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We Are Not the Same, So Let’s Talk

"If we are the same, we cannot talk, because there is nothing to say. But if you and I are different, there's a lot to exchange."

— Architect and designer Gaetano Pesce

In my first “Letter from the Director” after just a few months on the job, I mused about the challenge of remaining true to our legacy of caring for artists in a turbulent world. I wrote about MacDowell’s need to remain focused on the beauty and bounty of the future in order to continue to fulfill its mission to best support artists. Yet lately it’s become clear to me that we are not the same, it is a fact that we are not the same, and that is brilliant. Let’s just make sure we talk.

In friendship,

Chiwoniso Kaitano
Executive Director

On the Cover

This year, we celebrate what would be MacDowell Fellow James Baldwin’s 100th birthday. We’re featuring Pink Baldwin (acrylic on canvas; 40 in. x 30 in.) on our cover, a 2013 painting by Fellow Harold Smith (22). Baldwin, who wrote novels, essays, plays, and poems, was a sought-after social critic who won acclaim for insights on race, spirituality, and humanity. The author was in residence in 1954, 1958, and 1960, and MacDowell’s library was named for him in 2018.

quote above can be. They have always known it, and have always done it. They have shown us new ways of considering our world, demonstrated new paths to finding joy in both the mundane and the complicated, and presented new perspectives about how we think and feel about the world. We ought to continue to look to them for the light in the darkness, and to recognize the reflections of our own humanity. If we look to our artists for examples of experimentation, inquiry, and finding beauty in their work, we’ll discover new ways of pushing through that clogged intersection of destructive discord to find, if not harmony, then at least a productive way forward.

Never accept hate and fear as normal. Keep finding the beauty in people, in new ideas, in the art you seek out. Share that inspiring work of art as far and wide as you can. While in many ways we are the same, it is a fact that we are not the same, and that is brilliant. Let’s just make sure we talk.

Christine Fisher appointed President of MacDowell Board

MacDowell elected Christine Fisher in late spring to become its next president of the Board of Directors. Fisher, who first joined the board in 2015, replaces outgoing President Andrew M. Senchak, who has held the post since 2017. Fisher won unanimous support at the board’s meeting in April. The election means three of four executive leadership roles at MacDowell are currently held by women.

Fisher joins a leadership team of Chiwoniso Kaitano, who was named executive director in February; David Macy, who has served as resident director since 1994, and MacDowell Fellow Nell Painter, who has chaired the MacDowell board since 2020.

“Christine Fisher has long been a leader on the MacDowell board where she has always demonstrated tremendous thoroughness and generosity in her stewardship,” says Painter. “Her warmth, intelligence and devotion to artistic freedom make her a unique gift to this important institution.”

When she first encountered MacDowell, Fisher says she was impressed by its hands-off approach to offering artists time and space to create with no strings attached. “MacDowell supports artists by believing in their vision and giving them a supportive and inspirational environment in which to realize it. Marian MacDowell devoted her entire life to this simple but transformative idea. My colleagues on MacDowell’s board and I truly feel honored to be able to follow in Marian’s footsteps to sustain and advance that vision.”

Read more about the appointment here.

2023 Pulitzer Prize for Hernan Diaz’s MacDowell Work

Congratulations to author and MacDowell Fellow Hernan Diaz (19) for winning the 2023 Pulitzer Prize in Fiction for Trust, and to Fellows Vauhini Vara (13) and Aleshea Harris (16, 19) who were named finalists!

"At once an immersive story and a brilliant literary puzzle," the Pulitzer Prizes board said in praising Hernan’s "riveting" second novel. "Trust engages the reader in a quest for the truth while confronting the deceptions that often live at the heart of personal relationships, the reality-warping force of capital, and the ease with which power can manipulate facts." A MacDowell-supported work, Hernan reached the novel’s halfway point during his fall 2019 MacDowell residency. #MadeAtMacDowell

Vauhini was a finalist in fiction for The Immortal Kind Rao, the debut novel for which she was awarded her MacDowell Fellowship, and Aleshea was a finalist in drama for her play On Sugarland.

Follow the latest developments, news, and artist updates on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook @MacDowell1907
154 Artists Awarded Fellowships from Near Record Applicant Pool

An international group of 154 talented artists working in multiple disciplines have been awarded Fall 2023/Winter 2024 Fellowships at MacDowell, the nation’s preeminent artist residency program. The renowned Fellowships are distributed by seven discipline-specific admissions panels who choose artists in a blind process based solely on the content of their proposed projects and work samples. This latest group of individuals was chosen from MacDowell’s second largest applicant pool in its history for an admissions rate of 7.6 percent. For this round of Fellowships, 2,034 applications were reviewed by a panel of renowned professionals in each discipline. Read more here.

Four Fellows Win the Rome Prize

The 2023-24 Rome Prize winners include four Fellows (clockwise from left) among the 36 winners of the prestigious award. Kate Soper (13, 18) won the Frederic A. Juilliard/Walter Damrosch Rome Prize for Musical Composition for Orchestra Orpheus Opus Opus. Erica Hunt (23) won the Joseph Brodsky Rome Prize for The Mood Librarian Tells Stories. Elif Batmanman (18) won the John Guare Writers Fund Rome Prize in Literature for Camino Real/The Selin Novels. Jeanine Oleson (16, 22) won the Nancy B. Negley Rome Prize for Visual Arts for Untitled, Work-in-progress.

