



Vol. 50, No. 2, Winter-Spring 2022

IN THIS ISSUE >

**MacDowell Admissions Dept. Ramps Up After Surge in New Applicants 3**

**Sonia Sanchez, Poet, Will Receive 2022 MacDowell Medal 5**

**MacDowell to Receive \$15,000 Grant From the NEA 7**

**Caroline Shaw Wins a Grammy Award! 14**

**Swimming in It: Art And (Im)Morality, an essay by Jen Silverman 21**

Architects | Composers | Filmmakers | Interdisciplinary Artists | Theatre Artists | Visual Artists | Writers





◉ LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Stasis as Entitlement/Transformation as Hope



Recently on a cloudless spring day, a bright pink delivery van came to a sudden screeching halt at a corner on 8th Avenue in Chelsea, just in my line of vision. There was oddly no one else around. Emblazoned across the side of the van was this aphorism formally painted in bright red typeset: REMEMBER: CHANGE IS SCARY BUT SO IS STAYING THE SAME.

I wondered if this abrupt mobile communicate was slated for just my eyes when the van peeled off, weaving its way through uptown traffic toward what I imagined were other unsuspecting on-lookers who also needed provocation – or perhaps assurance.

I recently had the pleasure of reading an extraordinary book by MacDowell Fellow **Pamela Petro** (14). THE LONG FIELD is part travelogue, part memoir, part anthropological inquiry – most of all an ardent and intoxicating story. For me the book is an excavation of human capacity and yearning, serving up a bounty of disquieting questions. Ms. Petro aspires to plumb the very meaning of our vulnerable existences and the impossibilities of making solid sense of how this life resonates.

*There is no by-standing.  
If you're here, you have to change  
And will that change take place all around you.*

—Heather Christian, *An Oratorio for Living Things*

In the end, her exquisitely wrought and poetic observations inspired me with a new perception of hope.

Her story is set largely in Wales, a country she visited for the first time in her 20's, and has since re-visited again and again as she grows older, in a quest of an elusive feeling. Over several decades, she learns much of the Welsh language and history, provides fascinating research on a culture with which I was not familiar, falls in love, and keeps returning to the Welsh idea of “hiraeth.” Since in the end, the word itself cannot satisfactorily be translated into English, I won't try to do that. In effect, the entire book is a treasure hunt for a defined enlightenment of the concept.

The title, *The Long Field*, is in fact a real topographic and figurative destination – an acknowledgement that our life journeys meld pungent memory and nostalgia with an absolutely impenetrable longing to discover just what lies over the ever-shifting horizon. We exist in the in-between terrain. And that dynamic interweaving of looking back and looking ahead is what we know as being alive. A kind of search for home, where the idea of ‘home’ remains a thorny puzzle.

For me, both professionally and personally, the key to breathing in these present times has come to mean the fathomless and even warm embrace of “not knowing,” the ability to find in fact comfort – perhaps joy – in the stark obscurity of our reality.

And so – “change.” Scary, of course. But not more so than stasis. At least change holds a pass key to potential, to something transformative. A promise.

Even endless possibility.

In this newsletter, playwright and novelist Jen Silverman writes: “We – as readers, as audiences, as visitors to places of art - are not entitled to stasis. Or: if some of us have created lives in which we feel entitled to stasis, I don't want to participate in creating work that furthers this entitlement.”

This reflection emboldens me to find meaning as the executive director of a cultural institution whose mission is the support and uplifting of artists. Creating new work, by definition, always traffics in the unknown, and art makers courageously experiment, without any assurances. I aspire that MacDowell in whatever ways it can, remains a crucible of innovation and risk, so that in our work and decision-making, we mirror those very talented individuals who define us. This is what will keep the institution of MacDowell a relevant leader and inspiration to a society hungry for meaningful change.

In a recent off-Broadway work entitled, *An Oratorio for Living Things*, composer/author Heather Christian pens this maxim:

*There is no by-standing.  
If you're here, you have to change  
And will that change take place all around you.*

I wonder if I will see that painted in red on a delivery van one day.

*Philip Himberg*  
Philip Himberg  
Executive Director



Admissions Assistant & Administrativ Assistant Sarah Jordan, Admissions & Scheduling Coordinator Karen Keenan, and Admissions Director Courtney Bethel huddle in late March 2022.

MacDowell Admissions Dept. Ramps Up After Surge in New Applicants

MacDowell Admissions Director **Courtney Bethel** answers our questions after a record number of applications for the February 10, 2022, deadline.

The Admissions Department at MacDowell was six weeks into processing 2,967 applications for the Fall/Winter 2022-2023 residency period, a number for a single application cycle that exceeded all previous annual totals. While MacDowell's application deadlines and residency periods had adapted to the public safety necessities and cycles of the pandemic in the past two years, the number of applicants in that time, while trending upwards, were consistent with previous years. In 2019, 2,650 individuals applied in three regular application cycles (MacDowell's previous record year). In 2020, 2,109 individuals applied in two

cycles due to the pandemic, and in 2021, 1,514 applied in one cycle due to the pandemic.

In 2022, two significant changes to the application process instituted by the admissions department likely have affected the number of people who were able to apply for a residency: It reduced the number of application cycles from three to two per year and **suspended the reference letter requirement for applicants**. The number of Fellowships awarded annually remains unchanged, at approximately 300.

To get a sense of the 2022 figures and how our admissions department was managing the unprecedented quantity of residency candidates, we caught up with Admissions Director **Courtney Bethel** for a quick chat.

**MacDowell:** *What does the increase in applicants mean for the application panel process?*

**Courtney Bethel:** The increase in applications means an increase in the number of panelists required to review the applications. Typically, we employ around 40 panelists per admissions cycle. For this round, we need 95 panelists. We increased the number of panelists in all disciplines, but the largest impact was on literature, theatre, interdisciplinary arts, and film.

**M:** *How many first-time applicants do we have? If there was an increase, why do you think it occurred?*

**CB:** 2,029 of the 2,948 applications are first-timers (69%), 220 are Fellows (7%), and 699 are re-applicants (24%; individuals who have applied after having been unsuccessful in the past). In both 2019 and 2020, these figures were: First-time applicants, 63%; MacDowell Fellows, 12%; and re-applicants, 25%; so first time applications have increased while the percentage of Fellows has decreased.

**M:** *Why do you think the numbers of applicants increased as much as they did?*

**CB:** I have a few ideas: I think the pandemic had a big impact on the numbers; people are stir-crazy and ready to get out of their apartments/homes and be in a supportive community, many artists lost support – financial and otherwise during the pandemic – so I think that also plays into this desire to go to residencies. Also, some residency programs are not yet open or not at full capacity, so artists are applying to MacDowell. And finally, I believe that dropping the reference letter requirement encouraged a number of artists to apply who hadn't previously. We actually received direct feedback from a handful of artists who said that not requiring a reference letter made them feel able to apply for the first time!





Follow the latest developments, news, and artist updates on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook @MacDowell1907

**M: What were some of the most-asked questions from applying artists during this application season?**

**CB:** This is a hard one. Each of us in admissions intersects with the applicants at different points, so our answers vary widely. For [admissions & scheduling coordinator] **Karen Keenan**, who is first line of defense, there is a wide-ranging array of questions about the application itself, especially the artistic achievements/artistic experience section, which is purposefully open-ended but stumps many an artist. For me, the questions are almost always discipline-related. We get many questions about work falling between or encompassing

more than one discipline, and we strongly encourage applicants to contact us for guidance before they start the application.

