the creative community, as artists face diminished resources. MacDowell is responding by reducing and deferring expenditures while still trying to schedule as many residencies as possible. With your help, the Colony’s tradition of offering comprehensive support for artist residencies will be sustained.

To give, please visit our Web site at www.macdowellcolony.org to make a secure donation online, or contact Britton Matthews, development assistant, at bmatthews@macdowellcolony.org or 212-535-9690 for more information.

Please help to fulfill the promise of our society’s most talented artists by making a gift to MacDowell today.



ANDREW GINZEL

Mime, stainless steel, 32’ high x 22’ 2” diameter, 2009, by **Andrew Ginzel** and **Kristin Jones**.

Artistic Airs

Mime, a new public artwork by noted collaborators **Andrew Ginzel** and **Kristin Jones**, was unveiled in early October at the Richmond Heights MetroLink 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.”



Daniel Heyman in Putman Studio in 2007.

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 considerable 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.

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 85-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 Angstrom: *Rabbit, Run*; *Rabbit Redux*; *Rabbit Is Rich*; and *Rabbit at Rest*. He received many prestigious awards over the course of his career, including a National Book Award in 1964 for his novel *The Centaur* and two Pulitzer 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.



ELLEN FOSQUE JOHNSON

A TRADITION OF SUPPORT

“With national arts funding impossible to find, MacDowell gave me newfound hope for my own work and for American respect toward cultural producers in general.”

—**Caroline Woolard**, interdisciplinary artist

Visualizing MacDowell

MEDAL DAY 2009

A LOOK AT THE VISUAL ARTS AS MEDAL DAY TURNS 50

PRESENTATION SPEAKER

LYNNE TILLMAN

WITH SPECIAL PLEASURE, I'm very happy and privileged to introduce and honor Kiki Smith, who has been, in addition to everything else she is, and fortunately for me, a close friend since 1978. I've also had the good fortune to watch her develop into one of the leading artists of her generation — one of the most significant artists in contemporary art. And I want to thank MacDowell for asking me to speak about Kiki Smith and her contribution to art, and also for allowing me to be a Fellow here seven times, when I did a lot of writing, and no writing, and visited Colony Hall a lot, and made phone calls, and bothered people in the office.

Kiki Smith makes sculpture, drawing, photographs, installations, multiples, one-of-a-kind objects, in two dimensions, three . . . I can't think of a medium or form she hasn't tried. Smith's art investigates, plunders, reveres, and revises myths, spirituality, art history, women in history, poetry, feminism, religion — her own Catholicism mixes with Buddhism, paganism, deism, and pantheism, I think. She explores sexuality, social mores, violence, fear, horror, finding ways to conjure images of the anguish, pleasures, and vicissitudes of life in an anatomy not only of bodies but also of daily existence, of how we live our lives. There may be many silicon bronze crows lying on a floor but there is, as in every object she makes, much more

I've had the good fortune to watch her develop into one of the leading artists of her generation.

than meets the eye. What hovers below consciousness is being beckoned; the things that act on us without our knowing are being awakened.

An artist is recognized for producing a significant body of work when — because of and through it — a space has opened up, in aesthetics, in thought generally, in imagining, in feeling, in people's finding a greater capacity for understanding, and a greater allowance or encouragement

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!



ELLEN PAGE WILSON/COURTESY PACEWILDENSTEIN, NEW YORK



KERRY IRAN MCFATE/COURTESY PACEWILDENSTEIN, NEW YORK



ELLEN LABENS/COURTESY PACEWILDENSTEIN, NEW YORK

Artwork by Kiki Smith. *Left to right: Constellation*, glass and bronze on Nepal paper, installation dimensions variable, 1996; *Born*, bronze, 3' 3" x 8' 5" x 2", 2002; *Sleeping Girl*, bronze, overall installation approximately 44" x 55" x 2 1/4", 2004.