Netflix Series “Transatlantic” Adapts Orringer’s The Flight Portfolio

Author Julie Orringer’s (4x 05-23) historical novel The Flight Portfolio has been turned into a seven-episode Netflix series called “Transatlantic.” It tells the compelling real-life story – with some fictional characters added – of American journalist Varian Fry who is bent on saving as many artists and writers, most of them Jews, as he can from occupied France at the beginning of World War II. Fry, played by Corey Michael Smith, “works closely with Mary Jayne Gold (Gillian Jacobs), an American heiress who brings her money, energy and connections to the mission, as well as with Albert O. Hirschman (Lucas Engler), a German Jewish intellectual who would become a distinguished American economist.” The series is a must-see about a little-studied slice of history. The Flight Portfolio was adapted for television by Anna Winger (97) (creator of 2020’s Unorthodox). “Transatlantic” premiered in April 2023 and has been one of the streaming site’s most popular shows. Read the New York Times Review.

Thomas J. Campanella (22) published an article in the Times Union with Richard S. Booth called “Leaving Lighter Footprints,” about how efforts to protect the Adiron- dacks have offered lessons for address- ing climate change.

Michael Scott Moore (19) sailed with a German rescue ship, the Humanity 1, to write about migration across the central Mediterranean. Two pieces were recently published on the experience, one in English and the other in German. The German version ran in Die Zeit in late June with his original title, “Rafts of the Medusa,” and the English version ran in Foreign Policy under a different title, “The Libyan Coast Guard Is Not What It Seems.”

Fellow Wins Big with the Windham-Campbell Prize

Playwright Jasmine Lee-Jones (22) won a $175,000 unrestricted Windham-Campbell prize for her playwrighting this spring. These global English-language awards are aimed at calling attention to literary achievement and provide writers with the opportunity to focus on their work independent of financial concerns. Lee-Jones was singled out for her “iconoclastic plays [that] reinvigorate the vernacular of contemporary theater for a new generation,” according to the judges. Writers are nominated by a new group of judges each year for a body of work or outstanding promise. In Lee-Jones’s case, judges were impressed with the playwright’s debut, seven methods of killing Kylie Jenner, a “provocative, wildly funny story about a self-proclaimed Twitter activist, Cleo, and her best friend, Kara,” and her next effort, 2021’s Curious. Both plays deal with body image, colorism, cultural appropriation, and queer- ness in contemporary culture.

2023 Tony Winners and Nominations for Six Fellows

With its five Tony Awards, Kimberly Akimbo, “a small-scale, big-hearted show” created by Jeanine Tesori (20) and playwright David Lindsay-Abaire, was the most awarded work of 2023. Winning for Best Musical, it also earned Tonys for Best Original Score, which was written by Jeanine and David, as well as for Book of a Musical, Lead Actress, and Featured Actress! In accepting this year’s Tony for Best Revival, Susan-Lori Parks (99, 91, 95) praised actors Yahya Abdul-Mateen II and Corey Hawkins for “living large in a world that often does not want the likes of us living at all” and added, “Theater is the great cure.”

In addition to the winners, four Fellows earned nominations: Best Original Score for KPOP with music and lyrics by Helen Park and Max Vernon (18, 22) as well as for Almost Famous with music by Tom Kitt (17, 19) and music by Cameron Crowe and Kitt; Best Scenic Design of a Musical for Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street with design by Mimi Lien (12); and Best Direction of a Musical for Into the Woods, directed by Lear deBessonet (12).

Fellow Picks up His Second Obie Award

Congratulations are due to Jared Mezzoc- chi (17, 20) for winning his second Obie for the digital/virtual Hybrid production of Russian Troll Farm. The work is a digital production inspired by the Russian trolling campaign on social media that was said to have boosted Donald Trump’s successful run for the White House in 2016.
Hansol Jung’s *Wolf Play* Wins Five Lortels

Hansol Jung’s (14, 19) above Wolf Play won 2023 Lucille Lortel Awards for Outstanding Play, Outstanding Ensemble, Outstanding Scenic Design, Outstanding Director (Dustin Wills), Outstanding Music in a Play, and Outstanding Adaptation for a Doll’s House. A Jeff Award was presented to playwright Tina Fakhrid-Deen (20) for her play *Pulled Punches*, which she edited at MacDowell. Pulled Punches was the recipient of the Best New Work for the 2023 Jeff Awards for Non-Equity Theater.

More Theatre News and Awards

**TWO FELLOWS RECEIVE DRAMA DESK AWARDS**

The 2023 Drama Desk Awards ceremony held this summer resulted in two MacDowell Fellows receiving the awards for which productions on Broadway, Off Broadway, and Off Off Broadway compete against each other in the same categories. They are voted on and bestowed by critics, journalists, editors, and publishers covering theater. Congratulations are due to Suzan-Lori Parks (3x 89-95) whose play *For the Plague Year* won for Outstanding Music in a Play, and Amy Herzog (15) wins Outstanding Adaptation for *A Doll’s House. A Jeff Award was presented to playwright Tina Fakhrid-Deen (20) for her play *Pulled Punches*, which she edited at MacDowell. Pulled Punches was the recipient of the Best New Work for the 2023 Jeff Awards for Non-Equity Theater.

Christina Anderson (18) won a Steinberg/American Theatre Critics Association Award (ATCA; $25K) for the play *the ripple, the wave that carried me home*. ATCA also presented Suzan-Lori Parks (3x 89-95) with a citation for her work. In June, Ekaterina Wagner (23) presented a public reading of her play *How (Not) to Offend a Partisan* at the Portland Playhouse. This short satirical play, partly based on the trial of Alexey Navalny in 2021, is a collective portrait of contemporary Russian society emboldened in a vicious cycle of lawlessness and absurdity.