**M: You expect to send out admission results by May 26. How are you feeling about the next seven weeks? Are you tired? Determined? Excited?**

**CB:** Personally, I am exhausted, but also invigorated by all we have accomplished and looking forward to the upcoming application review panel meetings and the opportunity to be deeply engaged with artists' proposals. The panels meetings are thrilling. Sending out results elicits a full range of emotions.

This year, result letters will go out in two batches. Due to the volume of applications we received, we have moved some of the panel meetings out into May. The first set of results will go out the first week of May to applicants in six of the seven disciplines [architecture, film/video arts, interdisciplinary arts, music composition, theatre, and visual arts] and the second by May 26 to literature applicants.

*MacDowell will open its next application cycle, for Spring/Summer 2023 residencies (March 1 – August 31, 2023), on July 15, 2022, with a deadline of September 10, 2022. For more information, visit [MacDowell.org/apply](https://MacDowell.org/apply).*

# NEWS

## Sonia Sanchez, Poet, Lecturer, Activist for Peace and Racial Justice, Will Receive 2022 MacDowell Medal; to be Introduced by Novelist Walter Mosley July 10

Poet **Sonia Sanchez**, the author of more than 17 internationally renowned volumes of verse, will receive the Edward MacDowell Medal at a ceremony on the MacDowell grounds on Sunday, July 10, 2022. The return of the outdoor public celebration, including introductory remarks by novelist and MacDowell Fellow **Walter Mosley** (01) and picnicking on the grounds, will be the first since August of 2019.

"I had tears in my eyes as I learned about this award," said **Sanchez**, who is widely considered one of the most important writers of the Black Arts Movement. "When I consider my dear friend, Sister Toni, and so many others who have been given this award, I feel so welcomed to be part of that group. It is a great honor to be this year's awardee. MacDowell has such a great herstory and history of caring and concern for artists; it is a joy this place exists to keep the world on a path toward re-civilization, peace, and humanity."

The author and international lecturer on Black culture and literature, women's liberation, peace, and racial justice 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), **Art Spiegelman** (2018), **Charles Gaines** (2019), and **Rosanne Cash** (2021).

Sanchez is the author of more



Photo of Sonia Sanchez by Tom Hallock.

than 20 books of poetry, children's literature, and plays, including *We a BaddDDD People*, *Homegirls* and *Handgrenades* (winner of the 1985 American Book Award), *Under a Soprano Sky*, *Does Your House Have Lions?*, *Like the Singing Coming off the Drums*, *Shake Loose My Skin*, and *Morning Haiku*.

"Sonia Sanchez's illustrious career spans seven decades. Her commanding oeuvre continues to elevate language's ability to give voice to entire communities (their daily pleasures and pains) inside our shared and troubled history," said **Claudia Rankine** (95, 02), a MacDowell Fellow and chairman of this

year's MacDowell Medal selection panel. "A founding member of the Black Arts Movement, this poet, activist, scholar, and American treasure is, without doubt, a major figure in the landscape of American letters."

Rankine, the author of *Citizen: An American Lyric*, *Don't Let Me Be Lonely*, three plays, and the essay collection *Just Us: An American Conversation*, was joined on the Medal Selection panel by MacDowell Fellow and Board Member **Vijay Seshadri** (98, 04), and poets and essayists **Erica Hunt**, **Nuar Alsadir**, **Jericho Brown**, and **David St. John**.

"The magnificent Sonia Sanchez – lifelong poet, crafter of the complex and the clear, the hard and the beautiful – acknowledges who we are on this earth through American eras hopeful, frightening, and imponderable," said MacDowell Board Chair, Fellow, and best-selling author **Nell Painter** (3x 16-21). "She is an eloquent international figure, helping us understand the world. Over our many decades, I have looked up to Sonia Sanchez as bard and also as a forger of the new intellectual field of Black studies that has remade our consciousness."

A sponsor of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Sanchez is the winner of numerous awards, including the Robert Frost Medal for distinguished lifetime service to American poetry and the Langston Hughes Poetry Award. Other awards and honors include a National Endowment for the Arts grant, the 1985 Lucretia Mott Award, the 2004 Harper Lee Award, the 2009 Robert



### On the Cover: Finally, after eight years, Suffrs opens!

The long-awaited musical "**Suffs**" by composer **Shaina Taub** (12) takes audiences through the numerous triumphs and hardships of the American Suffragette movement in the early 1900s leading up to the passing of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment in 1920. Originally set to be released on the centennial of the amendment's passing in 2020, the piece has come to fruition after eight years of writing, rewriting, pandemic delays, and content adjustments to reflect the current political and social justice climate in the United States. Taub worked with a fierce team of creators to demonstrate the stories of the 'founding mothers' who fought persistently and unapologetically for women's right to vote. "**Suffs**" opened April 6, 2022 at The Public Theatre in New York with an extended run through May.



Cover image: **Nikki M. James** and **Cassandra James** in a scene from *Suffs*. This page left: **Ally Bonino**, **Phillipa Soo**, **Shaina Taub**, **Hannah Cruz**, and **Nadia Dandashi** as suffragettes. Above: **Phillipa Soo** and **Shaina Taub** in a scene from the play. (Production images by Joan Marcus)



Creeley Award, the 2018 Wallace Stevens Award, the 2019 Anisfield-Wolf Lifetime Achievement Award, and the 2021 Dorothy and Lillian Gish Prize. In December of 2011, Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter selected Sonia Sanchez as Philadelphia's first Poet Laureate.

Sanchez's other books include *Homecoming*, *Love Poems*, *I've Been a Woman*, *A Sound Investment and Other Stories*, *Wounded in the House of a Friend*, and most recently *Collected Poems*. In addition to being a contributing editor to *Black Scholar* and *The Journal of African Studies*, she has edited the anthology *We Be Word Sorcerers: 25 Stories by Black Americans*. *BMa: The Sonia Sanchez Literary Review* is the first African American Journal that discusses the work of Sonia Sanchez and the Black Arts Movement.

"From the Black Arts Movement to Black Lives Matter, from Birmingham to Harlem, from the blues to haiku, from anti-racism to anti-plastic – Ms. Sonia Sanchez is a leader who knows how to follow, an innovator who knows how to listen, and a song to sing for us all," said Mosley, who will introduce the Medalist to the Medal Day crowd. He will speak to the poet's impact on our culture before she receives the MacDowell Medal from Painter. Mosley is an American novelist, most widely recognized for his crime fiction. His first published book, *Devil in a Blue Dress*, was the basis of a 1995 movie starring Denzel Washington.

This free, public arts event is made possible with the support of generous individual contributors and business sponsors. For more information, please visit <http://www.macdowell.org/>. Join the conversation with #MacDowellMedal.

For more information on event sponsorship or tickets, contact Brett Evan Solomon [events@macdowell.org](mailto:events@macdowell.org).

**Find out about the history of Medal Day.**

## Shaka King Wins Big at NAACP Image Awards



Congratulations to **Shaka King** (16). His film *Judas and the Black Messiah* was nominated for nine NAACP Image Awards and came away with two wins for King, who won for both Outstanding Writing and Outstanding Directing. The biographical crime drama tells the story of the betrayal of Black Panther Fred Hampton by FBI informant William

O'Neal that led to Hampton's assassination by the FBI and Chicago police.