Top: Visual artist Kiki Smith addresses the Medal Day crowd. Above: Picnickers at Medal Day. Left: Smith accepting the Medal from MacDowell Chairman, Robert MacNeil.

MEDALIST

KIKI SMITH

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

*We are in a community,
all of us, in the
lineage of creativity
and the world.*

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.]

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

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



Presentation speaker **Lynne Tillman** (left) and Medalist Kiki Smith in Savidge Library.

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

on naming, made in 1987, one installation was comprised of 12 large bottles — glass, water-cooler-sized containers — labeled Blood, Tears, Semen, Saliva, Oil, Milk, Sweat, Pus, Mucus, Urine, Diarrhea, and Vomit. The 12 sat on a table — 12 bottles, 12 months. It's the body we don't see, or the one we hide and can't control. There was *Ribs*, also from 1987, a pair of human ribs made of white terra-cotta sewn together with thread and hung from nails, as delicate as the huge jars were heavy and brooding. A piece of the body's structure was a strikingly vulnerable entity.

Smith produces in so many media and in so many materials that the fact she has said of herself that she doesn't have any particular talent boggles the imagination almost as much as her art. But in a way, Kiki Smith couldn't help

Her art, its ideas, her commitment to art's necessity and the process of making it, is formidable and astonishing and revelatory.

but become an artist, though she didn't decide to be one until her mid-20s. Her father was the acclaimed sculptor and architect Tony Smith, and her mother, Jane Smith, was an opera singer and actor who appeared on Broadway

in the original *Oklahoma* and *Charley's Aunt*. I knew Jane Smith for many years. She died on August 5, 2006. Jane was an elegant, unusual, intelligent, and beautiful woman. Kiki once had a loft in an isolated building on the East River, very far downtown, when the South Street seaport area was abandoned and still salty. One night, Kiki had a party, and when her mother, Jane, decided to leave, I asked if I could have a lift. I was scared to walk around and find a cab or subway. We went outside. It was very dark, and to me it felt ominous. Jane looked toward the East River and declared, "Doesn't Kiki have the most romantic front yard in New York?" Jane Smith was exceptional in all ways.

Kiki grew up in New Jersey in a Victorian house, but filled with talk about contemporary art, and with visitors that

included Barnett Newman and Mark Rothko. Her sister, Seton Smith, knew from [the age of] 12 that she wanted to be an artist, and her resonant and subtle photographs of interior spaces and architectural forms are exhibited around the world.

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 played 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 away from her body, her palms open to receive, head bald, eyes cast down modestly. It's an unnerving piece. The other

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Make Art

As part of the 50th anniversary

of Medal Day, the Colony wanted to offer a memorable art-making experience to guests. Envisioned by sculptors and Colony Fellows **John Bisbee** and **Wade Kavanaugh**, the Make Art program began three days before the event with the assembly of a steel armature donated by Belletete's, a hardware store in Peterborough. With a generous grant from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation — as well as help from the Sharon Arts Center, several volunteers, many donors of yarn, and, finally, the great enthusiasm of the Medal Day crowd — the site-specific sculpture grew each day, knot by knot, string by string, until a vibrant network became a stand-alone sculpture.

On Medal Day, young and old spent minutes and sometimes hours contributing to the sculpture by taking a skein and weaving it around the armature, connecting their string with another's, or dramatically tossing yarn over the framework to see where it would go on its own. Lit from beneath at night, the Medal Day sculpture was a colorful symbol of how individual expression can unite all of us in creative, thought-provoking experiences.



Above: Volunteers participating in Make Art. Right: **John Bisbee** (left) and **Wade Kavanaugh**, co-creators of Make Art. Below: Make Art at night.



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Visual artist Louise Nevelson, the 1969 Edward MacDowell Medalist.