Lauren Taslitz (20) released *Regretting Almost Everything*, a two-person musical comedy about a middle-aged woman who loves her husband and kids, but wants more out of her later years.

Two Fellows Named 2023 Herb Alpert Award Winners

Congratulations to filmmaker Christopher Harris (18) and composer Erin Gee (13) who are among 11 winners of this year’s Herb Alpert Award in the Arts, which are presented to “risk-taking, mid-career artists – experimenters – who are challenging and transforming art, their respective disciplines, and society.” Fifteen highly regarded leaders in the arts made up the panels reviewing the candidates and selecting two award recipients in each of five disciplines: dance, film/video, music, theatre, and visual arts.

Two MacDowell-supported poetry collections win 2023 Lambda Literary Awards

As *She Appears*, by Shelley Wong (17, at left above), won the ‘Lammy’ in the Lesbian Poetry category, and *Real Phones and Genuine Fakes*, by Nicky Beer (17, above right), won for Bisexual Poetry.

Sarah Holland-Batt Wins Stella Prize

Congratulations to poet Sarah Holland-Batt (13, 15) who collected this year’s Stella Prize, a $60,000 AUD ($40,000 USD) prize considered Australia’s pre-eminent award for women and non-binary writers. Holland-Batt won for her poetry collection *The Jaguar, her third. The collection focuses on her father’s Parkinson’s diagnosis and his eventual death from the disease.

Eight Fellows Win AAAL Literature and Music Awards

The American Academy of Arts and Letters presented 18 writers with its 2023 literature awards this spring. Among them, five are MacDowell Fellows. The prizes honor both established and emerging writers of fiction, nonfiction, drama, and poetry. The winners included Jennifer Croft (16, 21), Mona Mansour (18), Hernan Diaz (19), Lauren Groff (12, 16), and Jacqueline Woodson (4x 90-09). The Academy’s 300 members propose candidates, and a rotating committee of writers selects winners. This year’s committee members were Amy Hempel (chair), John Guare, Elizabeth Kolbert, Sigrid Nunez (4x 89-10), Mona Simpson (4x 84-96), Rosanna Warren, and Joy Williams.

New Releases Made at MacDowell

*List of new releases made at MacDowell*

\[ List of new releases made at MacDowell \]

Lithhub’s Most Anticipated Books for 2023

\[ List of most anticipated books for 2023 \]

\[ List of most anticipated books for 2023 cont. \]
Elgin Cleckley

Discussed his MacDowell Project at the UK’s National Maritime Museum

Architect Elgin Cleckley (22) spoke at The National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, UK in April discussing “Brookes (Revisited),” an upcoming exhibition he worked on at MacDowell making use of models, drawings, and interactive elements. “Brookes (Revisited) is a humanization of the iconic drawing “Stowage of the British Slave Ship Brookes under the Regulated Slave Trade Act of 1788” that was presented as an example of the inhumane treatment of slaves in the Atlantic slave trade when attempts to abolish the practice first emerged in 1789s in Great Britain. Cleckley outlined his journey to developing the installation/exhibition and detailed how the work melds art, architecture, history, and storytelling, incorporating three decades of research and compiled data. The work will exhibit in national and global locations beginning in 2024.

Venice Biennale’s Silver Lion Awarded to Olalekan Jeyifous

Fellow Olalekan Jeyifous (16, 23) won the prestigious Silver Lion for a promising young participant in The Laboratory of the Future (above) at the 18th Venice Biennale for architecture. Jeyifous won for a multimedia installation “that explores a worldbuilding practice that expands public perspectives and imaginations, offering visions of a decolonized and decarbonized future” via a hypothetical All-Africa Protoport (AAP) lounge.

Architect Richard Hayes Presents to Henry James Society

Architect Richard Hayes (Sx 01-16) presented a paper at the 9th International Henry James Conference in Kyoto, Japan in a seminar section on “communicating in style.” The presentation was called (Re)thinking Food and Eating in James.

National Magazine Award for Tolentino

Essayist and journalist Jia Tolentino (18), a staff writer for The New Yorker, won a National Magazine Award this past spring for her writing about the repeal of Roe v. Wade. The prize, conferred by the American Society of Magazine Editors, honored Tolentino in the Columns and Essays category, recognizing three pieces published during the tumultuous months before and after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade. “A Post-Roe Threat,” “The Post-Roe Era,” and “Is Abortion Sacred?”

Ukrainian Diary

Performed in Boston

Jazz pianist and composer Vadim Neselovsky (12, 15) performed his Odessa Suite as well as a preview of his current work-in-progress Ukrainian Diary for piano and string trio in Boston at Congregation Kehilath Israel. He also appeared in Bologna, Italy, at the Ustica Memorial Museum (pictured above).

Other Literary Honors

Kathy Z. Price (23) was named the Rona Jaffe Non-fiction Scholar at Bread Loaf Hill Isler (19) received a McKnight Fellowship for her in-progress novel. A $25k award for which Fellow Alexander Chee (O4, 07) was judge. Novelist Roxana Robinson (99, 10) was honored by the Authors Guild with the Preston Award for Distinguished Service to the Literary Community.

Composer Laurence Sherr (02) released Fugitive Footsteps: Remembrance Music. An album preview video is available here.

