

VOL. 34, No. 2, WINTER 2005
100 HIGH STREET
PETERBOROUGH, NH 03458

The MacDowell Colony Newsletter



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2005 Medal Day

*A Tribute to David Diamond • The New Hampshire Benefit
Spotlight on the Tonys, the National Book Awards, and more!*

The MacDowell Mission: The Arts Have Value

I always look forward to the Winter issue of the newsletter because it reminds me of Medal Day and how much fun it was. We hope you enjoy reading the keynote speeches by composer **David Lang** and sculptor Richard Serra — both provide insight into what it is about composer Steve Reich that won him the Edward MacDowell Medal.

Whether it be through awarding the MacDowell Medal or a MacDowell residency, recognition of the value of artists to American culture is at the core of what we do. We take very seriously our eloquently stated mandate from 1907: “to promote the arts ...encourage study, research, and production in all branches of art; to develop a sympathetic understanding of their correlation and appreciation of their value; and to broaden their influence.”



Medal Day combines all of these elements in an extraordinary way with public recognition for outstanding work and visits to artist studios.

In these pages you will find the variety of other ways we go about accomplishing that mission. First and foremost we provide the list of artists in a variety of disciplines who have applied for and have been selected to receive a residency. These people and those profiled in Open Studio perform everyday the “study, research, and production” necessary to

make art. Examples of their award-winning work can be found in the Spotlight section. “An appreciation of the value of the arts and broadening their influence” is the intention of MacDowell Downtown, our monthly community program, and MacDowell in the Schools, and, of course, Medal Day. Look inside for news covering all of these.

In its annual application to the town of Peterborough for tax-exemption, MacDowell was asked whether or not its programs benefit the general public. We replied yes, emphatically yes. Anyone may apply for a residency, and the benefits of one extend far beyond the artist. Who profits more: the person writing the book or the person reading it? The answer is clear to everyone who reads, listens to music, sees a play, looks at buildings or films or sculpture. Art advances our intellectual well-being. Not every residency results in a completed work or a successful work but important progress is made when an artist is given the freedom to explore. That is why so much groundbreaking art can be traced to a MacDowell Fellowship. We need to invest in the creation of new work for ourselves and the next generation.

Thank you for joining MacDowell in valuing artists today and in the future.

Cheryl A. Young
Executive Director

THE MACDOWELL COLONY nurtures the arts by offering creative individuals of the highest talent an inspiring environment in which they can produce enduring works of imagination. 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 from either the New Hampshire or New York addresses below, or at our Web site:

www.macdowellcolony.org.

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

The MacDowell Colony Newsletter is published twice a year, in June and December. Past residents may send newsworthy activities to the editor in Peterborough. Deadlines for inclusion are April 1st and October 1st. For more timely updates we encourage Fellows to post their news and events on the Calendar section of our Web site.

Editor: Brendan Tapley
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Design and Production: John Hall
All photographs not otherwise credited: Joanna Eldredge Morrissey
Printer: Puritan Press, Hollis, NH

Cover photos (clockwise from left):
Joanna Eldredge Morrissey; Johannes Knoops; Anita Thacher; Joanna Eldredge Morrissey

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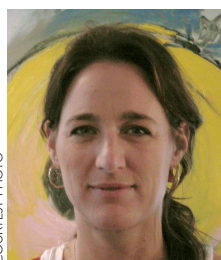
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The benefits of a residency extend far beyond the artist to everyone who reads a book, listens to music, looks at buildings or films or sculpture.

Board Welcomes New Members

Three Colony Fellows recently joined the Colony's board of directors. After stepping down as president of the Fellows Executive Committee, **Julia Jacquette** has returned as a member of the board. She serves on the Centennial Steering Committee. Her paintings about the notions of romance, desire, and elegance have been exhibited in solo and group shows at numerous galleries, including Holly Solomon Gallery, the Museum of Modern Art, P.S. 1, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Sydney, Australia. She has been a resident at the Colony three times.

Visual artist and two-time Colony Fellow **Louise Eastman Loening** has worked at the Museum of Modern Art



COURTESY PHOTO
Louise Eastman Loening

and at the Leo Castelli Gallery in New York. After graduating from Smith College in 1988, she continued her painting studies at the New York Studio

School from 1992–1993. She served on the board of Creative Time from 1990–1995, and is currently serving as a member of the board of Visual Understanding in Education.

The work of writer and three-time Colony Fellow **Martha Southgate** has appeared in numerous publications, including *Essence*, *Premiere*, *The New York Times Magazine*, and *The New York Daily News*. In 1996, she won the Coretta Scott King Genesis Award for Best First Novel for *Another Way to Dance*. Her second novel, *The Fall of Rome*, was named one of the best novels of 2002 by *The Washington Post*, and received a 2003 Alex Award from the American Library Association. Houghton Mifflin released her latest novel, *Third Girl from the Left*, in September. She is the president of the Fellows Executive Committee.

MacDowell Moment



Kenneth Brighton's connection with MacDowell began in the 1950s when, as a young lawyer just starting out in Peterborough, he was invited to Hillcrest to meet with Marian MacDowell to discuss a legal issue. Now 87, this lifelong resident of Peterborough talked to us recently about his impressions of Mrs. MacDowell and his lasting allegiance to her memory.

Q: What do you remember about Marian MacDowell?

A: She was a pleasure to know. When I went to meet her, what I found was a delightful, bright 92-year-old woman. She was concerned about protecting Edward's grave in the event that the Colony one day ceased to exist. The situation required me to use some fairly complicated legal terms, but she grasped what I was saying immediately. She was very keen, and understood exactly what I wanted to do. In the end I set up a deed that specified that the grave would go to the town of Peterborough if the Colony ever went out of existence.

Q: As a lifelong resident of Peterborough, how do you feel about the Colony and its mission?

A: Growing up in Peterborough, I was fully aware of the Colony, but I didn't have much to do with it until I met Mrs. MacDowell. After that, I became very involved. I remember a dinner party I attended one time at Hillcrest; **Aaron Copland** was there, and my wife had quite a long conversation with him. I did some occasional legal work for the Colony, too, although it didn't amount to much.

I think the Colony has a lot to do with the unusual feel of Peterborough. Having the Colony here has brought a certain amount of culture to the area. Obviously, the Colony has immense significance in the world of art.

Q: Are you still involved with the Colony on any level?

A: I still come to Medal Day occasionally, and I regularly check in at the grave to make sure it's being taken care of. I feel a certain obligation to Marian MacDowell. I thought very highly of her.

FEC Dispatch

by Martha Southgate, President, Fellows Executive Committee



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Martha Southgate

Vice President

David Petersen

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Adam Silverman

Secretary

Betty Tompkins

Members

Paul Brantley

Alan Brown

Mike Holober

Julia Jacquette

Rebecca Moore

Ira Sachs

Mark Thompson

Samuel Topiary

I am writing this missive on a plane from Denver to Cleveland. I've been up since 4:00 a.m. amidst my first book tour to promote *Third Girl from the Left*, a novel that I did critical work on during two residencies at MacDowell. A book tour is the antithesis of the MacDowell experience. It's about exposure, promoting one's work, travel, hotel rooms, and exhaustion. Don't get me wrong. I know that I'm in a privileged position. It's delightful to meet readers and I've had a lot of fun mixed in with the fatigue — for example, I had a wonderful dinner in San Francisco with Colony Fellows **Michael Chabon**, **Ayelet Waldman**, **ZZ Packer**, and **Andrew Sean Greer**. But there are moments when one feels more like Willy Loman, the sad protagonist of *Death of a Salesman*, than an artist on the road.

That's why a place like MacDowell is so crucial for all of us. We need a place where the making of the work, not the selling of it, is paramount. Where there is time and space and good food and good company to allow us to think, to breathe in the cool green air, and know that what we are doing serves a purpose on this earth beyond what it can sell for. That's why I'm proud and pleased to have been elected president of the FEC (until 2008). I look forward to hearing from many of you about what you'd like to see in the life of the Colony as we move toward MacDowell's centennial in 2007. We don't run the place but our opinions count for a lot — please share them with me. I can be reached at fec@macdowellcolony.org.

Board Members Win Emmys

Aclaimed stage and screen actress Jane Alexander received an Emmy Award at the 57th Annual Primetime Emmy Awards on September 18th. Alexander was recognized in the category of Outstanding Supporting Actress in a Miniseries or a Movie for her role as Sara Roosevelt in the HBO film *Warm Springs*. This is the second Emmy for Alexander, who has been a member of the Colony's board of directors since 1997.



JEFF VESPA/WIREIMAGE.COM

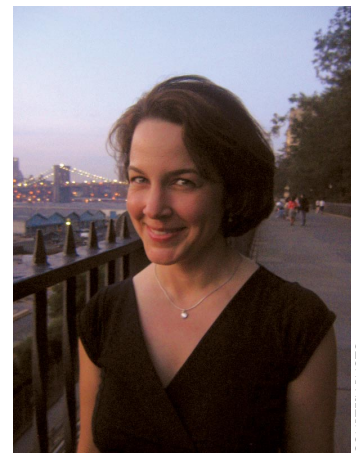
At the Creative Artists Emmy Awards on September 11th, fellow board member Ken Burns picked up his fourth Emmy Award for Outstanding Nonfiction Special for his latest documentary, *Unforgivable Blackness: The Rise and Fall of Jack Johnson*. A board member since 1990, Burns screened excerpts of *Unforgivable Blackness* — which received three Emmys in total — for the Colony's New Hampshire Benefit last fall.