COURTESY PHOTO

Bearing Witness

In 1999, noted AIDS activist and art historian Robert Atkins wrote: "Art has always played a role in coming to terms with collective tragedy, and the role of the artist has frequently been to bear witness. Surely an art of memory like **Eric Rhein**'s can help harmonize our views by suggesting that honoring the past is one way to live more fully in the present." What Atkins is referring to is *The Leaf Project*, begun by Rhein out of his MacDowell Fellowship in 1996 and recently included as part of the Art in Embassies Program sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. *The Leaf Project* is currently on view at the ambassadorial residence in Cameroon, Africa.

When Rhein came to the Colony in 1996, he was adjusting to his return to health from the then-new HIV medications. Walking the fields and woods at MacDowell, he gathered autumn leaves, each invoking memories of a friend or acquaintance who had died from the epidemic. The actual leaves inspired facsimiles "drawn" in wire and named for the deceased individuals.

"*Leaves* was conceived through a mystical experience in the hills of New Hampshire," recounts Rhein. "While wandering MacDowell, I was moved to tears at being welcomed into that



COURTESY PHOTO

vibrant community when, not even a year before, my health would not have permitted the experience. My senses were acutely open, and one by one, I picked up leaves until a host of kinsmen was gathered in my arms, 86 in all. The 'portraits' were pinned to the wall like the limbs of an extended family tree."

Rhein has sustained the project for more than a decade now, and his collection has grown to more than 180 portraits, which serve as a moving reminder that, in order to honor memory, one must first never forget.

POLITICAL APPOINTMENTS

In early October, The White House released a list of 45 artworks selected by Michelle Obama for display at the first residence, including two works by MacDowell visual arts Fellows and three by past MacDowell Medalists. Borrowed from the National Gallery of Art and chosen for the Obamas' personal living quarters were: **Edward Corbett's** *Washington, D.C. November 1963 III*; **Glenn Ligon's** *Black Like Me No. 2*; Richard Diebenkorn's *Berkeley, No. 52*; Jasper Johns's *Numerals, 0 through 9*; and Louise Nevelson's model for her sculpture *Sky Covenant*.

VISUALIZING MACDOWELL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

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, emerged more and more. Smith departed from or shifted direction from the female body to the stories humans tell

and have told themselves for thousands of years to explain the unexplainable.

Smith is incredibly prolific. Everything she touches turns to art, so I can only describe a few works of hers and hope to give you an idea of her complex and manifold project.

Recently, Kiki Smith has been addressing death, not so much as a physical body but as the absence and loss of a body — the spirit and what remains after death — in drawings of imagined spaces and empty chairs, and portraits of seated and standing women with windows framing them. In addition to telling people she has no particular talent, Smith also tells everyone she can't draw, but her drawings are unique, modest, and honest. Honesty in art is hard to explain. Maybe I should say that the eye, mind, and hand of Kiki Smith are moving together, not holding back. The drawings seem to be direct transcriptions from the imagination of memories, of cherished objects that have been lost.

Kiki Smith keeps changing and questing and finding things out, and her work describes unseen and weird states of being. She's a daring artist. If you asked her, she'd say she's not brave. But she is. Being brave means, really, to work against fear. Her pieces don't arise from the desire to please or fit into a program; they result from a compulsion to delve into what

she cannot completely know. Her courage has been an over-coming that feeds her art as she reaches for the huge subjects and questions — the greatest we have. She boldly takes on taboos and sacred cows, but she also, just as boldly, doesn't concern herself with what's fashionable or unfashionable. She goes where she has to go to create images with which she orders and reorders her experience, and then ours.

In *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*, Freud said, "We can only laugh when a joke has come to our help." To paraphrase him, we only respond to art when it speaks to our wishes and hopes and fears and doubts and thoughts. A work of art reaches us — it helps us — because we need it.

So, we needed Kiki Smith. We need her work, brilliance, insights, wit, extraordinary talents, and her courage — which has encouraged so many of us. She goes to the heart of things with a good heart. Her peers, and younger and older artists, cite her work with awe. They rely on its generosity. And, returning to what makes significance and greatness in art, generosity is a big part of it. Work is generous when it generates. And hers does. Kiki Smith is and has been and will continue to be the most generative of artists, her work growing richer and richer in time, and with time, offering us more and more.]