Christopher Willies (16) released a double-album and book, Resonance Gathering (pictured below), documenting a large-scale performance project on the music of avant-garde composer Pauline Oliveros (1932-2016). The project is also part of Discover Your Earpick, a group exhibition at Museo d’Arte Joliette.

Composer Lembit Beecher (15, 23) had a busy spring. The choir Cantori NY conducted by Mark Shapiro presented a newly revised version of his choral cantata The New Amorous World. The Aizuri Quartet continued touring Beecher’s These Are Not Estonian Flowers along the East Coast. Sasha Cooke and Kirill Kuzmin presented how do i find you, including Beecher’s song “After the Fires,” at Merkin Hall in New York. Finally, A Year to the Day, Beecher’s song cycle written with librettist Mark Campbell (98, 99, 01) continues to stream on the Violin Channel.
Fellows Works Abound in Season’s Film Festivals

The spring and summer film festivals were busy for MacDowell filmmakers as premieres and screenings of films were lined up at Tribeca, New York, and Toronto. Sheffield DocFest, Cannes Director’s Fortnight, and True/False film festivals.

At Tribeca Film Festival 2023: The short film lineup included Cam’S Mementos, a documentary directed by Cam Archer (10) (world premiere). The feature film lineup included The Adults, starring Hannah Gross (19) with Michael Sera and Sophia Lillis in a story about three siblings reunited (North American premiere). The International Narrative Competition screened Boca Chica (world premiere), directed by Gabriella A Moses, written by Maritæ Uå (16) and Mariana Rondón (16). The Documentary Competition screened Richland, directed by Irene Lustzig (06, 22), and produced by Lustzig and Sara Archambault (world premiere). The film is about a town in Washington formed to play a big part in the Manhattan Project. The film had its world premiere at Tribeca followed by international premiere at Sheffield DocFest in the UK. Lustzig worked on the final edit of the film during her recent residency, and was also awarded a 2021 Guggenheim Fellowship to support her work on the film.

At New York Film Fest: Featured films included Janet Planet from Annie Baker (4x 09-19), La Práctica from Martín Rejman (09), Last Things from Deborah Stratman (3x 10-21), The Night’s Work from Michael Gittin (06, 16), and Mangosteem + We Don’t Talk Like We Used To from Tulapop Saenjaroen and Joshua Gen Solondz (19). The festival’s Currents Programming included Q&A sessions during which Fellows Justin Jinsoo Kim (22), Steve Reinke (19), Maryam Tafakory (23) and Kevin Jerome Everson (03, 12) took part.

At the 2023 Toronto Film Fest: Feature Films included Filspide from Chris Wilcha (03) (world premiere), Special Presentations included Quiz Lady by Jessica Yu (06, 98) (world premiere), and Short Cuts included I Used to Live There by Ryan McKenna (21). Fellow Films included in the Wavelengths Programs included Mast-Del by Maryam Tafakory (23), We Don’t Talk Like We Used To by Joshua Gen Solondz (19), Sundown Picture of Maple Leaf by Steve Reinke (19), and Light, Noise, Smoke, and Light, Noise, Smoke by Tomonari Ichiya (19). 2023 Cannes Directors’ Fortnight: The feature selection at Cannes Fortnight was Aga by Kanu Behl (18) while the Short Films category included Mast-Del by Maryam Tafakory (23).

Cannes César Award to Subrin’s Maria Schneider, 1983

Elisabeth Subrin’s (6x 02-17) Maria Schneider, 1983, co-starring Isabel Sandoval (20), had its world premiere at Cannes and received a César Award for Best Documentary Short. Albert Serra’s (19) feature Pacification also took home the awards for cinematography and best actor. Both films were supported by MacDowell residencies.

The Listening Takes, an immersive video installation version of Maria Schneider, 1983, opened at Brown University’s gallery in February and included an event with Subrin and Sandoval. The installation presents three portraits of Schneider (1952–2011) within an immersive video, video, and sculptural installation. Collaborating with the women who portray Schneider (Manal Issa, Aïssa Maiga, and Sandoval), The Listening Takes focuses on Schneider’s refusal during a 1983 interview to discuss her controversial lead role opposite Marlon Brando in Last Tango in Paris (1972) and the non-consensual sex scene that she was subjected to on the set. As she articulates her perspective as a woman within the film industry, Schneider reveals a devastating prescience about the ways women are defined within and beyond cinema. Subrin’s project untethers Schneider from Tango and allows the nuances of her interview to be reimagined within three extraordinary performances.

Interdisciplinary Shows

Cathy Weis (08) hosted several shows in her space Weisacres in New York. https://cathyweis.org/

Composer Chase Elodia (22) performed his interdisciplinary project “Walking in the City” (pictured below) at National Sawdust. Elodia invited eight intergenerational, multiracial, and transcultural writers from across Brooklyn to submit a text inspired by the experience of walking down a street in their neighborhood.

Corl Spencer’s (19) work (pictured above) was in the group show “ANTI - VENOM” at The Arts Center at Governors Island in New York.

Interdisciplinary artist Bundi Phunombatier (11, 22) exhibited “Mapping Fragments” at the Brooklyn Public Library (Central).

Sketches for Three Voices is a spoken performance of text by poet Joanna Klink (08, 17), painter Francesca Fuchs (17), and curator Annette Carlucci. It premiered at testsite in Austin this past spring. The piece was created in response to a group of Fuchs’ paintings and sculptures installed in the downstairs rooms of testsite, an art space and private home.
Hasselblad Foundation Prize Awarded to Carrie Mae Weems

Photographer Carrie Mae Weems (14) has won the Hasselblad Foundation’s 2023 Hasselblad Award in October, an exhibition of her work opened at the Hasselblad Center in Gothenburg, Sweden, and a new text about her practice will be released.