Mark Our Calendar!

Over the past two years, MacDowell has redesigned and added numerous features to its Web

site, but perhaps one of the most innovative and recent is our Calendar. A direct link from the home page, the Calendar lists in detailed fashion the events of our artists. Screenings, exhibits, concerts, readings, openings, and more can be logged in by any MacDowell Fellow looking to immediately spread the word about his/her artistic happenings. It's very easy — just follow the prompts — and also searchable. The MacDowell site gets excellent traffic, and we'd like to showcase the work of Colony Fellows to the general public. Log on to www.macdowellcolony.org regularly to learn about our ongoing upgrades.

NEW FACES



COURTESY PHOTO

Amy McLaughlin,
Assistant to the Executive Director



BRENDAN TAPLEY

Rachel Garceau,
Admissions Assistant



The Senses, oil on linen, 42" x 50", 2004-2005, by Jeanne Duval.

MacDowell Artists Featured in Community Show

The work of five Colony Fellows was included in an exhibition at the Sharon Arts Center Gallery in Peterborough from July 16th – August

28th. *Between Perception & Invention: Three Generations of Figurative Artists* presented pieces from 36 nationally and internationally known artists, including Colony Fellows **Robert DeNiro Sr.**, **Leland Bell**, **Natalie Charkow**, and

Marjorie Portnow. Work from guest curator **Jeanne Duval** — a three-time Colony Fellow — was also included in the show, which aimed to bring to light a wide range of work that uses perception and/or invention as a concept, and to demonstrate the choices figurative artists have made since the advent of abstract expressionism.

Residency Periods Move

Please note that our residency periods have shifted by one month. We hope this change will better accommodate the scheduling needs of artists. For those applicants whose available dates fall in two residency periods, some accommodations may be made upon request. Please apply for the period in which most of your availability will fall. If you have any questions, please contact the Admissions department.

Winter–Spring... February 1st–May 31st
Summer June 1st–September 30th
Fall October 1st–January 31st

A Great Human Engine for Creation

Each year, 250 extremely talented writers, composers, visual artists, filmmakers, architects, and interdisciplinary artists from across the United States and abroad come to work in The MacDowell Colony's 32 studios, nestled in 450 woodland acres in Peterborough, NH. Many testify to the profound impact their experiences of solitude and interaction with a dynamic community of contemporary artists have on the direction and substance of their art. Works inspired, conceived, and created at MacDowell go on to be published, exhibited, and performed around the world, touching the lives of countless people.

Your annual gift to The MacDowell Colony is directed in its entirety to help underwrite the costs of Fellowships for these creative artists. In giving to MacDowell, "you are, in the most meaningful way imaginable, making it all happen," wrote Colony Fellow composer **Bobby Previte** in this year's



PAUL ROCHELEAU

appeal letter. "And it happens at MacDowell ... I can always feel it surrounding me, a great human engine for creation purring away all over the grounds — it seems to come out of the walls sometimes."

To make your gift to MacDowell, please use the gift envelope provided in the centerfold of this newsletter; visit our Web site at www.macdowellcolony.org to make a

secure donation online; or contact Adria Santo at 212-535-9690 for further information. MacDowell gratefully accepts all contributions, including donations of property (such as securities and real estate), bequests, and gifts in-kind. The MacDowell Colony is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization and relies on gifts to operate. Your contribution may be made in honor or memory of a friend or loved one, and is fully tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.

Thank you for supporting the creative artists working at MacDowell during the coming year.

MacDowell Downtown

Now in its fourth season, MacDowell Downtown is a monthly presentation featuring the work of Colony Fellows. From September to May, writers, filmmakers, composers, architects, and visual and interdisciplinary artists offer concerts, readings, screenings, art exhibits, performances, lectures, and workshops. Evenings begin at 7:30 p.m. on the first Friday of the month at the Peterborough Historical Society in downtown Peterborough. The event is free and open to the public; refreshments are served. Those who wish to read about the past three seasons may visit our Web site: www.macdowellcolony.org/downtown.html.

On a book tour? Coming to the Colony? Artists interested in participating in MacDowell Downtown can write to us at: media@macdowellcolony.org.

9.2.05



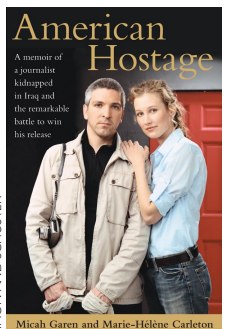
THOMAS ROMA

Filmmaker **David Petersen** screened his PBS film *Let the Church Say Amen* (pictured

above) and described his newest project, *Symptoms of Withdrawal*, a documentary about Christopher Kennedy Lawford's struggle to overcome a heroin addiction.

10.7.05

Irish composer **Rachel Holstead** gave a talk on how place informs music and played some of her recent work.



SIMON AND SCHUSTER

11.4.05

Writers **Micah Garen** and **Marie-Hélène Carleton** discussed their new book about Garen's abduction in Iraq.



DAVID MACY

Students from The Walden School on an August visit to the Colony.

MacDowell in the Schools

Active since 1996, the MacDowell in the Schools program continues its special influence by introducing students of all ages to MacDowell Fellows during the academic year. Thanks to the teachers and schools for helping coordinate the opportunity for artists and students to learn from each other. Here are some recent school visits:

5.19.05

Joanna Priestley presented several of her animated films to 30 seniors in Jill Lawler's film studies class.

8.16.05

Composers **Andrea Clearfield**, **Sebastian**

Currier, and **Mike Holoher** spoke to 18 aspiring musicians and faculty from The Walden School about contemporary music and the path of the artist.

10.12.05

Rocker and writer **Jacob Slichter** talked to two ConVal art classes about his band, Semisonic, and the life of an artist and musician.

Other Outreach

In May, poets **Mary Ruefle** and **Elena Rivera** judged the Peterborough Town Library's annual poetry contest. Students K-12 submitted poems to be included in a book that will become part of the Town Library's permanent collection.

SAVE THE DATE: SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2006

for the

New Hampshire Benefit

with Ruth Reichl

Colony Fellow, editor-in-chief of *Gourmet* magazine, and celebrated author of the bestselling memoirs *Tender at the Bone* (1999), *Comfort Me with Apples* (2002), and *Garlic and Sapphires* (2005)

6:00 P.M. **Cocktails, Book Signing, and Silent Auction**
7:00 P.M. **Dinner and Program**

To receive an invitation for this event, please e-mail development@macdowellcolony.org or call Adria Santo at 212-535-9690.



STEVE REICH

2005 medalist in music

2005 MEDAL DAY

ON AUGUST 14TH, Steve Reich took his place among past Medalists, including Robert Frost, I.M. Pei, and Georgia O'Keeffe. Speeches by composer and Colony Fellow **David Lang**, and sculptor Richard Serra follow below. A concert of Mr. Reich's work was also performed by New York-group So Percussion (pictured on cover); studios of current artists-in-residence were opened to the many guests who attended (pictured above). The Colony would like to thank members of this year's Medal Selection Committee: composers **Robert Beaser**, David Lang, **Francis Thorne**, and Chen Yi.

david remarks by LANG

HELLO, I AM DAVID LANG. I want to begin this speech with a little aphorism translated from the Hebrew: "Say little, and do much." This is from an early book of the Talmud called *Sayings of the Fathers*. I wish I could say that I learned it from my own Hebrew studies, but I can't. I learned it from Steve Reich. This little phrase — *say little and do much* — is the entire text of the last movement of Steve's most recent and remarkable piece, *You Are Variations*. Co-commissioned by the Los Angeles

Master Choral, Lincoln Center, and the Ensemble Moderne, *You Are Variations* is a very large piece, 25 minutes for chorus and a generous instrumentation of winds, strings, and percussion. I'll talk about the music in a bit, but what I want to start with is the text. This large and dramatic and deep piece is made entirely out of four short scraps of text — three from Jewish sources, and one from the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. These texts are as follows: *You are where your thoughts are. I place the eternal before me. Explanations come to an end somewhere. Say little and do much.* That's it. That's the whole text. It goes without saying that it is a tour de force to make so much music out of so few words, but what does the text really tell us about the composer? The quote from Wittgenstein is the tip-off about whom we are dealing with here. In



The music of Steve Reich is pure ecstasy. During a summer I spent at Tanglewood as a student I think I wore headphones all nine weeks, and coming through the headphones was invariably *Music for 18 Musicians* or *Music for a Large Ensemble*. When I hear these pieces I am transported and electrified. I am dazzled by the counterpoint, the glorious textures miraculously created with nothing more than the acoustic instruments we all know, but I also long for the “turn in the road”, the wonderful moment of harmonic shift that is always perfectly timed and sends chills down your spine. >> I would like to thank Mr. Reich for the generosity of his music, for the pleasure it has given me, and for the great influence it has had on my approach to listening and making music.