PRESIDENT CARTER WISEMAN

AS YOU ALL KNOW, The MacDowell Colony opens its studios to the public only one day each year. The reason for this is to allow the artists to create with a minimum of interruptions. This is the day we all get to come through the gates together. And we are thrilled to have you all here. In other places and other times, this institution — along with what it produces: artists like Kiki Smith, and people like

you who support the Colony — would not have survived for long. Writing in 1994 in *The Rape of Europa*, Lynn H. Nichols reported that, ". . . on March 20, 1939, 1,004 paintings and sculptures and 3,825 drawings,

from museums and private collections all over Europe. Why this apparently contradictory behavior? I think it is evidence of the frightening power of art as both a threat and a resource. Totalitarians hate the uncontrolled nature

Totalitarians hate the uncontrolled nature of creativity. But they are no less aware of its enduring value, to both enrich and to inspire. The enrichment they are willing to exploit; it is the inspiration they fear.

watercolors, and graphics were burned as a practice exercise in the courtyard of the Berlin Fire Department's headquarters." In a more recent book, the historian Richard J. Evans describes scenes from the Nazi invasion of Russia: "The houses in which famous Russian cultural figures had lived were deliberately targeted: manuscripts at Tolstoy's Yasnaya Polyana were burned in the stoves, while the composer Tchaikovsky's house was trashed and army motorcycles driven over the musical manuscripts that littered the floor." Yet at the same time, such Nazi leaders as Hermann Goering were furnishing their hunting lodges with Cranachs and Dürers, while making deals on the side with what they themselves called "degenerate" art looted

of creativity. But they are no less aware of its enduring value, to both enrich and to inspire. The enrichment they are willing to exploit; it is the inspiration they fear. Happily for us, Edward and Marian MacDowell created the Colony 102 years ago to encourage inspiration. But they knew that the process needed protection. That is why MacDowell doesn't offer regular tours to see artists at work. It is why the artists who are opening their studios to you today are doing so voluntarily — not because they were told to. In 1649, Oliver Cromwell destroyed the Irish monasteries and their manuscripts, and 284 years later Hitler closed the Bauhaus. Those arch-vandals have long vanished,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

Under the Rainbow



end of the Rainbow, steel band, dimensions variable, 2009, by Jinnie Seo.



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 constriction 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."



Above: *Named For Derrick Bell*, oil on theatre muslin, 100" x 147", 2003, by Kate Javens. Left: The artist in her studio.

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 Furseth, a labor leader of the 1930s, immortalized on a 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.

GRANTS FOR 10 VISUAL ARTISTS

The Pollock-Krasner Foundation announced the recipients of its 2008–2009 grants for visual artists in September. Awarded based on artistic merit and financial need to painters, sculptors, printmakers, and artists who work on paper, the grants aim to help artists create new work, purchase needed materials, and pay for expenses such as studio rent and health insurance. This year's list of recipients included 10 MacDowell visual artists: Blane De St. Croix, Pang-Chieh Hsu, Wade Kavanaugh, Anthony Krauss, Julia Kunin, John Newman, Paul Santoleri, Carrie Scanga, Peter Schroth, and Jane South.



Wall; hand-cut paper, ink, and acrylic with wood structure; 15' x 14' x 3'; 2009; by Pollock-Krasner recipient Jane South.

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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

The artists who work at MacDowell may well produce the works by which future generations measure us as a nation.

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.

Think of it this way: You are not being kept out of MacDowell for 364 days a year; rather, for one day, you are participating in the mystery that yields our culture’s most powerful legacy — not our cars, our computers, or our cell phones, but our paintings, plays, symphonies, buildings, and all the works of art yet to come that too many people will want to destroy.