Solo Exhibits and Appearances

“Technosignatures” was Amy Ellingson’s (10) third solo exhibition with Robischon Gallery in Denver. She showed a collection of paintings, robotic drawings, tapestries, and porcelain sculptures.

https://www.ameyllingson.com/techno-signatures-robischon-gallery

Painter Harmony Hammond (3x 79-17) had her sixth exhibition, “Accumulations,” with Alexander Gray Associates in New York.

Visual artist Sonia E Barrett (14) exhibited a site-specific installation, Here Tal, Quantum Black, at the International Curators Forum in London, addressing the material histories of flint, the black sedimentary rock used in Britain to construct tools, structures, and weaponry.

Anthony Hawley’s (12, 23) “Geograpologies” showed at New York’s LUBOV gallery.

Frauke Schlitz’s (17) solo show “Pandemic Architectures” (pictured below) opened at John Jay College’s Shiva Gallery in Manhattan.

10 Fellows Receive Prestigious Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grants

Congratulations are due to 10 MacDowell Fellows for winning 2022-2023 Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grants. The Fellows are among 93 international visual artists from 15 countries and 14 states selected by the foundation this year to receive nearly $2.7 million in grants. Since 1985, the foundation has served as one of the leaders in providing resources to emerging and established artists internationally.

MacDowell Fellows include:

- Josh Dorman (2019)
- Hong Hong (2020)
- Kakyung Lee (2003, 2005)
- Fouke Schlitz (2017)
- Kazumi Tanaka (2015)
- Rehab El Sadek (2020)
- Ben Durham (2017)
- Yevgeniya Baras (2015)

Group Shows and Exhibitions

Edward MacDowell Medal Presented to Filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin

More than a thousand arts lovers from around the region gathered on Sunday, July 23 as the 63rd Edward MacDowell Medal was presented to esteemed filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin during a free and open-to-the-public celebration.

After a brief award ceremony, visitors enjoyed a picnic lunch before artists-in-residence opened their studios to the public, giving attendees the unique opportunity to look behind the scenes of the nation’s oldest artist residency and speak with creators about their work.

A member of the Abenaki Nation and one of Canada’s most distinguished filmmakers, Obomsawin joins an august group of other MacDowell Medal winners such as Robert Frost (1962), Georgia O’Keeffe (1972), Leonard Bernstein (1987), Louise Bourgeois (1990), I.M. Pei (1998), Sonny Rollins (2010), Stephen Sondheim (2013), Toni Morrison (2016), Charles Gaines (2019), Rosanne Cash (2021), and Sonia Sanchez (2022).

Obomsawin, an Abenaki who was born in New Hampshire, which occupies the traditional homelands of the Western Abenaki people, has 56 films to her credit produced by the National Film Board of Canada (NFB), including landmark documentaries like Kanehsatake: 270 Years of Resistance (1993), documenting the 1990 Mohawk uprising in the villages of Kanehsatake and Oka, Quebec, and the groundbreaking Incident at Restigouche (1984), a behind-the-scenes look at Quebec police raids on a Mi’kmaq reserve. Obomsawin’s 2019 production Jordan River Anderson, The Messenger completed a seven-film cycle devoted to the rights of Indigenous children and peoples, which began in 2011 when she conducted her first interviews for The People of the Kattawapiskak River.

In his remarks outlining Obomsawin’s place in the world of art, author Jesse Wente said the filmmaker “has provided the microphone for many to use their voices to speak truth to power. Her cinema ethic that persists. … It is a decolonial approach that existed before such notions were the topic of dissertations, university courses or training seminars … Her cinema is of the people in a way that most documentaries never even attempt to be. That too has provided a path for an Indigenous cinema ethic that persists.” It is community-based filmmaking embodied by one individual and her work.”

Elana Herzog (18, 22) had work in group exhibitions (example above), including “philosophicalinvestigations” curated by Franklin Evans at Platform Projects Space in Brooklyn, “Impulse of An Era” by art trader Michael Findlay, and in its glowing review by the editor of the German art magazine Monopol.

Susan Schwalb (74, 75, 89) participated in several group exhibitions: “Music as Image and Metaphor” (example above) at the Kentler Drawing Space, “The 2023 National Arts Club Artist Members Exhibition” at The National Arts Club in New York, and “The 31st Annual National Arts Club Roundtable Exhibition” at the club’s Trask Gallery.

Polly Apfelbaum (92, 93), Martha Clippinger (13), and Julia Rommel (15) showed recent work in “Chromazones” at Analog Diary in New York.

Five MacDowell Fellows, Cadence Gibbonsback (97), Valerie Hegarty (13), Julia Jacquette (9x 95-15), Cyriaco Lopes (19), and Gelah Penn (89), showed work in “Mirror Milk” at Satchel Projects in New York. The show gets its inception from the story of Alice (of Alice in Wonderland), as a ramification of an original curiosity and a perpetual desire for that which lies on the other side—and, inversely, the counter-force of denial and loss—a perpetual circuit. The show seeks to explore the mutual longing of one side for the other, the tantalizing impossibility and the wonder that drives us.

Vicki Sher (13) participated in two group shows. Re-Surface in April at the George Gallery in Charleston, SC, and Future Fair at Chelsea Industrial with Frosch & Co Gallery in Charleston, SC, and The 2023 National Arts Club Artist Members Exhibition” at The MacDowell Club, which drew a large audience from across the region.