—composer and Colony Fellow Kevin Puts

Steve, the composer and the philosopher are one. It is in the philosophy — the intense questioning of fundamental forms of belief — that the music becomes set free.

Steve’s music always begins with an idea. Some of these ideas are narrative, or social, or philosophical, but even the strictly musical pieces begin by asking simple questions about how music can be made. How can a melody be made to slow down? How does a melody sound when it plays at the same time as a version of itself that is going slightly faster? Many of these questions come from his early work — looping bits of recorded tape; experimenting with how sounds can be recorded, and reproduced, and rearranged; and how these mechanical processes can be remade acoustically with live musicians. Some of the questions his music explores now are the logical continuations of the ideas he started with 40 years ago, reimagined and sometimes startlingly recombined.

The new piece, *You Are Variations*, follows up on Steve’s lifetime of exploration. You can hear the long history of each idea as it appears. The slow pulling apart of the vocal lines continues a process explored in the 70s with *Four Organs*, and in his early experiments at stretching musical

material on tape. The counterpoint and overlapping of lines come right out of the close canons of his ecstatic vocal work *Tehillim*, which itself came out of the early phase and counterpoint pieces. The harmony is a much richer, and denser, and more ornate version of the jazz chords he started with in *Music for Mallet Instruments*, and perfected in his breakout masterpiece, *Music for 18 Musicians*. I think for Steve there are abstract musical things he has always wanted to do, and he keeps finding new ways to do them. This intense focus on close and repeated examination of music’s basic materials has had a big effect on the composers who have followed him, and certainly the sound, the concentration, the stripping away of ornament, the monumental dedication of large sections of pieces to the working out of his ideas, have had a big impact on an entire generation of composers.

The thing that is sometimes overlooked is that Steve’s pieces are all incredibly humane. They are about something important and meaningful. A piece like *Different Trains* — Steve’s landmark work for the Kronos Quartet — that mixes a personal narrative with recordings of Holocaust survivors not only sounds great but it makes human a very emotional experience and an

VOX populi

On Medal Day, the cameras are trained on the honoree, but what about the public who attends? What do they come for and, even better, what do they come away with? We found the answers to why Medal Day is not just a ceremony but a personal celebration.



“Creativity is something we all have. I spent a career becoming a professor in social work, and I decided in retirement to do what I wanted to do, which is to write. MacDowell stands for that.”

— Carolyn Saari

“Creativity is more than a value; it’s a necessity. We may or may not share values, but I hope we would share an interest in creativity.”

— David Lord



incomprehensibly desperate moment in history. This is the part of Steve the composer that I think about the most. The depth — this intention to take on big issues — is something everyone really needs from art, and almost never gets.

I want to talk about something else, though. I want to talk about my first experience with the music of Steve Reich: how I found it, how I heard it, and how it changed me. One of my high school jobs was as a stock boy in a classical music record store. A perk of this job was that I got great discounts on records, and I would buy anything that caught my attention. One day, around 1973, I noticed a Columbia Records release with a violin and a rainstorm on the cover. It was a recording of two recent pieces by an unknown young composer named Steve Reich — *Violin Phase* and *It's Gonna Rain*. I bought the record; I think it cost me 50 cents. (I actually don't even remember if I paid the 50 cents, but that's another story. It was that kind of record store. And I was that kind of high school student.) *Violin Phase* was immediately very appealing, but the piece that knocked me out was *It's Gonna Rain*.

This piece, as you may know, was made in 1965 by looping tape fragments of a street preacher's testimony about Noah's flood that Steve had heard and recorded in San Francisco's Union Square. *It's Gonna Rain* is one of those pieces that invents its own powerful magic, its own world. It is a piece that asks a lot of questions, presenting an expansive array of paradoxes, not the least of which is how an individual's humanity can become illuminated in confrontation with technology. The piece is full of real contradictions; it is at the same time aggressive and restrained. The means of composition are elegant but the source material is raw. It is dense and complicated, but it is made very simply. The piece employs a repetitive process but somehow moves forward with a continuously

evolving shape. The man's voice is rough and human and down and out, but the music transforms the voice into something intensely spiritual with the promise of eventual redemption. Most important, it is a deeply musical experience made from something that is not supposed to be musical at all — from the spoken word itself. For me, as a young and inexperienced listener, what was most provocative was that this piece was clearly about something new. It wasn't about harmony or melody or orchestration. It wasn't satisfied to be about writing a nice tune or making a pleasant noise. It was a piece that was bursting out of the restrictions of the traditional definitions of music. Knowing that such a thing could even be attempted was a revelation to me, and I never forgot it.

Of course, many of the inventions of *It's Gonna Rain* foreshadow the later developments in Steve's music: the exploration of the relations between individuality and technology; the purity of the materials; the conversion of speech to melody; the search for humanity. I think you can hear that the composer of *It's Gonna Rain* might later seek out the eternal in a cave in Israel, or on a cross-country train ride, or in a geneticist's laboratory. It is a triviality to say that the music in all of his compositions is sublime, but it is important to recognize that the music is always in the service of something larger than itself. These pieces believe that music can serve as an opening to some kind of larger truth about ourselves, how we think, and feel, and live our lives. Knowing that such a thing is possible is still a revelation.

Recently, I discovered a way to sum up Steve's work, Steve's thoughts, and maybe even Steve's life, in four simple statements: You are where your thoughts are. I place the eternal before me. Explanations come to an end somewhere. Say little and do much.

Thank you.



"I think Peterborough has a pretty thriving arts community for a town of 5,000 — you don't find that a lot, and it's because of places like MacDowell."

— Jane Eklund

"I've been coming to Medal Day for 15 years. The Colony is so unique. It's a sanctuary. Artists can think about what they're doing here and why. I wish there were more places like it in the world."

— Penelope English





remarks by richard SERRA

THERE EMERGE, at various times and places, manifestations of art which transform the realm of possibilities. New York in the late 60s was such a place. To invent — to originate something new — was the pressing need of the moment. The group of young artists that would bring about the change came from different practices. They were musicians, dancers, sculptors, painters, filmmakers. I'll mention a few amongst others who were insistent on bringing about such a rupture, such a break: Michael Snow, La Monte Young, Philip Glass, Yvonne Rainer and the Grand Union, Trisha Brown, Bruce Nauman, Robert Smithson, Bob Ryman, and I have to include Steve and myself on the list.

We were each other's audience and critics. The interchange of ideas nourished new approaches to materials,

to time, to context, to process. We were all involved in process. Trisha did her *Accumulations* piece; Bruce fell in and out of the corner; I wrote *Verb List* and splashed molten lead against the wall; Steve wrote his *Pendulum Music* for microphones, amplifiers, speakers, and performers. I was one of the performers when *Pendulum Music* was played at the Whitney in 1969 as part of the *Anti-Illusion* show. That show summed up the activities of the moment and confirmed this group as a movement. One could call *Pendulum Music* a paradigm for process art. Let me read a paragraph of Steve's notations:

"The performance begins with performers taking each mic, pulling it back like a swing, and then in unison releasing them all together. Performers then carefully turn up each amplifier just to the point where feedback occurs when a mic swings directly over or next to its speaker. Thus a series of feedback pulses are heard, which will either be all in unison or not, depending on the gradual changing phase relations of the different mic pendulums. Performers then sit down and watch and listen to the process along with the audience."

Steve's early work has had a lasting effect on me. *Come Out, It's Gonna Rain, Clapping, Drumming, Piano Phase* refuse to be eradicated from my mind, although I have no precise recollection of how the pieces develop. Listening to Steve's music is being in complicity with his process. Comprehension is a matter of complicity. My experience lags behind my anticipation, which has to do in part with the speed of sound. It keeps me alert, sometimes annoyingly so. Even after having heard Steve's pieces many times I can never predict with any assurance how the pieces are going to develop as I am listening. The density and saturation of sound — the specific gravity — prevents recollection.

populi



"As a creative artist, it's a complete inspiration for me to come to Medal Day. I feel impressed by the excitement of people who really care about creativity, who see it as a value in the world. Creativity is not just important to every life. It is life. It's about being alive."

— Anita Francis

"Being a foreigner [Haiti], I don't know most of the culture of this country, but I'm glad to be a part of it here."

— Philippe Salnave



Sometimes, as the music evolves, patterns change so swiftly that their logic evades me. I am unaware of its consistency, particularly in the later work, where I only experience an emotional effect, and I completely give myself over to the rush of sound. Yet I am aware that there is an exact weight to the lightness of the sound. Although there are varying durations, the power of Steve's music has a lot to do with its speed. I find my ear and mind being flooded with ideas and emotions, which follow in quick succession. Tempo counts. Tempo — timing — may be a value in and of itself, and it's of particular importance to me whether the pace is quick or slow, contracted or extended. It's the same subjective time that conveys meaning to perception as you walk through an installation I recently completed in Bilbao titled *The Matter of Time*. It is based on the idea of multiplicity or layered temporalities. Duration — not clock time, not literal time — is the main organizing principle that drives the work. The time of the experience can be fast or slow, which depends entirely on bodily movement. The listening to Steve's music is subjective time, psychological time, durational time, and comparable to the viewing time in my work.