Thank you for supporting MacDowell. Whether you are inside or outside the gates, you stand in the way of the tanks.]



Ju-Yeon Kim opens her studio to Executive Director Cheryl Young (at left), Medalist Kiki Smith, and guests.

MEDAL DAY VISUAL ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE



NICK LAMIA

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.



Untitled, oil on canvas, 42” x 36”, 2009, by **Nick Lamia**.

COURTESY PHOTO

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.



Untitled, acrylic and paper cutouts on canvas, 54” x 54”, 2007, by **Ju-Yeon Kim**.

COURTESY PHOTO



COURTESY PHOTO



Untitled 2, digital C-print, 40” x 50”, 2009, by **Gillian Pears**.

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.



COURTESY PHOTO

Some Planes #436, archival pigment print, 47” x 36”, 2007, by **Bill Jacobson**.



STEPHANIE 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.



COURTESY PHOTO

Untitled (Berlin doorway); watercolor, gouache, pencil, and collage on paper; 6” x 6”; 2009; by **Stephanie Snider**.



COLONY HALL PORCH DEDICATED TO THE HELLERS

Over Medal Day weekend, The MacDowell Colony dedicated the new screened porch on the south side of Colony Hall to the late Rose "Red" Heller and her husband, Ernest "Pick" Heller. The Hellers were generous friends of the Colony and its artists. Mrs. Heller served on the board from 1980 until 2003; her total bequest to MacDowell exceeds \$1 million. In 2004, a portion of the bequest endowed the Ernest and Red Heller Fellowships, which support the residencies of two creative artists every year in perpetuity. A bronze plaque commemorating Red and Pick's generosity was installed on the porch. With its view of a pine grove and an abundance of light, the porch is a fitting tribute to the Hellers, who loved the outdoors and the creative energy of the Colony.



Yellowstone National Park's Old Faithful erupting in *The National Parks: America's Best Idea*.

From the Board

Board member Ken Burns's latest film, *The National Parks: America's Best Idea*, aired on PBS in September. The six-part, 12-hour series explores the history of America's national park system and profiles the people who devoted themselves to preserving precious parcels of land. Filmed over the course of six years, the film uses historical accounts, archival photographs, interviews, and what Burns says is the "most stunning cinematography in Florentine Films's history" to document the American landscape.

In other board news, the Chicago Goethe-Institut awarded the 2009 Helen and Kurt Wolff Translator's Prize to MacDowell board member John Hargraves on June 8th. Hargraves, who received the award for his version of Michael Krüger's *Turiner Komödie (The Executor)*, received \$10,000, along with the opportunity to spend one month at the Literary Colloquium in Berlin.



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Stay on top of the latest MacDowell news, events, and announcements by becoming a fan of The MacDowell Colony's recently launched Facebook page or signing up to receive our "tweets" on Twitter. Find us online and sign up today for frequent and personal access to the Colony!



A Drive to Renovate Delta Omicron

A campaign to revitalize Delta Omicron Studio began in July during the centennial conference of Delta Omicron International Music Fraternity. At the invitation of Kay Wideman, president of Delta Omicron Foundation, Inc., MacDowell's Resident Director David Macy presented renovation plans and a history of the studio to 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.

Since Delta Omicron generously funded its construction in 1927, the studio has served more than 480 artists. Originally designated for composers, the studio's use has expanded over the years to include artists of all artistic disciplines practiced at MacDowell. Novelist **Alice Walker**, poet **Stephen Dunn**, and playwright **Suzan-Lori Parks** all wrote there before winning Pulitzer Prizes; composers **George Tsontakis** and **Marilyn Shrude** have worked in the studio, as well.

MacDowell is seeking contributions from Delta Omicron members, artists who have worked in the studio, and the general public to fund the renovation project. Your support is welcome. To make a gift, please contact Wendy Belser, director of development, at 212-535-9690.