The Edward MacDowell Medal was established in 1903 and is presented annually to a distinguished artist in recognition of his or her contributions to the arts. The Medal is the highest honor conferred by the MacDowell Colony. Since its inception, the Medal has been awarded to more than 200 artists in a variety of creative disciplines, including writers, composers, visual artists, and performing artists. The MacDowell Medal Day event is held each July to celebrate the achievements of past Medal recipients and to recognize new recipients.

The MacDowell Colony is an artist residency located in Peterborough, New Hampshire. It has been a haven for artists of all disciplines to create, collaborate, and connect in a supportive environment. The Colony provides a unique opportunity for artists to work away from the pressures of daily life and share their ideas in a community of peers.

The MacDowell Medal Day event is open to the public and features a speech by the new Medal recipient, a celebration of past winners, and an opportunity to explore the work of current artists-in-residence. This year’s event took place on July 23, 2023, with Alanis Obomsawin, an Abenaki filmmaker who has made groundbreaking documentaries on Indigenous rights and resistance, being honored with the Medal.

The event began with a brief award ceremony where the Medal was presented to Obomsawin, followed by a public celebration and tour of the colony’s studios, allowing visitors to witness the creative process of the residents. The event also featured an exhibition of Obomsawin’s work, which highlighted her dedication to cultural representation and the importance of Indigenous voices in the arts.

The MacDowell Medal Day event is an annual celebration of the arts and ongoing support for artists. It serves as a platform for the MacDowell Colony to honor its past winners and new recipients, fostering a continued commitment to the arts and the community’s support for creative expression.
MEDAL DAY

Watch videos and read transcripts of speeches here

Clockwise from top left: Painter June Edmonds with visitors to Eastman Studio; picnickers, including MacDowell Board Member Monica Lehner, enjoy the afternoon sun before open studio visits; interdisciplinary artist Cristóbal Cea welcomes visitors to Alexander Studio; speaker and best-selling author Jesse Wente gives Edward MacDowell Medalist Alanis Obomsawin a kiss after offering context for the award in his introductory remarks as Madam Chairman of the Board Nell Painter looks on.

Clockwise from top: The Medal Day crowd reacts to Nell Painter’s welcome; Ceremony participants Resident Director David Macy, Board Chair Nell Painter, introductory speaker Jesse Wente, Board President Christine Fisher, Medalist Alanis Obomsawin, and Executive Director Chiwoniso Kaitano; attendees make their ways to open artist studios; Fellows Ayelet Waldman and Michael Chabon enjoy a humorous moment during the speeches.
More than 350 Fellows, board members, and guests joined us at the Ziegfeld Ballroom in New York City for our annual MacDowell National Benefit on October 16. Featuring performances and work by MacDowell Fellows, the festive evening also included the presentation of the fourth annual Marian MacDowell Arts Advocacy Award to Fairfax Dorn, co-founder and artistic director of Ballroom Marfa. Special guest and conceptual artist Adam Pendleton presented Dorn with the award and spoke about her life-long commitment to supporting and centering artists’ needs. During an evening that celebrated Dorn for her significant support of artists, guests raised more than $750,000 in funds to provide critical operating support for the 300 artists that come to MacDowell each year from all corners of the globe.

Hosted by Tony Award-nominated actor, writer, and producer Sharon Washington, the benefit also included performances by Fellows of original works, including a kanun performance by Firas Zreik (23), an excerpt from Daniel and Patrick Lazour’s (18) musical We Live in Cairo, and a duet from James Brandon Lewis (22) and Kirk Knuffke. MacDowell Executive Director Chiwoniso Kaitano and Benefit Committee Co-chair and board member Katie Firth both spoke about the unique and powerful effect MacDowell has had on our culture, and the essential space MacDowell provides for artists to come to make work and build community. The celebration included a cocktail hour, dinner, and a paddle raise as well as closing remarks by board member, Fellow, and author Elliott Holt. (14, 17).

This year’s Benefit also featured artwork MacDowell Fellow Torkwase Dyson (16) and postcard prints of Erin Shirreff’s (09) Surface Capital. As guests exited at the end of the evening, they browsed several bookcase walls filled with books by MacDowell Fellows, which they were encouraged to take home and enjoy.
MacDowell Downtown Wraps Up 20th Season

In June, photographer Tanya Marcuse (18, 23, pictured top right) talked about the intricate manipulations and staging behind her large-scale photographs that blend constructed fictions and real landscapes to create fantastical scenes. In July, graphic novelist James Sturm (08, 15) spoke about the simple power of the comic book to deliver complex concepts through constructed fictions and real landscapes.

Finally, in November, visual artist Tatiana Arocha (23) closed the 2023 MacDowell Downtown season by presenting still images and video to immerse the audience in representations of the forests of her native Colombia in an effort “to promote conversation to examine the connections between the War on Drugs and depletion of the rainforest.”

Save These Dates! MAY 18, 2024 The New Hampshire Benefit JULY 21, 2024 Medal Day OCTOBER 21, 2024 The National Benefit in NYC

MacDowell Downtown continued through spring and summer, with editions at both the Monadnock Center for History and Culture as well as the Peterborough Town Library. In May, composer and first-time fellow Firas Zreik (23) demonstrated his virtuosity on the kanun, a 78-stringed instrument common to the eastern Mediterranean region. In Zreik’s capable hands, it is capable of bridging genres from flamenco to Brazilian, and western classical to the blues.