Some of the music places me in a constant state of unease with its continuous, relentless, insistent modulations. It forces me to follow its trajectories. It gains its power through the building of similarities, connecting them one after the other so that the process of adding produces a kind of layered rhythm: forward, forward, backward, forward. As the pieces develop, the sound includes and connects all that you've previously heard in its elastic stretch. It is as if the sound begins to roll forward, pitch backward, and then forward again, shift and repeat. I understand that the form is a round, but it's not what I hear. This is not the *Alouette* I learned as a child.

When I recall *Come Out* or *It's Gonna Rain*, I don't recall the structure or concise logic of the pieces. What I retain is a feeling of alienation and discomfort. It might seem strange but the discomfort arises from a rethinking of form. That is what I cherish in art, whether it's Schoenberg, Feldman, Nauman, or Pollock.

Let me try to explain what I mean by a rethinking of form in relation to Steve's early pieces, where he uses prerecorded language. He starts out with a seemingly simple premise: a found voice, a sentence uttered. But as he subjugates this found language to his structure of overlays, as it is repeated again and again, the detail of the detail begins to resonate. I find that I am drawn into the infinitesimal, the infinitely subtle moving variations. It's then I realize I am lost in the infinite vastness of the whole. As the voices spin out they become something other than language. The words are transformed by rhythm into emotion. Words sing as sounds, and as they reach the end of the path they trace through their phased diversions and combinations, the result is music, not language. Language is being pushed to the breaking point, where the meaning of the word has been obliterated so as to allow its potential for music to emerge. It's as if the original word or phrase has been stretched along an abstract, infinitely variable line dissolving its original meaning in a process, which allows for a new meaning to emerge. Smithson, who was a friend of mine, loved Steve's work. I can hear him say, "Oh yeah, I get it. The disintegration of language into the vortex of entropy."

It takes effort to sustain listening to Steve's music. That's its virtue. You might say great composers need great listeners. Steve was never tempted by commissions for operas or symphonies. He says, at the end of his interview with Jonathan Cott, that life is too short



"This is the first Medal Day I was at where I was old enough to know what was going on. It wasn't like it was sad, but I felt like I wanted to cry. Because of how moving and important these people are and how they spoke so earnestly. It really got me. To keep bringing new things into the world, that's so important to the soul. And that's what this place is for."

—Windsor Johnson

"I love creativity and I'm sometimes sad I didn't develop mine, but I'm happy to know I can be surrounded by it."

—Christine Bulgariades





I distinctly remember my first exposure to *Come Out*. I must've been about 19, and I was an undergrad. We listened to a recording of the work in class, and it was in this class that I was really getting my first experiences with music of the 20th century. I was reeling with all this "new" music and even had a mixed reaction to *Come Out* — it was a little bit like driving past a car accident. I was drawn to it and horrified at the same time. >> As far as Reich's continued influence on me (and I think on many composers of my generation), I would like to mention two divides that his music bridges. First there's Reich's use of technology. From those

early tape pieces, to the more recent video operas which fuse multiple streams of video activity with live performance and electronically manipulated sounds, the striking thing about Reich's use of technology is there's nothing blatant or obtrusive about it. *It's Gonna Rain* and *Piano Phase* are clearly products of the same musical mind. *Music for 18 Musicians* and *Three Tales* "make sense" side-by-side. I think it's telling that I've never heard anyone refer to Reich as an "acoustic composer" or an "electronic composer". He's always simply called a composer. >> The second split is between "popular" and "art" music. I think we are fortunate in America today to have a very plastic definition of what makes popular music and what makes art music. I myself am not interested in these labels, and I can't say that I've heard Reich himself express an interest in categorizing music in this way. But I also cannot think of another living ("art music") composer who has inspired DJ Spooky, Sonic Youth, and The Orb to rework or cover his/her music. Reich has. And for me, *Four Organs* is pure rock — happily, just the sort of piece to cause a riot!

—Alan Shockley, composer and Colony Fellow

to just write the next orchestral commission. "Best to do what you have been assigned to do. I have been given my assignment, just as everyone has his or her assignment." I don't think I am wrong when I assume that Steve looks to his assignment as given by a higher power. Whether we believe in assignments — whether we are secular or religious — does not matter. In Steve's case his beliefs translate into conviction. It's the conviction that makes the work compelling.

Having taken this tack I want to compare two major composers of the second half of the 20th century in terms of their philosophical underpinnings. Steve Reich's belief of having been given an assignment to fulfill differs radically from Cage, who said: "I have nothing to say but I'm saying it." I always thought Cage's statement was somewhat disingenuous in that he used an attitude of indifference and a denial of meaning to bolster his musical theory based on chance. The ability to believe



"When I was a child, my mother played the piano and she had many pieces by Edward MacDowell. Now I play the piano and have those pieces and to think this place was started by him and his wife, and it's become so successful — it's very satisfying to me."

—Judith Collier

"One of the nice things about Medal Day is that it's an affirmation that you're not wasting your time in art. That art is important, that art matters. Creativity is a specific value and a worthwhile value and it should be highly valued — over a lot of other things we value as a society."

—George Sanderson



and to confess to a belief is a quality. Art, music, and poetry would not exist without belief systems. Belief systems are not synonymous with ideologies. I do not mean to suggest that art ought to communicate a specific ideology. Art is purposefully useless. It must refuse to serve. However, nonservice does not negate the ability or necessity for an artist to have a belief. It may be a mere belief in self, or a longing for belief. It may be a belief in making a contribution. Assumptions, speculations, all kinds of superstitions qualify as belief systems. I simply don't believe that art can come out of an attitude of indifference. That's where I take issue with Cage. We all have fantasies, we all imagine, we all project. Making art is an act of faith, a manifestation of hope.

I've always felt that Steve had an ethical grounding, which in his early work translated into social and political philosophy and responsibility, whereas in the later work the emphasis is on the historical and the spiritual. Steve didn't choose the words for *It's Gonna Rain* or *Come Out* by chance. *Come Out* was a political choice of content, echoing the concerns of the civil rights movement. I never got over the desperation of a young black man who was wrongfully arrested for murder and, having been beaten in a Harlem police precinct, squeezed his bruised leg until blood came out so he would be taken out of his cell to be cleaned up. I came upon his cry for the first time when Steve played the tape loop for me in his studio. Conceptually, I begin with process, form, and structure. Here, I found myself listening to a work where the form was content-driven, where the account of the boy — "I had to, like, open the bruise up and let some of the blood come out to show them" — was turned into the sound of sheer anxiety. It floored me. *Come Out* violated any notion of music that I held.

It was with these early works that Steve became the key figure of my generation and for the generations that followed.



remarks by

steve
REICH

THANK YOU. What I'm cruising for here is the brevity award, so rest easy. It's truly an honor to be honored by those you respect and admire. The MacDowell Colony is devoted to making it possible for artists to get their work done. I'm proud to be acknowledged by such an organization. To receive this medal — given in the past to **Aaron Copland**, Willem de Kooning, and Jasper Johns, among so many other great artists — is indeed an honor. To be honored by old friends — like sculptor Richard Serra, composer David Lang, and the wonderful performance group So Percussion — is particularly satisfying. To all of you, I can only say once again, thank you very much.



"Every year Robin MacNeil says something that leaves a lump in my throat. Because he's always acknowledging how hard it is to make art and how hard it is to fit it in your real life and real job, and it's just nice that someone says that out loud."

— Ann Sanderson

"The idea of America is about freedom of expression. I think The MacDowell Colony shows and exhibits that freedom of expression. This is one place to see what's happening in the art world, internationally and in America."

— Gavin Sturges



populi

VOX



REEL NY Airs Films by Fellows

Six films by MacDowell Fellows were broadcast in June and July as part of the 10th season of the independent film and video series *REEL NY*. A production of PBS affiliate Channel Thirteen (WNET, New York), the annual eight-week program reaches audiences in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. The show's one-hour premiere episode on June 17th featured 10 short films created specifically to celebrate *REEL NY*'s 10-year anniversary, including **Jem Cohen's** *NYC Weights and Measures*, **Jennie Livingston's** *Through the Ice*, and **Kimi Takesue's** *E=nyc²* (pictured above). **Samuael Topiary's** *Little Frankenstein*, **Simeon Hutner's** *My Brother Nathaniel*, and **Mitch McCabe's** *Highway 403, Mile 39* were included in subsequent episodes that aired in July.

New Plays by MacDowell Fellows Open in New York

Third, a new play by MacDowell board member and three-time Colony Fellow **Wendy Wasserstein**, opened at Lincoln Center's Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater on September 29th. Wasserstein's concept for the play — a candid, uncompromising portrait of a woman at a crossroads — came to her while she was in residence at MacDowell in 2004. "I hadn't planned to write it, but the beauty of the landscape and the high caliber of the residents inspired me," she reveals.