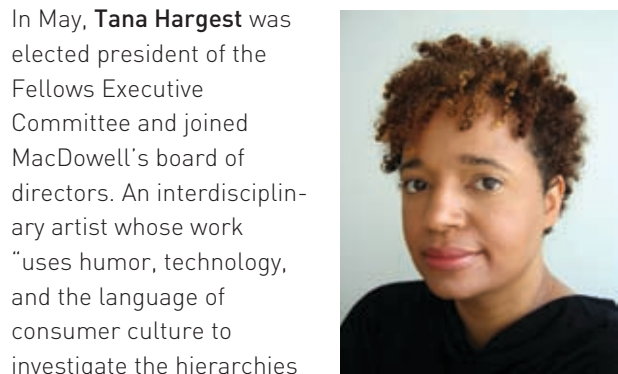


NEW FACES



Courtney Brecht
OFFICE ASSISTANT

COURTESY PHOTO



Tana Hargest



Lisa Kron

TANA HARGEST

SUSIE PAGE

In May, **Tana Hargest** was elected president of the Fellows Executive Committee and joined MacDowell's board of directors. An interdisciplinary 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, Art21, 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 Cal Arts/Alpert Foundation. Kron, who had a residency at MacDowell in 1995, is currently a lecturer in playwriting at the Yale School of Drama.



ANDREW GELLATLY



CHERYL YOUNG

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'Keeffe Museum Research Center, the Emily Fisher Landau Director, Barbara Buhler Lynes, discussed the work of Georgia O'Keeffe, New Mexico's most famous artist and the recipient of the 1972 Edward MacDowell Medal. Colony guests also toured O'Keeffe'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 R. Karp and artists-in-residence joined them for a program featuring readings and a performance of contemporary indigenous dance by artist Rulan Tangen. 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.

Top: Tears, glass, approximately 6" x 6", 1994, by Kiki Smith. Collection of Jean and Michael Klein. Bottom: A group of Santa Fe travelers stand before The Letter poster at the Santa Fe Opera.

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*.



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 workshop for ConVal High School creative writing and journalism students.

Left: Young readers gather for Brian Selznick's MacDowell Downtown. Above: The author presenting his award-winning book.

