



CURATORS CORNER

Macdowell Artist Residency Program Announces Chiwoniso Kaitano As New Executive Director

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*Julie Bridgham photo, courtesy MacDowell*

On February 24, [MacDowell](#), one of the oldest and most distinguished artist residence programs in the United State, announced the selection of [Chiwoniso Kaitano](#) as its new executive director. Kaitano, who was born in Zimbabwe, previously served as the Girl Be Heard executive director, a non-profit that promotes social change via theatre and the performing arts. Midway through March, she will arrive at the Peterborough, New Hampshire, residency and succeed temporary director Philip Himberg.

Chiwoniso's nonprofit career has been dedicated to helping organizations at the forefront of arts and culture, social justice, youth education, and social services. Prior to joining Ifetayo, Chiwoniso served as the Director of the All for One Collaborative, a collective impact partnership spearheaded by three major Brooklyn-based Community Development Corporations; Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation, IMPACCT Brooklyn and Bridge Street Development Corporation. Under this initiative, Chiwoniso was charged with launching and implementing the All for One initiative, a collective impact project which focused on promoting economic mobility within low-resource communities of color in Northern Brooklyn.

Chiwoniso has long been involved in the arts scene including running the long-standing literary series The Salon, and founding Africa Redux a platform that promotes the art, culture and music of Africa. Chiwoniso also serves on the Board of Directors of three organizations: The Center for Fiction, The Brooklyn Conservatory of Music and the International Contemporary Ensemble.

Chiwoniso holds a law degree from the London School of Economics and a Masters in International Affairs from Columbia University's School for International and Public Affairs.



Julie Bridgham photo, courtesy MacDowell

Kaitano was chosen after an extensive search. In a statement, MacDowell board chair Neil Painter said Chi's knowledge, energizing and cooperative engagement methods, and inspiring leadership abilities "proved irresistible."

"This change in MacDowell's leadership follows an intense period of inquiry and innovation throughout the pandemic and recent social justice movements," said MacDowell board president Andrew M.

Senchak. Senchak pointed to MacDowell's decision to drop the word "Colony" from its name in the wake of the 2020 murder by police of George Floyd as the organization's board and staff worked to "examine our values and our governance, to strengthen and democratize our policies, procedures, and program."

"I look forward to working with the board and staff to sustain and grow funding and to build upon the extraordinary vision for artist support that Edward and Marian MacDowell articulated when they welcomed the first artists-in-residence," said Kaitano. "Imagining and joyfully meeting the ever-evolving needs of contemporary artists is how MacDowell can and will continue to be a pioneering champion for the value of the arts in our society."

Composer Edward MacDowell and musician and philanthropist Marian MacDowell found MacDowell in 1907. The residency has hosted over 8,800 fellows across seven disciplines: writing, architecture, composition, film, theater, visual art, and interdisciplinary art who have been honoured with 99 Pulitzer prizes, eight National Medals for the Arts, 33 National Book Awards, 34 MacArthur Fellowships, 122 Rome Prizes, 31 Tony Awards, 868 Guggenheim Fellowships, among other accolades.



Catherine Bardi

Bardi Osobuanomola Catherine is a budding storyteller. Her academic credentials include a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Benin. She has contributed to numerous Art publications across Africa. She is currently a Writer for Art News Africa.

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