Three other Fellows were nominated for NAACP Image Awards: **Colson Whitehead** (99, 11) for both his novel *Harlem Shuffle* and the TV series based on his novel *The Underground Railroad*; **Honorée Fanonne Jeffers** (99) was nominated for Outstanding Literary Work - Debut Author for *The Love Songs of W.E.B. Du Bois*; and **Jeremy O. Harris** (15) and Janicza Bravo were nominated for Outstanding Writing in a Motion Picture for *Zola*. In addition, the film *My Name Is Pauli Murray*, which draws from *Proud Shoes*, the 1954 memoir that **Pauli Murray** (4x 54-59) wrote at MacDowell, was nominated for Outstanding Documentary.

## Three Fellows Come Away with National Book Critics Circle Awards

Congratulations to the following Fellows for winning 2022 NBCC Awards: **Diane Seuss** (15) won the poetry prize for her collection *frank: sonnets*, **Melissa Febos** (4x 10-21) won the criticism award for *Girlhood*, **Honorée Fanonne Jeffers** (99) won in the fiction category for *The Love Songs of W.E.B. Du Bois*. **Colson Whitehead** (99, 11) was a finalist in the fiction category for *Harlem Shuffle*.

## Nine MacDowell Authors are Finalists for the 2022 PEN America Literary Awards:

**Daisy Hernández's** (01) *The Kissing Bug* and **Dantiel W. Moniz's** (22) *Milk Blood Heat* are up for the PEN/Jean Stein Book Award. *Milk Blood Heat* is also a finalist for the PEN/Robert W. Bingham Prize for Debut Short Story Collection.

**Honorée Fanonne Jeffers's** (99) *The Love Songs Of W.E.B. Du Bois* and **Kirstin Valdez Quade's** (11, 15, 21) *The Five Wounds\** are finalists for the PEN/Hemingway Award for Debut Novel.

**Ann Patchett's** (96) *These Precious Days* is up for the PEN/Diamonstein-Spielvogel Award for the Art of the Essay.



**Diane Seuss's** (15) *frank: sonnets* is up for the PEN/Voelcker Award for Poetry Collection.

**Jennifer Grotz** (16, 18) and Piotr Sommer's co-translation of Jerzy Ficowski's *Everything I Don't Know* is a finalist for the PEN Award for Poetry in Translation.

**Andrea Elliott's** (16, 18) *Invisible Child\** and **Sarah Schulman's** (10x 86-19) *Let the Record Show: A Political History of ACT UP\** are finalists for the 2022 PEN/John Kenneth Galbraith Award for Nonfiction.

## Four Fellows are Finalists for National Book Award

Congratulations to **Lauren Groff** (12, 16) and **Laird Hunt** (04), whose novels *Matrix* and *Zorrie*, respectively, were finalists in fiction in the 2021 National Book Award running; **Hoa Nguyen** (19) for her poetry collection *A Thousand Times You Lose Your Treasure*; and **Natasha Wimmer** (02) for her translation of Nona Fernández's novel *The Twilight Zone*.

## Thirteen MacDowell Fellows are finalists for the 2022 Lambda Literary Awards across eight categories!

The shortlisted authors, poets, and playwrights are **Lauren Groff** (12, 16), **Kirstin Valdez Quade** (11, 15, 21), **Alix Ohlin** (04), **Jen Silverman** (12, 13, 22), **Hasanthika Sirisena** (10), **Daisy Hernandez** (01), **Melissa Febos** (4x 10, 21), **Sarah Schulman** (10x 86-19), **CM Burroughs** (08), **Raquel Salas Rivera** (20), **MJ Kaufman** (19), **Mashuq Mushtaq Deen** (15, 22), and **L M Feldman** (19).

\* Asterisks throughout this newsletter denote a work that was directly supported by a MacDowell Fellowship. (#MadeAtMacDowell)

# MacDowell to Receive \$15,000 Grant From the National Endowment for the Arts

*First-time Fellows will benefit from newest round of NEA funding.*

The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) has approved a \$15,000 Grants for Arts Projects award to MacDowell, the nation's first artist residency program, to provide critical support for an artist working in one of MacDowell's various disciplines. The grant will provide a first-time Fellowship to an artist, assisting MacDowell in meeting the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic as it continues to offer artists from all over the United States ideal workspace and time to expand their creative practices in 2022. This grant is one of 1,248 projects across the country, totaling nearly \$29 million, selected by the NEA during this first round of fiscal year 2022 funding in the Grants for Arts Projects category.

"The National Endowment for the Arts is proud to support arts projects like this one from MacDowell that help support the community's creative economy," said **NEA Acting Chair Ann Eilers**. "MacDowell is among the arts organizations nationwide that are using the arts as a source of strength, a path to well-being, and providing access and opportunity for people to connect and find joy through the arts."

"Receiving a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts represents both actual support for our artists and, even more so, acknowledgement by our government that arts are part of the very fabric of our American democracy," said **MacDowell Executive Director Philip Himberg**. "MacDowell is honored to be a long time recipient of NEA recognition."

Fellowship recipients will be selected from a range of artistic disciplines, geographic regions, race, ethnicity, cultural backgrounds, gender, and age. To attract qualified applicants who would otherwise not be able to afford time off for a residency, MacDowell provides financial aid and travel support. More than one third of our accepted artists receive financial aid to cover lost income, travel expenses, and other costs that might interfere with their ability to take part in a residency. MacDowell distributes more than \$170,000 annually in financial aid and travel support to artists demonstrating need.



## 2021 NY Times Notable Books Includes 13 by Fellows

Congratulations to the following Fellows whose recent books were included by *The New York Times* in their annual Notable Books List: *Build Your House Around My Body* by **Violet Kupersmith** (14), *A Calling for Charlie Barnes* by **Joshua Ferris** (21), *Crossroads* by **Jonathan Franzen** (93, 96, 97), *Harlem Shuffle* by **Colson Whitehead** (99, 11), *Kink: Stories* edited by **R.O. Kwon** (17, 20) and Garth Greenwell, *The Love Songs of W.E.B. Du Bois* by **Honorée Fanonne Jeffers** (99), *The Plot* by **Jean Hanff Korelitz** (88, 89), *The Sentence* by **Louise Erdrich** (80), *Catching the Wind: Edward Kennedy and the Liberal Hour* by **Neal Gabler** (81), *Festival Days* by **Jo Ann Beard** (93, 14), *Invisible Child: Poverty, Survival and Hope in an American City* by **Andrea Elliott** (16, 18), *Let the Record Show: A Political History of ACT UP New York, 1987-1993* by **Sarah Schulman** (10x 86-19), *Putting It Together: How Stephen Sondheim and I Created "Sunday in the Park With George"* by **James Lapine** (7x 01-17).





MacDowell residencies last two weeks to two months, with an average duration of 30 days. Each residency includes use of a private studio with discipline-specific amenities, three meals a day, and living accommodations. The opportunity for artists-in-residence to engage with creators in other disciplines and backgrounds is vital to the program, and MacDowell is ensuring that it can continue to take place in a safe and healthy manner even as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to interrupt our daily lives. The relationships formed between artists often spark inspiration and long-term creative partnerships.