Graphic novelist James Sturm spoke at the Monadnock Summer Lyceum hosted by the Unitarian Universalist Congregation in Peterborough in July.

In October, composer Paul Brantley (6x 94-23) played solo cello pieces, presented video of a recent commission, and spoke about his project composing a sonata for cello and piano—his first—for Laura Metcalf. He was joined by playwright Sam Grabiner (23) who read three James Joyce poems Brantley put to music for a double-bass and vocal performance.

During her last MacDowell residency in 1994, she met and, for the next three decades, worked with Writers in the Schools (WITS) and the James Baldwin Library, and the mainstay of keeping up 31 studios, three dormitories, and the upkeep of 31 studios, three dormitories, and the mainstay of keeping 31 studios, three dormitories, and the mainstay of keeping 31 studios, three dormitories, and the mainstay of keeping 31 studios, three dormitories, and the mainstay of keeping 31 studios.

In the same frame, Iduma reimagined his home city in multi-layered and evocative images he was editing at MacDowell.

Rolaine Hochstein I Writer Rolaine Hochstein, who may have been best known for her short stories, died September 11, 2023. She was 94. She was in residence five times beginning in 1975. Hochstein published features and profiles for the Washington Post, the Toronto Star, Cosmopolitan, Redbook, Ms. Magazine, and Good Housekeeping before turning her hand to fiction, with two novels, Stepping Out (Norton, 1977) and Table 47 (Doubleday, 1986). She also wrote more than 48 short stories, many of which have been translated into French, Hungarian, Chinese, and Japanese. They have also been anthologized in two O. Henry Prize anthologies and a Pushcart Prize anthology, and four have appeared in La Revista magazine in Colombia. She was awarded fellowships from MacDowell, Yaddo, and the New York City Arts. She worked with Writers in the Schools (WITS) with the New Jersey Writers Project. Among her proudest accomplishments was having been the oldest mentor with the writing program Girls Write Now. During her last MacDowell residency in 1994, she met and, for the next three decades, worked with Writers in the Schools (WITS) and the James Baldwin Library, and the mainstay of keeping up 31 studios, three dormitories, and the upkeep of 31 studios, three dormitories, and the mainstay of keeping 31 studios, three dormitories, and the mainstay of keeping 31 studios, three dormitories, and the mainstay of keeping 31 studios.

Shirley Schnell I Painter and illustrator Shirley Ann Luke Schnell, and educator who had a 42-year career teaching in the foundations department at the Kansas City Art Institute (KCAI), died at home in Independence, Missouri, on March 30, 2023. She was 86. Shirley earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Minnesota College of Art & Design in 1958 and a Master of Fine Arts from Yale University in 1963. After graduation from

James Sturm I Composer Craig Shuler, who directed numerous choirs and bands, and holds the distinction of being commissioned by American Ballet Theater to score a new ballet by Robert Weiss at the age of 26, died November 1, 2022 in Oneonta, NY. After earning a bachelor of music degree in composition from North Texas State University and master’s and doctoral degrees in composition from the Julliard School where he studied with Elliott Carter and Roger Sessions, he was awarded the George Gershwin Memorial Foundation Scholarship and Alexander Gretchaninoff Memorial Prize. He also earned an ABD degree in musicology from NYU. Shuler studied composition, theory, musicology, conducting, and piano in Florence Italy; at Northwestern University, and with artists of the Chicago Symphony, New York Pro-Arte Chorale, and the Pittsburgh Sym-phony. He was in residence in 1973, 1976, and 2012. A Fulbright sent him to study in Italy with Maestro Luigi Dallapiccola in 1974. He was on the dance faculty at Julliard, teaching literature and materials of music, and he also taught composition at Julliard’s pre-college. He also taught at Moravian College, Hartwick College, and SUNY Oneonta. He was deeply involved in the musical theatre scene in Oneonta, as well as many other productions around upstate New York, and directed the Oneo- nia Boys Choir.

Yale Shirley taught at the Minneapolis College of Art & Design and the University of Minnesota Minneapolis. In 1961 she married photographer Lloyd Schnell and in 1966 the couple moved to Kansas City where they both took teaching positions at KCAI. She was in residence in 1976. Her work has been shown throughout the United States and in Canada, Japan, and Ireland. She exhibited at the Invitational Easter at the White House in 1987. Her work resides in the permanent collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C., and at the State His torical Society of Missouri. She was the recipient of numerous fellowships and awards, including the Missouri Governor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Craig Shuler I Composer Craig Shuler, who directed numerous choirs and bands, and holds the distinction of being commissioned by American Ballet Theater to score a new ballet by Robert Weiss at the age of 26, died November 1, 2022 in Oneonta, NY. After earning a bachelor of music degree in composition from North Texas State University and master’s and doctoral degrees in composition from the Julliard School where he studied with Elliott Carter and Roger Sessions, he was awarded the George Gershwin Memorial Foundation Scholarship and Alexander Gretchaninoff Memorial Prize. He also earned an ABD degree in musicology from NYU. Shuler studied composition, theory, musicology, conducting, and piano in Florence Italy; at Northwestern University, and with artists of the Chicago Symphony, New York Pro-Arte Chorale, and the Pittsburgh Sym-phony. He was in residence in 1973, 1976, and 2012. A Fulbright sent him to study in Italy with Maestro Luigi Dallapiccola in 1974. He was on the dance faculty at Julliard, teaching literature and materials of music, and he also taught composition at Julliard’s pre-college. He also taught at Moravian College, Hartwick College, and SUNY Oneonta. He was deeply involved in the musical theatre scene in Oneonta, as well as many other productions around upstate New York, and directed the Oneo- nia Boys Choir.