Artist Awards, Grants, and Fellowships

Faith Adiele

PEN Beyond Margins Award,
Meeting Faith: The Forest Journals of a Black Buddhist Nun
New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Creative Nonfiction
Ohio Arts Council Fellowship

Joann Beard

Margaret Brouwer

Lan Samantha Chang

Rachel Cohen

PEN Beyond Margins Award, Inheritance
PEN/Martha Albrand Award Finalist for First Nonfiction,
A Chance Meeting

Christina Davis

Stacey D'Erasmio

Beatrice Hawley Award Finalist, Forth a Raven
Triangle Award for Lesbian Fiction,
A Seahorse Year

Nick Flynn

PEN/Martha Albrand Award for the Art of the Memoir,
Another Bullshit Night in Suck City
2005 Obie Award for Distinguished Emerging Playwright
Civitella Ranieri Fellowship

Gina Gionfriddo

Ann Harleman

Frances Hwang

Cynthia Ona Innis

Tayari Jones

Robert Marshall

Rona Jaffe Foundation Writers' Award for Fiction
2005 James D. Phelan Art Award in Printmaking
Lillian Smith New Voices Award, The Untelling
New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Printmaking/Drawing/
Artists' Books

C.M. Mayo

Toni Mirosevich

Meredith Monk

Eugene Ostashevsky

Gregory Pardlo, Jr.

Kym Richardson

Brian Robinson

Rachel Sheinkin

Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism Award

Frank O'Hara Chapbook Award

ASCAP Concert Music Award

New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Poetry

New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Poetry

AIVF Screenwriting Mentorship, Ruby My Dear

Copland House Award

Tony Award for Best Book of a Musical,

The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee

New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Creative Nonfiction

Judy Grahn Award for Lesbian Nonfiction,

Name All the Animals

Special Mention, EPICMUSIC International Composition Prize,

Three Ancient Pieces

Joshua Shenk

Alison Smith

Max Stern

David Surface

Kimi Takesue

Diane Wolkstein

Greg Wramage

New York Foundation for the Arts Fellowship in Creative Nonfiction

IFP Distribution Grant, Summer of the Serpent

Anne Izard Storytelling Award, Treasures of the Heart

Copland House Award

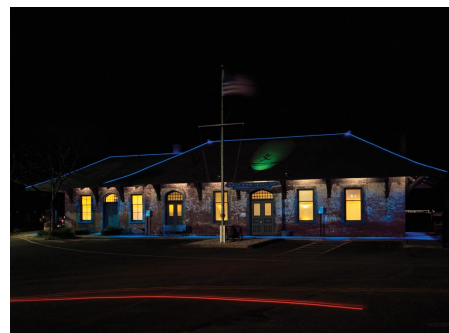
"Because I spent my time in the quiet of the woods with other creators, I was open to inspiration." Featuring two-time Academy Award-winning actress Diane Wiest, the play's initial run, which was sold out, ends in December.

The 2005–2006 season at New York's Playwrights Horizons features work by five MacDowell Fellows. *Fran's Bed*, a new play written and directed by **James Lapine**, had its New York premiere in August at the Mainstage Theater, the same theater where *Grey Gardens* — a new musical collaboration by **Doug Wright**, **Scott**

Frankel, and **Michael Korie** — will have its world premiere in early 2006. The world premiere of **Sarah Schulman's** new work, *Manic Flight Reaction*, took place at the Peter Jay Sharp Theater in October.



Actors Diane Wiest and Charles Durning in *Third*.



ADAM FRELIN AND ANITA THACHER

White Line (above, left and lower right) by Adam Frelin and Illuminated Station (above, upper right) by Anita Thacher.

Interdisciplinary Fellows Light Up the Night

Anita Thacher's permanent site-specific work *Illuminated Station* opened at the Long Island Train Station in Greenport, New York, on June 4th. To evoke the feel of an earlier era, Thacher outlined the Victorian station's rooftop with blue LED lighting, accented the ground with deep blue light, and shaded the windows to simulate the contrast of the soft glow of gaslight against the darkness of night. Thacher's work also includes a pictograph of an early American Indian projected in green light on the front and back roofs of the station in honor of the first residents of Long Island. The installation is visible from the streets of Greenport, from the harbor area, and from the Shelter Island Ferry.

Out west on a ranch in Wyoming, **Adam Frelin** assembled an outdoor light piece titled *White Line*, the idea for which was inspired by the landscape at MacDowell. "I often would look at the little rolling hills in the field in back of Colony Hall and envision something spanning the distance between them. At the time I thought it would be something simple, like a

long white board that would create this line in the landscape. Once I was in Wyoming, however, I realized that it would have to be something that demanded more presence, hence the fluorescent lights."

A series of 60 four-foot, single-bulb fluorescent fixtures strung on a steel cable spanning a 240-foot gap between two hills, the installation was hung 50 feet above the valley floor and could be seen for miles in every direction. Frelin elaborates on why he enjoys creating site-specific art: "This kind of artwork is both the piece itself, and the effect it has on the place it is created for."

MacDowell Fellows Nominated for National Book Awards

On October 12th, noted writers and Colony Fellows **Alan Burdick**, **E.L. Doctorow**, and **Mary Gaitskill** were nominated for National Book Awards in the nonfiction and fiction categories. MacDowell Medalist Joan Didion was also nominated in nonfiction. Both Burdick and Gaitskill worked on their books while in residence at the Colony. Gaitskill, who finished her novel *Veronica* at MacDowell in 2004, said:

QUOTABLES

“MacDowell has always been a blessing to my work, but this time it actually saved the life of my book. I was lost when I got here; now I'm found. The amazing grace of MacDowell!”

— **Michael Chabon**, winner of the 2001 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction



“I got about twice as much work done as I would have at home. In the private and utterly supported atmosphere of the Colony, I was able to move quickly and enter into the deep, quiet mental state required for writing well. The idea that this place exists and that I may be able to return to it cannot but have a positive impact on my future work process.” Burdick (*Out of Eden: An Odyssey of Ecological Invasion*), Doctorow (*The March*), and Gaitskill have received seven collective Fellowships at MacDowell.

Princeton Retrospective Celebrates Fellow's Gift

On June 25th, Princeton University Art Museum launched an exhibition titled *Thomas George: A Retrospective* in celebration of a gift of 37 works of art from artist and longtime Princeton, New Jersey, resident **Thomas George**. The show covered a wide range of media and techniques, emphasizing both change and continuity in George's artistic development. “I have thought a lot about the question of changing,” says George. “The idea of changing — of



The Pond, Institute for Advanced Study, 9 a.m., Oct. 11. 1993, pastel on off-white paper, 50 x 64.5 cm, 1993, by Thomas George.

wanting to change — has led me to make many discoveries. For instance, I have tried to develop new forms — not so much technically, but aesthetically.” The exhibition, made up largely of selections from the museum's permanent collection, was on view through September 11th.

QUOTABLES

“As it has done for so many over the years, the haven of MacDowell gave me more head- and heart-room. MacDowell has made such a positive, redemptive difference in my life. Every artist has to believe what they are doing is special and important. Thank you for showing faith in me when others did not.”

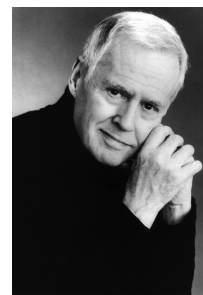
— **Kris Saknussem**, author of the recently released novel *Zanesville*, which has been described as “visually stunning without even a single illustration” by Kirkus Reviews.

At right, a self-portrait.



Fellows Participate in National Read-Aloud Day

On Saturday, October 22nd, Symphony Space and the National Book Foundation presented a 12-hour marathon of speakers,

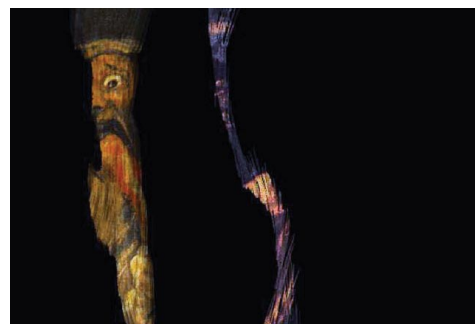


Composer and two-time Colony Fellow Ned Rorem.

panelists, artists, politicians, and business people on the topic “The Book That Changed My Life”. Several MacDowell Fellows got involved in the event, including writers

Elissa Schappell

and Pulitzer-winner **Doug Wright**. Composer **Ned Rorem** also participated. MacDowell Fellows were joined by actors John Lithgow and Cynthia Nixon, NEA Chairman Dana Gioia, and Congressman Jerrold Nadler of New York's Eighth district.



KATHY AOKI AND JUDITH SHATIN

Stills from Grito del Corazon, a video and music collaboration between Colony Fellows Kathy Aoki and Judith Shatin.

Fellows Collaborate on Interdisciplinary Score

When visual artist **Kathy Aoki** opened her studio doors one day to share her work during her 2001 residency, she had no idea she was literally “opening the door” on the opportunity for her first collaborative project. Also in residence at the time, composer **Judith Shatin** had been contemplating an upcoming commissioned work requiring both a video and musical component when she strolled into Aoki’s studio. She was immediately struck with one of Aoki’s digital pieces, and soon approached Aoki about working with her on the video element of her commissioned piece for the Barcelona New Music Ensemble. “I had never collaborated with another artist before, let alone a musician,” says Aoki. “I found myself leaping into the unknown, thanks to MacDowell.”