*MacDowell's next application deadline for residencies is September 10, 2022.*

### Nine Fellows Earn NEA Literary Grants

Creative Writing Fellowships of \$25,000 are awarded in alternating years in prose (fiction and creative nonfiction) and poetry. Translation Fellowships ranging from \$10,000 to \$20,000 are awarded to literary translators. Among the creative writing winners are seven Fellows, and two who work in translation. They include **Dewaine Farria** (21), **Melissa Febos** (4x 10-21), **Elliott Holt** (14, 17), **Violet Kupersmith** (14), **Asako Serizawa** (21), **Jen Silverman** (12, 13, 22), and **Laura van den Berg** (16) in creative writing; and **Paula Bohince** (04, 06) and **Deborah Helen Garfinkle** (97) in translation.

### Whitney Biennial Returns with Eight Fellows on Roster

After being delayed a year because of the pandemic, the Whitney's 2022 edition of the exhibit, titled "Quiet as it's Kept" and co-organized by the museum's David Breslin and Adrienne Edwards, will run until September 5. Eight MacDowell Fellows are among the 63 artists and collectives selected for one of the most anticipated exhibitions of contemporary art in the U.S. They include **Jonathan Berger** (03, 06, 18), **Nayland Blake** (18), **Matt Connors** (14), **Jane Dickson** (08), **Ellen Gallagher** (96), **Julie Tolentino** (21) with Ivy Kwan Arce, **Terence Nance** (17), and **Denyse Thomasos** (01)!



Mabel O. Wilson



Annea Lockwood

### Suzan Frecon, Charles Gaines, Annea Lockwood, Mabel Wilson Elected to American Academy Ranks for Lifetime Appointments

Three Fellows were elected to The American Academy of Arts and Letters' class of 2022. The honor society of the country's 300 leading architects, artists, composers, and writers elects new members for lifetime spots as vacancies occur. Among the 21 new members who will be inducted into the Academy during its annual ceremony on May 18 are painter **Suzan Frecon** (98), 2019 Edward MacDowell Medalist and painter **Charles Gaines** (4x 70-78), composer **Annea Lockwood** (79), and MacDowell Board Member and architecture Fellow **Mabel O. Wilson** (10, 17).

The academy also administers more than 70 awards and prizes, exhibits art and manuscripts, funds performances of new works of musical theater, and purchases artwork for donation to museums across the United States. In the latest round of music awards are the following Fellows: An Arts and Letters Award in Music to **Erin Gee** (13), the Walter Hinrichsen Award in Music to **Orlando Jacinto García** (14), and the Andrew Imbrie Award in Music to **Mike Holoher** (6x 03-20). In addition, we are happy to report that a Charles Ives Scholarship was awarded to former communications intern Kari Watson. Among the prizes in literature, the Award of Merit for Poetry will be given to **Stephen Dobyns** (72, 76); and the Arts and Letters Awards in Literature will go to fiction writer **Jo Ann Beard** (93, 14), playwright **Aleshea Harris** (16, 19), and poet **Sarah Manguso** (05, 06, 07). The Katherine Anne Porter Award will go to **Lynne Tillman** (11x 92-15) and the Rosenthal Family Foundation Award will be presented to **Kirstin Valdez Quade** (11, 15, 21) for her novel *The Five Wounds*.

### Pollack-Krasner Foundation Grants to Eight Fellows

The following visual artists were awarded Pollock-Krasner Foundation grants in Fiscal Year July 2020 through June 2021: **Lisa Corrine Davis** (17), **Blane De St. Croix** (82, 08, 13), **Amy Feldman** (11), **Selena Kimball** (11, 17, 18), **Sharon Lockhart** (09), **Gamaliel Rodriguez** (12), **Terri Rolland** (04), and **Marjorie Welish** (78, 87).

### Other Publications and Literary News



*Meredith Monk, une voix mystique* is a new book of interviews in French conducted by Jean-Louis Tallon between 2014 and 2020 with **Meredith Monk** (6x 87-07).

**Melissa Febos** (4x 10-21) released *Bodywork\**, a mix of memoir and master class as Febos tackles the emotional, psychological, and physical work of writing intimately while offering an utterly fresh examination of the storyteller's life.

A book of essays by **Emily Maloney** (18, 18) entitled *Cost of Living\** about the failure of the American healthcare system.

*Indebted to Wind* is a new collection of poems from **L.R. Berger** (88, 91) published last August.

*Kissing a stranger* is a new book of black and white photographs illustrating **Joni Sternbach's** (18) early years as a photographer on the gritty streets of New York in the 1970s.

In August 2021, fiction writer **N. West Moss's** (12) memoir *FLESH & BLOOD* received a starred review from Kirkus Reviews.

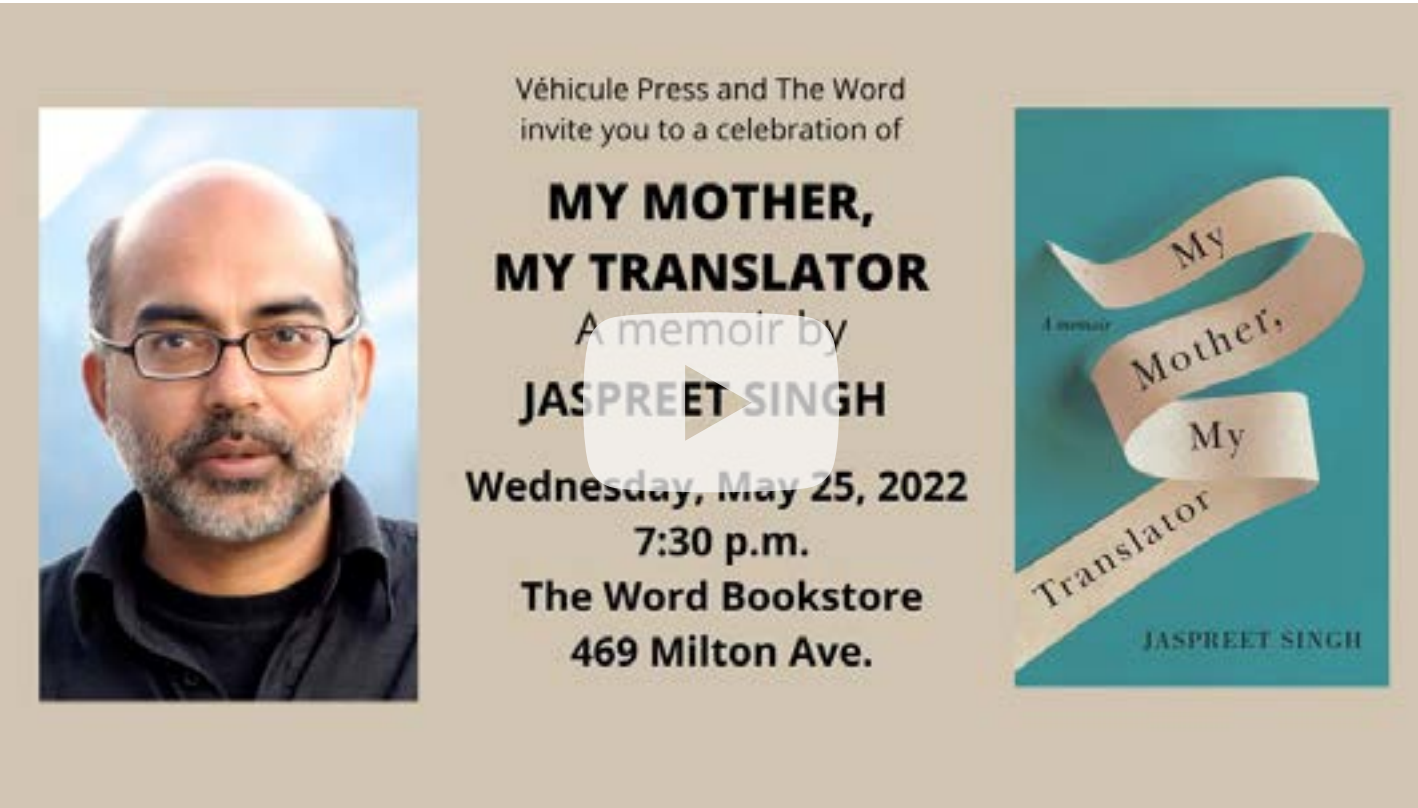
Writer **Phyllis Chesler** (71, 72) has been part of a team that has evacuated many hundreds of endangered, educated wom-

en and their families from Afghanistan. That work still continues and includes food and medicine drops for those who are trapped behind Taliban lines as well as supporting physicians and midwives. She's written 24 articles about this work for *4W*, *Investigative Project on Terrorism*, and *American Thinker*.