Read more about these great talents and others on their pages here at MacDowell.org
Lewis Spratlan | Composer Lewis Spratlan, who won a Pulitizer Prize for the opera Life is a Dream 22 years after he completed the work, died on February 9, 2023 in Lumberton, N.J. He was 82. He was destined to a performing career as an oboist when he applied to a graduate program to be a composer and taught music while he wrote. He said he found profound importance and kept at it for 36 years. He was in residence six times between 1976 and 1986. Spratlan finally raised enough money to fund two performances of its second act in January 2000, then submitted the piece to the Pulitzer committee. A few months later, he discovered that he had won on the afternoon of April 10, 2000, while in a meeting with a student at Amherst College. Despite his enthusiasm for the work, he was caught off-guard by its success. He was in residence in 1971 and 1975. Spratlan was an early experimenter with the collagraph and is often credited with the invention of the Maserstone-intaglio process. His method of creating his collographs is described on pages 322 and 323 of Fritz Eichenberg’s informative book on the history of printmaking, The Art of the Print. Spratlan has also worked as a sculptor, including working with precast concrete murals and wood. Once retired from teaching, he dedicated his life to the preservation and recording of Hawaiian Petroglyphys, ensuring that the enduring legacy of Hawaiian Rock Art will be preserved. Spratlan has held numerous one-man exhibitions in the United States and abroad, including at the Honolulu Academy of Arts (1961, ’69, ’76, and ’87); Downtown Gallery, New York (1965); Cleveland Institute of Art (1976); exhibitions in Anarka, Istanbul, Izmir, and Bucharest (1976); Armstic Center, Hono- lulu (1979); among others. His work is included in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art; New York Public Library; the Brooklyn Museum; Library of Congress; the San Fran- cisco Museum of Modern Art; Museum of Modern Art, New York; and several others.

Ronald Steel | Writer Ronald Steel, an historian who remained steadfastly critical of U.S. postwar and Cold War policy, and wrote prolifically in essays and books, died May 7, 2023 in Washington, D.C. He was 92. In his obituary, Steel is described by The New York Times as “a bookish, small-town boy from Illinois who became a soldier, wanderer, translator, diplomat, journalist, author and profes- sor.” He graduated from Northwestern University in 1953 with a B.A. in political science and English and earned a mas- ter’s degree in political economy from Harvard in 1955. He served in the U.S. Army in Paris as a translator, joined the Foreign Service and became vice consul of St. Luke’s before turning her experiences in the classical music world into the best-selling and critically lauded memoir. The book was optioned by actor Jason Schwartzman, who with his cousin Roman Coppola, director Paul Weitz, and Broadway director Alex Tim- bers created the Amazon series. The show, which starred Lola Kirke, Gael Garcia Bernal (who won a Golden Globe Award for his performance), Bernadette Peters, and Malcolm McDowell, ran for four seasons (2014-2018). The series won a 2016 Golden Globe for Best Comedy Series. Tindall also performed on various film soundtracks including The Inbetweeners, Crooklyn, and Malcolm X. Her cover story on John Steinbeck’s tidepools appeared in the May/ June 2004 issue of Sierra Magazine.

Joe Swayne | Joseph (Joe) Couse Swayne, photographer and journalist, and a long-time teacher who inspired students to seek the truth in words and imagery, died July 11, 2022 at home in Rockport, MA of congestive heart failure. He was 77. A 1966 graduate of Williams College, Joe spent a year in Vietnam as a U.S. Army information officer, writing news stories, making photographs, and escorting journal- ists in the field. He said that a day he spent with Larry Burrows, a legendary British combat photographer, inspired him to make photography a part of his life. Swayne returned to Massa- chusetts to work for the Bennington Banner and the Berkshire Eagle for a time before becoming a teacher and sharing his passion for journalism with students at Noble and Greenough School in Dedham, MA for 23 years. He also taught the Young Photographers class for many summers at the Maine Photographic Workshops. He was in residence in 2001. Swayne led numerous student trips that included canoeing down the Hudson River, as well as biking adventures in Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos, and along the coast of California. And he always had his camera in hand, captur- ing portraits of life and nature. Over the years, Swayne student disciples ended up at The Boston Globe, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, Washing- ton Post, National Geographic, and other media outlets.

MacDowell is grateful for the generous support of the following organizations:
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MacDowell awards Fellowships to artists of exceptional talent, providing time, space, and an inspiring environment in which to do creative work. MacDowell was founded in 1907 by composer Edward MacDowell and pianist Marian Nevins 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. MacDowell 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 website at [www.macdowell.org](http://www.macdowell.org).

**Madam Chairman:** Nell Painter  
**President:** Christine Fisher  
**Executive Director:** Chiwoniso Kaitano  
**Resident Director:** David Macy

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**Tom Nussbaum** (06, 05, 07) and his studio (pictured) appeared on the new TV show ArtNation on the Smithsonian Channel. Brassworks Gallery in Montclair, NJ, hosted his show *Step Right Up* and he was honored by the Montclair Art Museum at their gala.

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**MacDowell** is published twice a year. We also produce a bimonthly eNews and are active on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. Fellows may send newsworthy items to be included to fellowsnews@macdowell.org.

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The names of MacDowell Fellows and works conceived and/or created during residencies are noted in **bold** throughout this newsletter.