The result of Aoki and Shatin’s teamwork was *Grito del Corazon* (*Cry of the Heart*), a piece scored for electronic sound, instruments, and video that was produced with the work of Spanish painter Francisco de Goya in mind. “The piece was created for a program called *Painting Music*,” Shatin explains. “The idea was that each piece would be inspired by a painter. Although there was no requirement that the painter be Spanish, I immediately thought of the haunting power of Goya’s *Black Paintings*.”

Since its premiere in Barcelona in November of 2001, *Grito del Corazon* has been performed at various locations around the world, including the

International Computer Festival at the Verona Conservatory in Italy, The Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, the Electroacoustic Festival in Mexico, and most recently at The Knitting Factory in New York earlier this year.

“I’m very fortunate to have worked with Judith on a project that really pushed my skills and broadened my artistry,” Aoki reflects. “Our fortuitous meeting at MacDowell led to a creative work that has been enjoyed by audiences all over the world.”

New and Notable

Contributions to the Colony’s Savidge Library and the Peterborough Town Library serve as a lasting record of the importance of the Colony and its mission. All Fellows are encouraged to donate copies of their work — especially work that has been created at the Colony — in any format, including books, CDs, DVDs, videos, scores, drawings, paintings, etc. Though we are unable to list all the donations received from May to October, we have highlighted below the works that were specifically created in whole or in part at the Colony.

BOOKS

Michael Chabon
Patricia Chao
Patricia Fargnoli
Elise Levine
Judith Michaels
Julia Older

Ghosts
Mambo Peligroso
Necessary Light
Requests and Dedications
Loss Sonnets: For My Brother
Rolling the Sun

CDs

Alex Shapiro, Alvin Singleton,
Steve Mackey, Belinda Reynolds

Hammers and Sticks: New Music for Piano & Percussion

FILMS, VIDEOS, and DVDs

Brenda Brown

Autumnal Listening Trails

MUSICAL SCORES

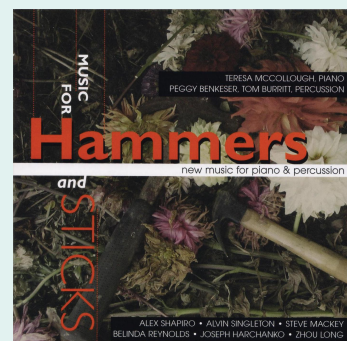
Sebastian Currier
Paul Osterfield

Quiet Time for String Quartet
Jagged Edges

VISUAL WORK

Tamiko Kawata

Breathing (a print)



KAREN SAMPSON

Kinereth Gensler

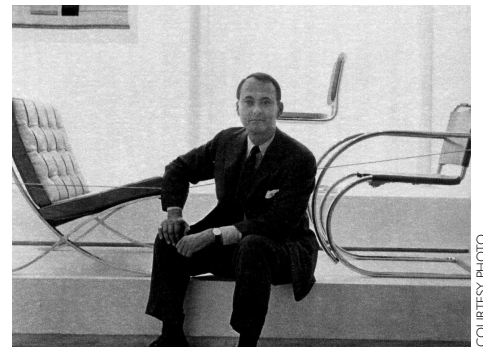
Poet, teacher, and two-time Colony Fellow **Kinereth Gensler** died on August 27th at the age of 82. Her poetry, known for its vivid visual and tactile imagery, appeared frequently in established journals, including *Ploughshares*, *The Massachusetts Review*, and *The Virginia Quarterly Review*. She had three books of poetry published by Alice James: *Threesome* (along with co-authors Jeannine Dobbs and Elizabeth Knies) in 1976, *Without Roof* in 1981, and *Journey Fruit* in 1997. A teacher in Boston-area schools in the 1960s, she was co-author of *The Poetry Connection* (1978), an anthology of poems intended to stimulate children's writing. After many years of teaching seminars at the Bunting Institute at Radcliffe in Cambridge, she continued to instruct a new generation of poets from her home overlooking the Charles River.

About her frequent childhood travels between the U.S. and Palestine, she wrote:

*In those weeks on board ship, a child
would see
Icebergs and dolphins and a churning
wake.
You'd pitch and roll and were often seasick
But you knew with luck you'd get your sea
legs,
A kind of balance, the agreement
A body makes with the humbling ocean.*

James Wilder Green

Longtime MacDowell board member **James Wilder Green** died on April 27th after a long illness. Born in Paris, he studied architecture at Yale University with Louis Kahn. His distinguished arts administration career began in 1956 at the Museum of Modern Art, where he was named director of the museum's exhibition program in 1967. From 1971



James Wilder Green

until his retirement in 1987, he was the director of the American Federation of Arts. Green's active involvement and support of the arts included 25 years of service on MacDowell's executive committee. Executive Director Cheryl Young reflected on his dedication: "His passion for the arts and architecture was reflected in his gentlemanly prodding and attendance at countless meetings. He will be deeply missed by all of us." A memorial service for Green was held at the AFA on May 31st. He was 78 years old.

David Diamond



JACK MITCHELL

Distinguished American composer **David Diamond** passed away in Rochester, New York, on June 13th at the age of 89. Described by **Leonard Bernstein** as "a vital branch in the stream of American music," Diamond's 11 symphonies, 10 string quartets, and numerous instrumental and vocal compositions include *Symphony No. 3* (1945), *Sonata for Piano* (1947), and the more recent *Symphony No. 11* (1989-1991) — a commission for the New York Philharmonic's 150th anniversary. Diamond received numerous significant honors during his career, including Guggenheim and Fulbright fellowships, a Prix de Rome, a Gold Medal from the American Academy, a William Schuman Lifetime Achievement Award, and a National Medal of Arts. A two-time MacDowell Fellow, Diamond was also the recipient of the Edward MacDowell Medal in 1991.

As a tribute to the memory of David Diamond, we have reprinted an excerpt from his 1991 Medal Day acceptance speech.

*Dear guests, Colony resident artists, everyone present, thank you for honoring me with your presence. I miss, though, my old friends — Medalists, too — **Aaron Copland** and **Leonard Bernstein**. But I sense them close by me.*

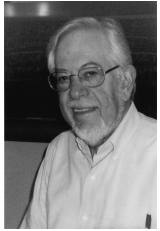
I could have hidden or just plain invented what I would like to tell you today. Every human spirit seeks solvency, and the narrative of human experience is one way to accomplish this. What I have seen and experienced in my life goes farther than mere narrative. One mystery actually occurred right here at the Colony in the summer of 1935, on my first visit.

A day in July. It must have been about five o'clock in the evening. I had worked hard that day. I went out for a short walk. When I returned to the Sprague-Smith Studio I heard someone playing the piano within. As I approached the screen door, there was now only silence. The piano I heard must have been from a nearby studio, I thought. So I entered, worked a bit more, then went to Colony Hall to have dinner.

That evening I felt oppressed and troubled. I was aware of my melancholy nature, my fatigue after a full day's work. I did not sleep well that night. The next day I was up early, had breakfast alone, and went off to my studio. There was a dense fog and a mist in the air as I approached the studio. And now I heard the piano again, more thrummed upon than played. I hurriedly

M. William Karlins

Composer and two-time Colony Fellow **M. William Karlins** died on May 11th at the age of 73. His extensive compositional works include large orchestral and chamber works and solo and choral pieces. He was best known for his saxophone music, which has been widely performed in the United States and abroad. Karlins had been a visiting guest composer at many universities in the U.S. and Canada, and was a professor of music at Northwestern University for more than 30 years. His work was commissioned and performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, the American Chamber Symphony, Boston Composers String Quartet, and Vienna Saxophone Quartet, to name a few. A concert in his memory was held at Northwestern's Evanston campus this fall.

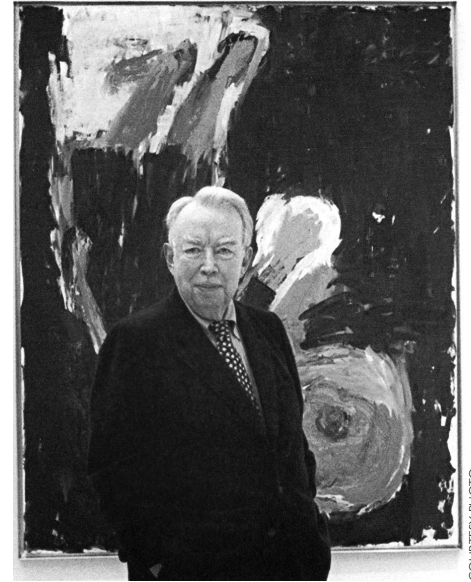


MICKEY KARLINS

William Lieberman

MacDowell board member and prominent museum curator William Lieberman died at his home in Manhattan on May 31st. His encyclopedic knowledge of art began in his teens, when he earned pocket money by guiding tourists around the British Museum and the Louvre. Lieberman's long career at the Museum of Modern Art commenced when he became an assistant to the museum's founding director, Alfred Barr, in 1945. During his career, Lieberman organized more than 40 exhibitions at MOMA, where he held a number of prominent posts, including curator of painting and sculpture, and founding director of the department of drawings. In 1979, he became chairman of the department of 20th-century art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, where he remained actively involved until his death. "His many years of advising

the Colony held the standard," Cheryl Young said of the 24 years Lieberman spent as a dedicated member of the board. "He gave us his best advice in furtherance of the Colony's purpose." He was 82.