**Hilal Isler** (19) created a platform to elevate the works of women and non-binary writers/artists of color called Hennepin Review.

Writer **Yxta Maya Murray** (01) had her piece "When the Prophet Gazed Upon the Face of the Lord" published in Ploughshares' Fall 2021 issue.

Poet **Dylan Willoughby** (09) boasts eight publications in the following: *Sledgehammer Lit* (Guernsey), *The Laurel Review*, *The Sparrow's Trombone*, *Bloom Magazine*, *Fahmidan Journal*, *Goat's Milk Magazine*, *ZiN Daily* (Croatia), and *Melbourne Culture Corner*. His photography will be published in *Rejection Letters*. Currently, the poet is working on a memoir and two new EPs.



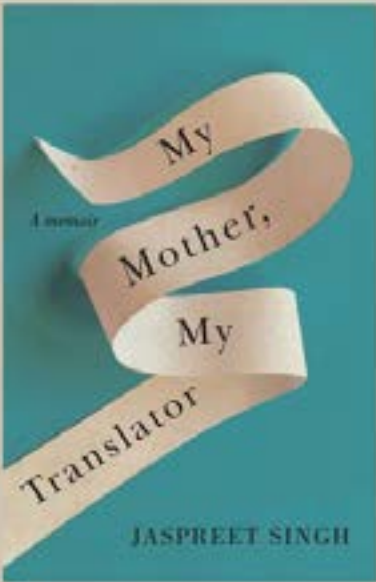
Véhicule Press and The Word invite you to a celebration of

# MY MOTHER, MY TRANSLATOR

A memoir by

## JASPREET SINGH

Wednesday, May 25, 2022  
7:30 p.m.  
The Word Bookstore  
469 Milton Ave.



Writer **Jaspreet Singh** (10) presented a virtual book launch and reading for his memoir *My Mother, My Translator* last October.





Interdisciplinary artist **Cori Spencer** (19) opened her first solo exhibition *Splendor* at the University of Rochester's Hartnett Gallery which ran March-April 2022. *Splendor* is a multimedia project exploring and re-envisioning the relationship between Black bodies and the American Landscape. Spencer is working on extending the life of *Splendor* via a book of full-color photographs, video stills, and poetic text. The artist says this about the exhibition and forthcoming book: "*Splendor* is a work of love that invites each of us beyond singular narratives of pain and into a space where healing, self-recovery, and reunion with the vitality of life is possible."

*Rose of Sharon*; digital photo; 36 in. X 24 in.; 2021; Corrine Spencer





## Priestley Film Wins LA Animation Silver

*Jung & Restless*, a new film by **Joanna Priestley** (6x 90-05), won the Silver Award at the Los Angeles Animation Festival, Best Animation nomination at the Barcelona Indie Filmmakers Festival and at the Maracay International Film and Video Festival (Venezuela), and was a finalist at the USA Film Festival (Dallas, TX) and Lisbon Film Rendezvous (Portugal).

## Sundance Premieres for Six Fellows

New cinematic works by six MacDowell Fellows debuted in the 2022 Sundance Film Festival. A leading global festival for independent cinema, it received nearly 15,000 submissions this year and is again virtual, making its program available to audiences around the world. Fellows' movies in the fest are *Riotsville*, *USA\** by **Sierra Pettengill** (19); *Kicking the Clouds\** by **Sky Hopinka** (21); *The Inside World* with artist **Peter Rostovsky** (16) as illustrator and art director; *Descendant* directed by **Margaret Brown** (16) and co-produced by **Essie Chambers** (16) – who Margaret met at MacDowell – and *32 Sounds* by **Sam B. Green** (4x 07-11).

Several MacDowell Fellows' works are also screening in Sundance's "From the Collection" retrospective celebrating the organization's 40th anniversary. These include works from **Jenni Olson** (18),

**Natalia Almada** (6x 06-16), **Kevin Jerome Everson** (03, 12), and **Tamara Jenkins** (95).

\*Denotes a work that was directly supported by a MacDowell Fellowship. (#MadeAtMacDowell)

## Visual artist Diana Shpungin Keeping Busy

In February 2022 visual artist **Diana Shpungin** (12) premiered *Day for Night*, a collaborative and experimental dance piece. Ballet dancer Tatiana (Tati) Nuñez co-choreographed with Shpungin. The score, composed by Mick Rossi of the Phillip Glass Ensemble, is also titled *Day for Night* and is an experimental piece incorporating Shpungin's own "amateur and out-of-tune" playing on her childhood piano which was shipped in from Riga, Latvia. Costumes for the piece were created by renowned designer David (Debs) Quinn, who used Shpungin's sculptural work as inspiration.

In addition, Shpungin released her third book with Grant Carmichael titled *Always Begin At The End*. The book launch and signing took place in February of 2022. The 112-page exhibition catalog includes an introduction by Smack Mellon curator Rachel Vera Steinberg, an essay by Darla Migan, and a transcribed conversation between Shpungin and curator Gabriel de Guzman.



## More Visual Art and Filmmaker News



Filmmaker **Jim Finn** (12) received the LEF Foundation Preproduction Moving Image Grant for his upcoming project *The Apocalyptic is the Mother of All Christian Theology*.



Videographer **Michael Robinson's** (14) short film *Polycephaly in D* was included in a group program at MoMA in New York City in November 2021. The program also included a screening of his 2017 short film *Onward Lossless Follows*.

Documentary filmmaker **Tom Weidlinger** (83, 05, 14) completed the film version of his award-winning book *The Restless Hungarian* in October. The film will premiere at international film festivals in spring 2022, before going into distribution.

Documentary filmmaker **Jane Gillooly's** (95-96, 11) latest film, *Where the Pavement Ends*, was rebroadcasted on PBS / America ReFramed in February 2022.

Filmmaker **Jenny Perlin** (18, 19) announced her feature documentary *Bunker* was selected as the opening film for the Museum of Modern Art's 2022 Doc Fortnight festival in New York in February 2022. The film was followed by an

in-person, on-stage conversation about the piece.

Experimental filmmaker **Stacey Steers** (6x 04-18) exhibited films, installations and collages in her show "*Night Reels*" at the galleries and theatre of the Cinémathèque québécoise August through October 2021. Steers also presented *Night Hunter House*, a sculptural installation, at the Denver Art Museum as a part of their exhibition *Disruption*.