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 Cowhig**, and composer **Liza 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, <i>writer</i> Cambridge, MA	STEPHEN DUNN, <i>writer</i> Frostburg, MD	MAYA JASANOFF, <i>writer</i> Cambridge, MA	MEGHAN O’ROURKE, <i>writer</i> Brooklyn, NY
DONALD ANTRIM, <i>writer</i> Brooklyn, NY	JUDITH DUPRE, <i>architect</i> Mamaroneck, NY	CHIDO JOHNSON, <i>visual artist</i> Detroit, MI	ED PAVLIC, <i>writer</i> Athens, GA
KIRA APPELHANS, <i>architect</i> Brooklyn, NY	DAVID EBENBACH, <i>writer</i> Oxford, OH	NICK JONES, <i>theatre</i> Brooklyn, NY	GILLIAN PEARS, <i>visual artist</i> Philadelphia, PA
ANNIE BAKER, <i>theatre</i> Brooklyn, NY	BARBARA ESS, <i>visual artist</i> Elizaville, NY	ILYA KAMINSKY, <i>writer</i> San Diego, CA	JOHN PIELMEIER, <i>theatre</i> Garrison, NY
DAVID BARKER, <i>filmmaker</i> Brooklyn, NY	CHRISTINE EVANS, <i>theatre</i> Providence, RI	JOEL KATZ, <i>filmmaker</i> Woodstock, NY	MARTIN REJTMAN, <i>filmmaker</i> Buenos Aires, ARGENTINA
JAN BEATTY, <i>writer</i> Pittsburgh, PA	FARNOOSH FATHI, <i>writer</i> Mountain View, CA	DAN KAUFMAN, <i>composer</i> Brooklyn, NY	MIRA ROSENTHAL, <i>writer</i> Jacksonville, FL
ALAN BERKS, <i>theatre</i> Minneapolis, MN	MICHAEL FAUVER, <i>writer</i> Iowa City, IA	ELLEN KAUFMAN, <i>writer</i> New York, NY	OLIVER SACKS, <i>writer</i> New York, NY
CHANTAL BILODEAU, <i>theatre</i> New York, NY	CHANDA FELDMAN, <i>writer</i> San Francisco, CA	DAVID KECHLEY, <i>composer</i> Williamstown, MA	YUKO SAKATA, <i>writer</i> Jackson Heights, NY
JOHN BISBEE, <i>visual artist</i> Brunswick, ME	JENN FIGG, <i>visual artist</i> Richmond, VA	DAVID KIM, <i>writer</i> Costa Mesa, CA	ELISABETH SCHUMAN, <i>writer</i> Camden, ME
ROBERT BLEDSOE, <i>writer</i> Indianapolis, IN	DAN FISHBACK, <i>theatre</i> Brooklyn, NY	JU-YEON KIM, <i>visual artist</i> Brooklyn, NY	CHRISTINA SEELY, <i>visual artist</i> San Francisco, CA
THERESA BLOISE, <i>visual artist</i> Brooklyn, NY	JOHN FITZ ROGERS, <i>composer</i> Cayce, SC	NICK LAMIA, <i>visual artist</i> New York, NY	BRIAN SELZNICK, <i>writer</i> Brooklyn, NY
MATT BONDURANT, <i>writer</i> Plattsburgh, NY	PETER FLAHERTY, <i>interdisciplinary artist</i> Brooklyn, NY	WILLIAM LAMSON, <i>interdisciplinary artist</i> Brooklyn, NY	DAVID SERLIN, <i>architect</i> La Jolla, CA
PAUL BRANTLEY, <i>composer</i> New York, NY	BARBARA FRASER, <i>theatre</i> San Jose, CA	ALLISON LANDA, <i>writer</i> Berkeley, CA	MARINA SHRON, <i>theatre</i> New York, NY
KATARINA BURIN, <i>visual artist</i> Mason, OH	KERMIT FRAZIER, <i>theatre</i> Brooklyn, NY	JAMES LAPINE, <i>theatre</i> New York, NY	JUDITH SIMONIAN, <i>visual artist</i> New York, NY
DONALD BYRD, <i>interdisciplinary artist</i> Seattle, WA	ELISABETH FROST, <i>writer</i> New York, NY	JANAKI LENNIE, <i>visual artist</i> New Castle, NH	STEPHANIE SNIDER, <i>visual artist</i> Brooklyn, NY
DERIC CARNER, <i>visual artist</i> San Francisco, CA	JENNIFER GILMORE, <i>writer</i> Brooklyn, NY	SHARON LOCKHART, <i>filmmaker</i> Los Angeles, CA	HOYUN SON, <i>interdisciplinary artist</i> Chicago, IL
JENNIFER CHANG, <i>writer</i> Charlottesville, VA	ELIZABETH GRAVER, <i>writer</i> Lincoln, MA	KIRSTEN LUNSTRUM, <i>writer</i> Danbury, CT	EVA TALMADGE, <i>writer</i> Brooklyn, NY
ADAM CHANZIT, <i>theatre</i> Berkeley, CA	SAM GREEN, <i>filmmaker</i> San Francisco, CA	HEATHER MACDONALD, <i>theatre</i> New York, NY	BENJAMIN TAYLOR, <i>writer</i> New York, NY