William Lieberman

COURTESY PHOTO

walked to the screen door, opened it. There at the piano, her back to me, sat a young woman in a white blouse and grey skirt. She quickly turned around when I said "Who are you, what are you doing here?" Her straight eyebrows gave her loveliness a quizzical air as she looked at me and said in a soft, clearly articulated, almost studied way: "May I stay here?" She turned around quickly, looked down at the music I was orchestrating, and turned slowly back to me, and the lovely profile, I remember, made me smile. And then she was gone. Vanished. The rest of the day was never clear to me. I remember only that when I picked up my lunch basket from the porch I could not eat it.

*A few weeks later Aaron Copland arrived and I told him the story. Mrs. MacDowell got wind of the story and had Miss Richardson invite me to Hillcrest. This must have been a week or so later, for I found **Thornton Wilder** in the music room sitting in a rocking chair near the fireplace. "Now!" said Mrs. MacDowell firmly, "let's hear your story." When I had finished, Thornton, who had been rocking in the chair agitatedly, said, "Do you know whom he has described, Marian?"*

*When he walked me back to Colony Hall, he told me about **Elinor Wylie** and her tragic death. She had been to the Colony a few years before and would wander into other Colonists' studios all the time. It is interesting to me even today that Thornton never made much of a fuss about my "apparition" as he called it.*

*I must now speak of Edward MacDowell. Among the earliest pieces of music I ever heard as a child were his *To a Water Lily* and *Of a Tailor and a Bear*. The lovely contoured melodies haunted me always and still do. And of his wife, Marian — what can one say that has not been said over and over again? What she accomplished here, why it still continues — acknowledged facts of course. She was a woman of great conscience and awareness.*

Once we were seated in the steps leading up to the kitchen. This was after the evening at Hillcrest with Thornton Wilder. And I became very philosophical, and I asked her whether morality was the equivalent of conscience. "You're quite a young man," she commented. "Will you keep seeing ghosts and asking hard questions all your life? Come along and have a cup of tea with me." And I did just that.

"Our society needs consonance; it was always a must, because of the communicative power of that kind of music. If music doesn't communicate, it has no chance of survival. The need for beautiful music is stronger now than ever."

—**David Diamond**, in a Seattle Times interview one month before his death.

From May to October, 2005, The MacDowell Colony welcomed a total of 121 artists from 24 states and six countries. This group included 62 writers, 17 visual artists, 16 composers, 14 filmmakers, eight interdisciplinary artists, and four architects.

Jorge Accame, *writer*
SAN SALVADOR DE JUJUY,
ARGENTINA

Harry Allen, *architect*
NEW YORK, NY

Donald Antrim, *writer*
BROOKLYN, NY

Christopher Arrell, *composer*
ATLANTA, GA

Alice Attie, *photographer*
NEW YORK, NY

Hayes Biggs, *composer*
NEW YORK, NY

Sarah Bostwick, *visual artist*
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Arthur Bradford, *writer*
BROOKLYN, NY

Rebecca Brock, *writer*
SEVERNA PARK, MD

Fritz Buehner, *visual artist*
BROOKLYN, NY

Catherine Bush, *writer*
TORONTO, CANADA

Kevin Canty, *writer*
MISSOULA, MT

Robert Carl, *composer*
HARTFORD, CT

Chao-jan Chang, *composer*
WALTHAM, MA

Laurel Chiten, *filmmaker*
SOMERVILLE, MA

Andrea Clearfield, *composer*
PHILADELPHIA, PA

Jem Cohen, *filmmaker*
BROOKLYN, NY

Brian Current, *composer*
TORONTO, CANADA

Sebastian Currier, *composer*
NEW YORK, NY

Oscar De Las Flores,
visual artist
ISLINGTON, CANADA

Thorsten Dennerline,
visual artist
ST. LOUIS, MO

Stacey D'Erasmus, *writer*
NEW YORK, NY

Sabrina Dhawan, *filmmaker*
BROOKLYN, NY

Roberto Doati, *composer*
ALBIGNASEGO, ITALY

Chris Doyle,
interdisciplinary artist
BROOKLYN, NY

Elizabeth Duffy, *visual artist*
BROOKLYN, NY

Peter Edlund, *visual artist*
NEW YORK, NY

WRITER

Stacey D'Erasmus



The Ovidian notion of metamorphosis — that force responsible for changing Daphne into a laurel tree or Echo into, well, an echo — intrigues Stacey D'Erasmus. In low, conspiratorial tones, which is her normal voice, she observes: “I’m incredibly impressed and moved by beings who come under a pressure too great to bear and then become something else.”

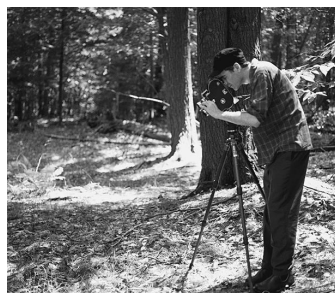
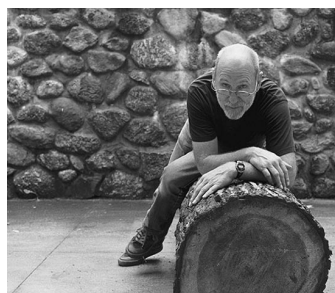
But don’t expect Gabriel, the unapologetically modern man and protagonist of D’Erasmus’s next novel, to become, say, a cell phone. On the other hand, do expect transformation. And not necessarily in a modern way. “These days, we don’t really imagine transformation. [Unbearable pressure] simply provides unmanageable psychological damage.”

As a young publisher specializing in death books, Gabriel creates a rising niche market that provides a primer when he suddenly must face his own demise.

“I realize the theme of transformation can get cheesy in about 10 seconds,” she laughs, but it’s clear there’s an urgency to the concept for the author. “It’s a ferocious age. Some unbearable things are happening. And while human beings have never been more plastic, mobile, mutable, there’s also this desire to have something fixed to hold onto. I want Gabriel poised at the edge of an abyss,” she says.

Pulling at Gabriel and our time — possibly undoing them both — may not require the apocalypse’s four horses, but two: one that’s determined to stay who we are and the other intent on becoming something else.

Stacey D'Erasmus is the author of Tea, which was a New York Times Notable Book of the Year, and A Seahorse Year, which won both the Lambda Literary Award and the Ferro-Grumley Award.



Clockwise from top left: Sarah Bostwick, Fritz Buehner, Robert Carl, Chao-jan Chang, Jem Cohen, and Sabrina Dhawan.

VISUAL ARTIST

Michele Kong

Michele Kong has a superpower. She sees things that aren't there. Beneath a balcony with no support, she creates a 200 sq. ft. sculpture of hot glue patterns, which, when hardened, appear to support the balcony in prismatic light. She says she is calling attention to gravity.

In an urban gallery space, she lays down angel hair pasta in patterns reminiscent of hay and invites the viewer to walk on it. The crunch precedes an impossibly pastoral sense memory.

In an empty room she weaves wire, streaking it across in gossamer lines that absorb light from a window with a fragility one might associate with a spider web or lash of rain.

It may not be a putative superpower, those of comic books and Hollywood films, but it might be the kind of sixth sense that provokes the marvelous.

"I have these moments of observing something fleeting, and I want to record that sculpturally. I'm trying to make sculpture out of air."

Growing up in the suburbs of Los Angeles, Kong calls the intersections of landscapes a "pressure point" in her work. And while she's quick to acknowledge the paradox of nature and manmade environments, she states that her work is more about their symbiosis. In a sculpture she completed at MacDowell, she placed plastic globes inside bark harvested from trees. The sculptures represent oversized "anthills", but the plastic is not meant to contrast the bark; its intention is to show how dwellings are manufactured by every creature. "Creatures create structures," she says, "it's the evidence of being alive."

Kong's superpower is really about revealing such evidence — evidence of life that can be invisible, but is more often seen through.

Michele Kong was recently recognized with the Young Artist Award by the Trawick Prize in Bethesda, MD.