In October, photographer **Rosalind Fox Solomon** (02, 03) opened *The Forgotten*, a solo exhibition at the Foley Gallery in New York. The show featured over 30 B&W images from her portfolio of work from 1976-2019 and coincided with the release of her book, also titled *The Forgotten*. Fox Solomon spoke to writer Lynne Tillman about the book and her remarkable photographic career in November at Rizzoli Bookstore in New York.

In August 2021, the Blanton Museum of Art at the University of Texas at Austin acquired multiple photographs from visual artist **Nina Katchadourian's** (95) acclaimed project *Sorted Books* (1993 - ongoing).



Visual artist **Elana Herzog** (18) participated in two shows in August and September 2021 in New York. The first, "UnWalled," took place at Fahrenheit 451 House in Catskill, NY, and the second, "AbStranded: Fiber and Abstraction in Contemporary Art," ran September 2021 - January 2022 at The Everson Museum of Art in Syracuse.

Last year installation artist **Blane de St Croix** (82, 08, 13) exhibited his largest and perhaps most ambitious work *How*

to *Move a Landscape* at MASS MoCA.

Painter **Tom Judd** (01) was featured by the Clark Gallery at the Art on Paper fair in New York in September 2021.



Painter **Hong Hong** (19-20) participated in two group shows last fall. The first, "Cloud Cover," took place at the McClain Gallery September-October. The second, "In Residence," ran August-October at the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft.



Heroes Gallery in New York hosted painter **Tricia Keightley's** (10) show "Tricia Keightley & Caitlin MacBride: Deborah Remington" last fall.

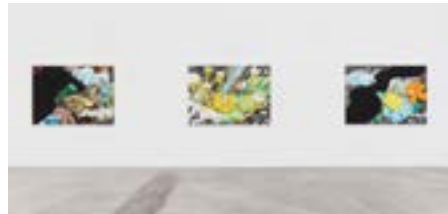
Painter **Vicki Sher** (13) presented in a two-person show "Groundswell" at the University of Dallas Beatrice M. Haggerty Gallery October-December 2021. Alongside Ky Anderson, the show featured Sher's first forays into sculpture.



**Jack Damer** (80, 82, 86) showed his paintings in a solo exhibition "Jack Damer: Prints, Drawings, Objects, 1965 to 2022" at James Watrous Gallery in Madison, WI October-November 2021.

Painter **Valerie Hegarty** (15) exhibited paintings and sculpture in her show "GONE VIRAL" at the Malin Gallery in New York. Works included *The Covid Diaries*, *Covid Refrigerator with Flowers*, and *Covid Mini Fridge*. The show ran through December 2021.

The Mitchell Albus Gallery in New York presented "Conceptual Drawings," an exhibition of work from three long-running series by visual artist **Morgan O'Hara** (08, 09). It opened in January 2022. Photographer **Marc Ohrem-Leclef** (18) participated in the Center for Photogra-



phy at Woodstock in "Photography Now 2021," was named a finalist in the 2021 Penumbra Foundation Workspace Residency Program for his ongoing project *Ulysse*; his short film *Olympic Favela* was acquired by the Watson Library at the MET Museum; he is continuing to teach at ICP; he participated in the 2021 Queer|Art|Pride Book & Print Fair; His works *Ulysse* and *Hudson River Crossing* (1994) were part of the online exhibition *undisclosed resource*, curated by Efreem Zelony-Mindell; and his photograph *Just Love Me* was included in ICP's exhibition and soon-to-come book, *#ICPConcerned: Global Images for a Global Crisis* which was "a diary for a world-wide pandemic" captured by 820 photographers.



## Composer Caroline Shaw Wins GRAMMY

Congratulations are in order for Pulitzer Prize-winning composer **Caroline Shaw** (17, at right) who won this year's Grammy for Best Contemporary Classical Composition, for *Narrow Sea*. The title piece to Shaw's 2021 album was recorded by Sō Percussion, Dawn Upshaw, and Gilbert Kalish, for whom it was written. *Narrow Sea* is in five parts, each a new setting of a text from *The Sacred Harp*, the 19th-century collection of shape-note hymns. Other Fellow Grammy nominees include **Anthony Brown** (94) & Group Therapy for Best Gospel Performance/Song, **Arturo O'Farrill** (15), who had two nominations: Best Latin Jazz Album for *Virtual Birdland* and Best Instrumental Composition for "Dreaming In Lions"; two for **Clarice Assad** (07) with Sérgio Assad and Third Coast Percussion for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble and Best Contemporary Classical Composition; **Chris Cerrone** (15, 17) for Best Classical Compendium for *The Arching Path*, and **Michael Tilson Thomas** (77) as conductor for Best Classical Compendium.



## Composers Present New Works After Long COVID Delays

Composer **Jan Krzywicki** (9x 97-17) celebrated his 30th anniversary as the conductor of the Network ensemble and his many contributions to music at Haverford College's new music hall in February. The concert featured Krzywicki's *Catching Light* and the premiere performance of *Arabesques de près et de loin II* for flute, viola, and harp; *Rainbow Chaser*, a newly commissioned work from former



Krzywicki student Michael Shingo-Crawford; and *Waves*, a 30-minute major work commissioned for the occasion from Grawemeyer Award-winning composer and Fellow **Sebastian Currier** (17x 91-19).

**Laura Schwendinger's** (11x 94-21) *Cabaret of Shadows*, a collaborative work with lighting Artist Leni Schwendinger and librettist Ginger Strand, is an immersive chamber opera combining music with elements of light, sound and shadow to rediscover the milieu of turn-of-the-century cabaret. It received its premiere in March at the MATCH Center and Third Eye Theater (Chicago) in 2022. The opera is an exciting, gender bending, eye popping, sexy production, and is an exploration of women making art by women artists of our time, all baked in lustrous light. The viewers will be invited be the actual audience at the cabaret, to participate in the spectacle of this turn-of-the-century theater.



Research images for *Cabaret of Shadows*

Composer **Christopher Cerrone's** (15, 17) song "I Will Learn How to Love a Person and Then I Will Teach You and Then We Will Know" was named one of The 25 Best Classical Music Tracks of 2021 by *The New York Times*. In other news, Cerrone's new opera, *In a Grove*, which he composed with librettist **Stephanie Fleischmann** (93), premiered at Pittsburgh Opera in February. In April, the Phoenix Symphony premiered his new orchestral suite *The Age of Wire and String*. Finally, after a long postponement, his work for choir and orchestra, *The Last Message Received*, had its world premieres at both Yale and Northwestern Universities in April.

## Recent Music Releases and News



The Israel Music Institute and the Ministry of Culture have released a collection works by composer **Max Stern** (73, 74) entitled *Max*

*Stern: Retrospective*.

Composer **James Brandon Lewis** (22) released the album *Code of Being* with his James Brandon Lewis Quartet last October.

Composer **Ian Dicke** (17, 21) curated the returning five-show season of Outpost Concert Series in Riverside, CA.



Composer **Jerome Kitzke** (5x 07-20) released a new album *The Redness of Blood* in November.

Composer **Alicia Svigals** (14) has been busy. She performed in a one-woman show at Atomic Tom's in Binghamton, NY in August; performed with Donald Sosin on new original scores for two silent films: *Man Without a World* (1991) and *City Without Jews* (1924) in November at AFI Silver Theatre and Cultural Center in the D.C area; and guided participants through selections of klezmer music during "Beyond the Manuscript," an online event in December. The music was drawn



**Evan Hause** (5x 94-06) released his fifth solo album, *Jade*. In November, the world-renowned University of Michigan Symphony Band premiered his *Branching (A Tree Symphony)*.

from transcription notebooks written by violinist Avrohom-Yehoshua Makonovsky housed in Kiev's Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine.