LEONA CHRISTIE, <i>visual artist</i> Troy, NY	YOTAM HABER, <i>composer</i> Brooklyn, NY	YUTAKA MAKINO, <i>composer</i> Kanuma, Tochigi, JAPAN	TESS TAYLOR, <i>writer</i> Brooklyn, NY
CATHERINE CHUNG, <i>writer</i> New York, NY	FRITZ HAEG, <i>architect</i> Los Angeles, CA	SARA MARCUS, <i>writer</i> Brooklyn, NY	HANS THOMALLA, <i>composer</i> Wilmette, IL
HENRY COBB, <i>architect</i> New York, NY	EMILIE HALPERN, <i>visual artist</i> Los Angeles, CA	MISSY MAZZOLI, <i>composer</i> Brooklyn, NY	GEORGE TSONTAKIS, <i>composer</i> Shokan, NY
SCOTT COFFEL, <i>writer</i> Iowa City, IA	BANG GEUL HAN, <i>interdisciplinary artist</i> Royal Oak, MI	MAUREEN MCLANE, <i>writer</i> New York, NY	CHRISTOPHER TURNER, <i>writer</i> Brooklyn, NY
ANDREA COHEN, <i>writer</i> Watertown, MA	DANIEL HANDLER, <i>writer</i> San Francisco, CA	KATIE MERZ, <i>visual artist</i> Brooklyn, NY	KEN URBAN, <i>theatre</i> Cambridge, MA
PATRICIA COHEN, <i>writer</i> New York, NY	LOU HANEY, <i>visual artist</i> Oxford, MS	SMILJA MILOVANOVIC-BERTRAM, <i>architect</i> Austin, TX	JEAN VALENTINE, <i>writer</i> New York, NY
ALEXANDRA COLLIER, <i>theatre</i> Brooklyn, NY	LAURA HEIT, <i>filmmaker</i> Los Angeles, CA	EILEEN MYLES, <i>writer</i> New York, NY	RYAN VAN METER, <i>writer</i> Iowa City, IA
DAVID COTE, <i>theatre</i> New York, NY	KYTHE HELLER, <i>writer</i> Somerville, MA	JULIE NAGLE, <i>visual artist</i> Houston, TX	LARA VAPNYAR, <i>writer</i> Staten Island, NY
FRANCES COWHIG, <i>theatre</i> Austin, TX	KEITH HENNESSY, <i>interdisciplinary artist</i> San Francisco, CA	AIMEE NEZHUKUMATATHIL, <i>writer</i> Fredonia, NY	SUZANNE WALTERS, <i>visual artist</i> New York, NY
ROBYN CRESWELL, <i>writer</i> New York, NY	ELEANOR HOGAN, <i>writer</i> Alice Springs, AUSTRALIA	ANDREW NORMAN, <i>composer</i> New Haven, CT	LIZA WHITE, <i>composer</i> Jamaica Plain, MA
BRIAN CULHANE, <i>writer</i> Seattle, WA	MEREDITH HOLCH, <i>filmmaker</i> Hardwick, VT	D. NURKSE, <i>writer</i> Brooklyn, NY	DYLAN WILLOUGHBY, <i>writer</i> Studio City, CA
NATHAN CURRIER, <i>composer</i> Greenwood, VA	MIKE HOLOBER, <i>composer</i> South Nyack, NY	DOMINIC ORLANDO, <i>theatre</i> Minneapolis, MN	JOE WINTER, <i>interdisciplinary artist</i> Long Island City, NY
KRISTINE DIEKMAN, <i>interdisciplinary artist</i> San Diego, CA	CATHY PARK HONG, <i>writer</i> New York, NY		
SHARON DOLIN, <i>writer</i> New York, NY	BILL JACOBSON, <i>visual artist</i> Brooklyn, NY		

MacDowell

FREEDOM TO CREATE

The MacDowell Colony awards Fellowships 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 Marian 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 “nurturing and inspiring many of this century’s finest artists.” Applications are available on our Web site: www.macdowellcolony.org.

Chairman: Robert MacNeil
President: Carter Wiseman
Executive Director: Cheryl A. Young
Resident Director: David Macy

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

On the Cover...



COURTESY PHOTO

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 year’s Make Art 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 contrasted the organic and built environment of the area’s brick-and-glass setting against a fantastical forest of trees 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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