Amze Emmons, *visual artist*
IOWA CITY, IA

Barbara Ess,
interdisciplinary artist
ELIZAVILLE, NY

Rodney Evans, *filmmaker*
BROOKLYN, NY

Malcolm Farley, *poet*
BROOKLYN, NY

Heide Fasnacht, *visual artist*
NEW YORK, NY

Joelle Fraser, *writer*
SUSANVILLE, CA

Adam Frelin,
interdisciplinary artist
GROVE CITY, PA

Joshua Furst, *writer*
NEW YORK, NY

Mary Gaitskill, *writer*
RHINEBECK, NY

Leslie Garis, *writer*
NEW YORK, NY

Robert Gatewood, *writer*
OXFORD, MS

Douglas Gauthier, *architect*
NEW YORK, NY

Andrew Greer, *writer*
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Rinne Groff, *playwright*
NEW YORK, NY

James Hannanham, *writer*
AUSTIN, TX

Natalie Harris, *writer*
WATERTOWN, ME

Ryan Harty, *writer*
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Frederick Hayes, *visual artist*
BROOKLYN, NY

Laura Hendrie, *writer*
SALIDA, CO

Hubert Ho, *composer*
PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC

Tony Hoagland, *poet*
WELLFLEET, MA

Marietta Hoferer, *visual artist*
NEW YORK, NY

Martin Hogue, *architect*
SYRACUSE, NY

Mike Holober, *composer*
SOUTH NYACK, NY

Michelle Hoover, *writer*
BOSTON, MA

Arlene Hutton, *playwright*
NEW YORK, NY

Lewis Hyde, *writer*
CAMBRIDGE, MA

Sherrilyn Ifill, *writer*
BALTIMORE, MD

Colette Inez, *poet*
NEW YORK, NY

Catherine Ingraham, *architect*
BROOKLYN, NY

Gail Jones, *writer*
PERTH, AUSTRALIA

Sheri Joseph, *writer*
ATLANTA, GA



Clockwise from top left: Amze Emmons, Heide Fasnacht, Frederick Hayes, Laura Hendrie, Tony Hoagland, and Martin Hogue.

Daphne Kalotay, *writer*
BROOKLINE, MA

Amy Kao, *visual artist*
BROOKLYN, NY

Daniel Kellogg, *composer*
NEW HAVEN, CT

Elyas Khan,
interdisciplinary artist
BROOKLYN, NY

Michele Kong, *visual artist*
BALTIMORE, MD

R.S. Koya, *writer*
BROOKLYN, NY

Daniel Levin, *librettist*
BROOKLYN, NY

Billie Livingston, *writer*
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Sarah Manguso, *poet*
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Joshua Marston, *filmmaker*
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Anne McClintock, *writer*
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Lavonne Mueller, *playwright*
WHITEFISH, MT

Brighde Mullins, *playwright*
CAMBRIDGE, MA

Eric Novak,
interdisciplinary artist
BROOKLYN, NY

Karl Nussbaum, *filmmaker*
BROOKLYN, NY

Tom Nussbaum, *visual artist*
MONTCLAIR, NJ

Daniel Orozco, *writer*
MOSCOW, ID

Julie Orringer, *writer*
SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Jena Osman, *poet*
PHILADELPHIA, PA

Jeffery Paine, *writer*
WASHINGTON, DC

Christa Parravani, *photographer*
NORTHAMPTON, MA

David Petersen, *filmmaker*
BROOKLYN, NY

Miouly Pongnon, *writer*
NEW YORK, NY

Joanna Priestley, *filmmaker*
PORTLAND, OR

Sarah Provost,
interdisciplinary artist
BROOKLYN, NY

Kevin Puts, *composer*
AUSTIN, TX

Andrew Rathbun, *composer*
BROOKLYN, NY

Ruth Reichl, *writer*
NEW YORK, NY

Nelly Reifler, *writer*
BROOKLYN, NY

FILMMAKER

Rodney Evans

The outsider has long appeal in art. Often it's because he or she is used as a curio meant to contrast convention. That's fine with filmmaker Rodney Evans, but it isn't quite enough.

"Growth happens when you're engaged with otherness, and I think there's something beautiful about that struggle."



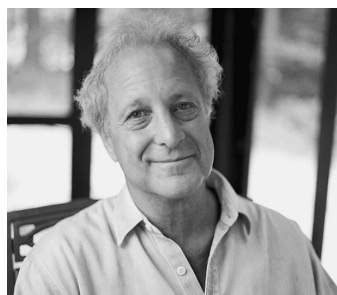
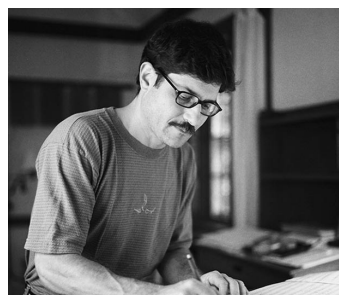
Evans's last film, *Brother to Brother*, took the Harlem Renaissance — a sacred cow of black history — and revealed its gay legacy. Weaving journalism with dramatic invention, the film was a provocative hybrid designed to challenge historic assumptions and expose the prejudices which inform them. Chiefly: what is invisible in African-American history, what makes up its ideas of masculinity and the white perception of them; and is the curse and gift of minority art its ability to induce personal growth in the majority?

Such notions were met with resistance. At one screening, Evans recounts how the primarily African-American audience jeered at the screen when they learned the protagonist was gay. But the filmmaker looks on that moment as memorable, particularly as the catcalls were silenced by the end. "I see the film as an antidote to a lot of ideas in black, youth culture,

hip-hop culture, and to those codes that people see as giving them power.

"I think we're living in a time where there's more fear, more paranoia in the world. There are huge obstacles to extending yourself, and it's so much easier not to care, not to connect. But there's something about being an outsider that forces people to look at the inside." And in inviting them there reveals how important it could be to stay.

Rodney Evans received the Independent Feature Project's Gordon Parks Award for Screenwriting for his most recent film, Brother to Brother. The film also won the Special Jury Prize at Sundance in 2004.



Clockwise from top left: Mike Holober, Arlene Hutton, Gail Jones, Tom Nussbaum, Jeffery Paine, and Christa Parravani.

INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTISTS

Elyas Khan, Eric Novak, Sarah Provost

Art can spawn from the unlikeliest of places and the most symbolic of ones — take, for instance, a stick stuck in a campfire. “There was a piece of wood that wasn’t burning,” says Provost, by way of describing how she and her collaborator, Eric Novak, first came up with the idea of Charcoal Boy, the protagonist in their puppet musical/bildungsroman fantasia about a singed (and severed) tree branch.

The Adventures of Charcoal Boy is a story in the tradition of *Alice in Wonderland*. Yearning to be a tree again, Charcoal Boy must come to terms with the fact that his liability — the fact that he’s charcoal — is also his gift. The fable, which is accompanied by vocal choirs, punk rock, and Japanese Koto music, all by composer Khan, “provides introspection into human themes” more incisively than anything anthropocentric, say the artists.

“Mythical stories are the ointment for our own worlds. Myths have always been healing devices that keep communities together,” says Khan. Of course, anything that aspires to mythical status must grapple with contemporary problems to reach it.

“I think politically, we are wrestling with things that are primarily false. And in this show, what is real is a question,” Khan says.

Having just completed the first act, the team isn’t sure how the adventure will end. Charcoal Boy is just beginning to realize that the trail he leaves in his search for answers is a kind of drawing. That he might be capable of art. But will his transformation be enough to resolve the longing for his once inanimate life?

Novak’s not telling, though he does say, “We’d like to explore this idea of whether the journey chooses you or you choose the journey. That’s interesting to us.”

The work of collaborative artists Elyas Khan (center), Eric Novak (top), and Sarah Provost (bottom) has recently received grants from the New York State Council on the Arts and the Jim Henson Foundation.



Frances Richard, *poet*
BROOKLYN, NY
Elena Rivera, *poet*
NEW YORK, NY
Mary Ruefle, *poet*
BENNINGTON, VT
David Ryan, *filmmaker*
NORTH MANKATO, MN
Shelley Salamensky, *writer*
NEW YORK, NY
Selah Saterstrom, *writer*
ASHEVILLE, NC
Sarah Schulman, *playwright*
NEW YORK, NY
Brian Seibert, *writer*
NEW YORK, NY
Yevgeniy Sharlat, *composer*
NEW HAVEN, CT
Jeffrey Sharlet, *writer*
BROOKLYN, NY
Alan Shockley, *composer*
CHAPEL HILL, NC
Shelley Silver, *filmmaker*
NEW YORK, NY
Karina Skvirsky, *interdisciplinary artist*
NEW YORK, NY
Jacob Slichter, *writer*
BROOKLYN, NY
Sue Standing, *poet*
CAMBRIDGE, MA
Ginger Strand, *writer*
NEW YORK, NY
Nova Suma, *writer*
NEW YORK, NY
Brian Teare, *poet*
OAKLAND, CA
Sally Tittmann, *visual artist*
NEW YORK, NY
Darla Villani, *interdisciplinary artist*
BROOKLYN, NY
Tom Weidlinger, *filmmaker*
BERKELEY, CA
Mac Wellman, *playwright*
BROOKLYN, NY
Kristof Wickman, *visual artist*
VERONA, WI
Katie Williams, *writer*
AUSTIN, TX
Lex Williford, *writer*
EL PASO, TX
Mark Winges, *composer*
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
Terri Witek, *poet*
DELAND, FL
Pawel Wojtasik, *filmmaker*
BROOKLYN, NY
David Wright, *writer*
URBANA, IL
Caveh Zahedi, *filmmaker*
SAN FRANCISCO, CA
Sabrina Zanella-Foresi, *filmmaker*
BOSTON, MA



Clockwise from top left: Miouly Pongnon, Frances Richard, Karina Skvirsky, Terri Witek, David Wright, and Caveh Zahedi.



Architect **Johannes Knoop** was recently awarded two honors in his field: the 2005 Unbuilt Architecture Award from the Boston chapter of the American Institute of Architects and a People's Choice Award from the New York chapter for his firm's project entitled *Urban Oasis* (pictured above and on the cover).



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