## United States Artists Fellowships to Four

U.S.A. Fellowships are annual \$50,000 unrestricted awards recognizing the most compelling artists working and living in the United States, in all disciplines, at every stage of their career.

Each year, individual artists and collaborators are anonymously nominated to apply by a geographically diverse and rotating group of artists, scholars, critics, producers, curators, and other arts professionals. Four MacDowell Fellows are among the 2022 winners, including writer **Dawn Lundy Martin** (21), poet **Emmy Perez** (98), and performance artists **JJJJJ-Jerome Ellis** (19, 22) and **Lars Jan** (10).

## Other Awards and Grants

### 2021 Steinberg Playwright Awardees Announced

Ten outstanding early-to-mid-career playwrights will be celebrated with 2021 Steinberg Playwright Awards in the amount of \$10,000 each. In the past the Steinberg Trust honored two mid-career playwrights with a total of \$100,000. But in 2020, given the impact of the pandemic on playwrights throughout the industry, the Trust temporarily restructured the awards to reach a greater number of writers. Of the 10, two are MacDowell Fellow playwrights: **Jihae Park** (3X 14-18) and **Haruna Lee** (21).

### Seven Earn Creative Capital Awards

The 2022 Creative Capital Awards represent 50 projects by 59 artists from all over the country. The projects span a range of genres, including literature, performance, the visual arts, moving image, technology, and socially-engaged art. Seven winners are MacDowell Fellows: **Crystal Z Campbell** (17), **JJJJJJerome Ellis** (19, 22), **Lucy Kim** (08), **Suneil Sanzgiri** (22), **Steven Kazuo Takasugi** (89, 20, 21), **Pinar Yoldas** (10, 12), and **Mónica de la Torre** (06).



### Other Exhibition and Interdisciplinary News

Mixed-media artist **Lucy Puls** (12) was featured in a solo exhibit at Nicelle Beauchene in Tribeca this past winter.



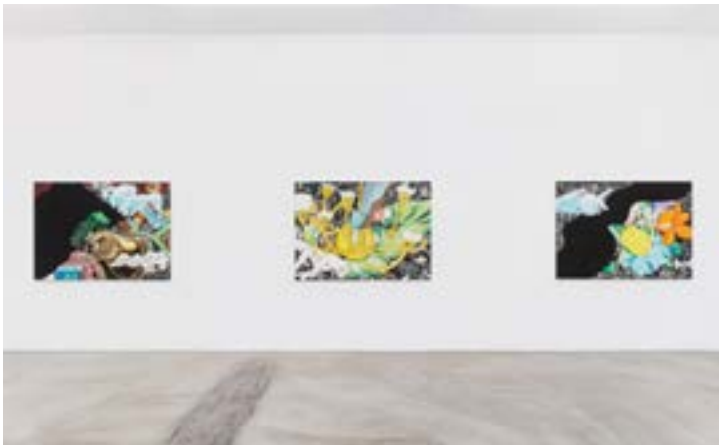
Photographer **Vanessa Woods** (06) and husband Josh Smith exhibited work at Center for Photographic Art in Carmel, CA in the two-person show *"Each One of Us Was Fastened to the Other."*

The Center for Innovation, Research, and Creativity in the Arts of the University of Maryland, Baltimore County Presents: **Nicolás Dumit Estévez Raful Espejo Ovalles** (06, 07) with Harley Spiller on December 2. He also worked alongside artist Linda Mary Montano to launch a series of Q&As as part of their co-conceived project *The Interior Beauty Salon*.

Visual artist **Amy Cheng** (89, 92) completed a recent commission from Charlotte Area Transit Authority's Arts in Transit Program called "Worlds Within Worlds" consisting of large laminated glass panels for four of the Elizabeth Area's streetcar shelters.

Painter **Katie Merz** (6x 95-11) delivered the keynote address at Ursinus College's (PA) commencement on May 14<sup>th</sup> and received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree.

Multimedia artist **Melanie Manos** (13, 14) launched a new course through the University of Michigan/Future Learn titled *Visualizing Women's Work: Using Art Media for Social Justice*.



Painter **Mark Thomas Gibson** (17) had a solo show "Don't Let Me Be Misunderstood" at M+B in Los Angeles in late fall.

Movement artist **Jon Kinzel** (20) co-presented three shows at Roulette in Brooklyn in November 2021. *Standing in a Doorway* and *Calling It a Dance* featured pieces by Kinzel and Vicky Shick.

Interdisciplinary artist **Gregory Sale** (14) invited audiences to help "take over the museum to unseat, dis-locate, and de-center notions of safety, imprisonment, and control" during "We Occupy/ We Dis-cover" at the ASU Art Museum in November. Community justice scholars, artists and ASU graduates presented in a day of conversation, intervention and performance. This show was in response to and a part of the exhibition *Undoing Time: Art and Histories of Incarceration* at ASU.

In early 2022 interdisciplinary sound artist **Christopher Willes** (16) released recordings with Karen Ng and Philippe Melanson. Throughout the pandemic, these three artists passed ideas, beats, and tunes back and forth resulting in a cassette tape which they named *Impossible Burger*.

The Catherine Clark Gallery opened its Fall 2021 season with interdisciplinary artist **Shimon Attie's** (5x 03-21) solo exhibition *Here, Not Here*. Featuring videos and photography from 1993 to present, this was Attie's first comprehensive survey exhibition on the West Coast.



Performance artist **Erik Ruin** (18) released two new videos. First was the latest in his ongoing series *Practical Abolition*, a collaboration with activists at Amistad Law Project, and the second was a music video for guitarist Daniel Wyche's new record, *Earthwork*.

# EVENTS

## Hybrid National Benefit Celebrates Creative Collaborations

MacDowell engaged more than 200 virtual and in-person guests during our hybrid 2021 benefit hosted by **Cathy Park Hong** (7x 03-18) and featured the presentation of the Marian MacDowell Arts Advocacy Award to Urban Word. Artistic Director of Urban Word NYC and Poet-in-Residence at Lincoln Center, **Mahogany L. Browne**, accepted the award on their behalf and was followed by a performance from the 2022 NYC Poet Youth Laureate **Elizabeth Shvarts**.

The virtual benefit program, focusing on the magic of creative collaboration at MacDowell, featured performance excerpts, speeches, and interviews with Fellows **Raphael Xavier, Shaina Taub, Sharon Greytak, Anne Beal** and **Christopher Zuar, Patricia Smith, John Murillo, Cheryl Savageau, Peter Zuspan**, and more! It was an opportunity to experience and celebrate some of the magic that happens at MacDowell when artists – writers, visual artists, composers, architects, interdisciplinary artists, filmmakers, and theatre artists – engage in artistic exchange to create new works. Donors tuned in virtually, hosted parties at their homes, participated in our online auction, and received at-home picnic baskets of artisanal snacks from Mayfair Farms featuring books released in 2021 and works of art by Fellows.

### The New Hampshire Benefit is Back!

We welcomed our New England supporters back to our grounds for the 2022 New Hampshire Benefit on Saturday, May 7<sup>th</sup> for a special evening of cocktails,



**Mahogany L. Browne, MacDowell Board Chair Nell Painter, and Executive Director Philip Himberg** pose for a selfie onstage at **National Sawdust**.

conversations, and performances after a two-year hiatus! The special evening raised more than \$50,000, bringing 110 supporters, guests, and Fellows together for a late afternoon hosted by MacDowell

Fellow and board member **Dan Hurlin** (03, 12, 15). The program featured artist presentations from **Jaime Lowe** (19, 22) and **Jing Wang** (14), followed by a conversation and Q&A afterward.



(From left to right) Fellows **Jing Wang, Jaime Lowe, and Dan Hurlin** talk about their work and the magic of MacDowell at the New Hampshire Benefit.





The 2nd Annual Katherine Min Fellowship Event

The Katherine Min Fellowship was established by MacDowell Fellow and author Katherine Min's family and friends to celebrate her life and to honor her creative legacy. On June 1, we held the second reading to celebrate Katherine's work and legacy with 2020 and 2021 Min Fellows Jessica Shi (20) and Lisa Ko (14, 21). They were joined by Katherine's daughter Kayla Min Andrews and event moderator and Fellow Alexander Chee (05, 07) in-person at MacDowell's NYC space in Chelsea and online via Zoom.

Learn more about the celebration.

Save These Dates!



SUNDAY, JULY 10 Medal Day Peterborough, NH

Don't miss the return to our free, public celebration of 62nd Edward MacDowell Medalist Sonia Sanchez! The world-renowned poet will be introduced by writer and MacDowell Fellow Walter Mosley back under the big tent on July 10, 2022, with a picnic to follow!

MONDAY, OCTOBER 17 The National Benefit NYC

Mark your calendars for MacDowell's largest fundraiser of the year, the National Benefit, to be held in-person on October 17, 2022 at the Ziegfeld Ballroom in NYC!

REMEMBERING

Sharon Anton | Writer Sharon Mayberry Anton, who wrote film criticism and was an early champion of New German Cinema, particularly the works of Rainer Werner Fassbinder, died on October 8, 2021, in Portland, Maine of heart failure. She was 77. She was in residence in 1979. After graduating from Hendrik Hudson High School in Montrose, NY she enrolled at Harpur College (now Binghamton University) in 1961. Eventually Anton moved to Western Massachusetts in 1971 after some time in San Francisco and worked at UMass Amherst while completing her undergraduate degree in a low-residency program at Goddard College. She worked as a freelance writer and editor, and wrote a weekly column for the Daily Hampshire Gazette in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In the 1990s she reinvented herself as a movie extra and appeared in several films made in western Massachusetts and Vermont. A late move to Los Angeles meant work as a television extra and a pursuit of painting and drawing, before a return to the East Coast.

Read more about Sharon

Miriam Beerman | Miriam Beerman, an American expressionist artist from Providence, RI, died on February 7, 2022. She was 98. Beerman, who was in residence in 1959, studied painting under John Frazier at the Rhode Island School of Design, and after graduating from RISD, Beerman studied under Yasuo Kuniyoshi at the Art Students League of New York, and Adja Yunkus at the New School for Social Research. Beerman was the recipient of two Fulbright Scholarships, allowing her to study under Stanley William Hayter in Paris. She then moved back to the United States, and went on to have her work featured in more than 30 solo exhibitions. Beerman received several awards and honors for her work, including Fellowships in Ossabaw Island, Georgia; the Burston Graphic Center in



Jerusalem; Cassis France; the Virginia Center for the Creative Arts; a New Jersey State Council of the Arts Grant; a Joan Mitchell foundation Grant Award; and a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant. Beerman's work resides in several collections, including those at the Everson Museum of Art, the Brooklyn Museum of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Newark Museum, the New Jersey State Museum at Trenton, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the National Museum of Women in the Arts. In 2015 a film was made about Miriam. Miriam Beerman: Expressing the Chaos was shown on PBS and is available on demand at Amazon Prime Video.

Read more about Miriam

Joseph Lawrence Cady | Author, poet, and psychotherapist Joseph Lawrence Cady who published widely – especially in 19th-century American and English literature, AIDS literature, and the history and literature of homosexuality – died on November 14, 2021 in New York following a stroke. He was 83. He was in residence in 1983. He graduated from Amherst College in 1960, and earned his Ph.D. in 19th century American literature



in 1968 from Berkeley. He taught literature and creative writing at Columbia and Rutgers, and subsequently trained as a psychotherapist, specializing in medical education. He taught medical humanities at several medical schools, including at the University of Rochester School of Medicine, and his poetry appeared in many periodicals and anthologies, including Massachusetts Review and Shenandoah. A pioneer in gay studies, he was a founding member of the Gay Academic Union and of the Gay and Lesbian Caucus of the Modern Language Association. Particularly significant are his seminal essays on Whitman, on "Masculine Love" in the Renaissance, and his forceful challenges to extreme constructivist views of homosexuality. At his death, he was working on a book under contract with Oxford University Press, tentatively entitled Not to be Named: Keeping Homosexuality Unspeakable.

Read more about Joseph

Josephine Caroline Goodman | Writer Carol Goodman, whose "The Kingdom of Gordon" was selected for The Best American Short Stories of 1951 while she was in her final year at Bennington College, died March 3, 2022. She was 92. Goodman, who published that first short story under the byline J. Carol Goodman, was in residence in 1987.

Though Goodman came to MacDowell as a fiction writer, she also studied visual art at Bennington and made large-scale drawing and paintings, work that earned her solo shows at galleries in New Jersey and New York. Her stories were often inspired by incidents from her childhood and were published primarily in university literary magazines. Later in life she self-published several novellas.

Read more about Josephine

Sondra E. Mayer | Sondra E. Mayer, an artist and printmaker who broadened her activities to include teaching etching techniques to other artists and appraising art collections for insurance purposes and donations, died on February 13, 2021. She was 87. Mayer, who was in residence in 1978, also wrote articles on art for Long Island publications such as Anton Community Newspapers, The Great Neck Record, Sunstorm, Long Island Heritage, and also for World and I, a national magazine printed by The Washington Times. She was listed in several editions of Who's Who in American Art, Who's Who in the East, and Who's Who in American Women, and her work is illustrated in Intaglio Printmaking Techniques, by Ruth Leaf. Mayer was also a sales executive for Petersburg Press, and a principal in several art ventures. In her later life, she was a private art dealer with a global clientele, marketing high-level museum-quality contemporary and modern American and European art in all media.

Read more about Sondra

Kamilah Aisha Moon | Poet Kamilah Aisha Moon, whose collection Starshine & Clay (2017) was a CLMP finalist, and whose book She Has a Name (2013) was a finalist for both the Audre Lorde and Lambda Literary Awards, died September 24, 2021 in Atlanta. She was 48. She was in residence in 2019. After attending Metro Nashville Public Schools, Kamilah Aisha earned her B.A. in English at Paine



College in Augusta, GA and received an M.F.A. from Sarah Lawrence College. She worked in New York public schools with both the Community-Word Project and the DreamYard Project as an instructor in poetry and writing, taught poetry workshops on Rikers Island, and was an adjunct professor at Medgar Evers College CUNY, before eventually landing a tenure-track position at Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia as an assistant professor of creative writing. A graduate fellow of Cave Canem's writers' retreat, she has received Fellowships from MacDowell, Hedgebrook, Prague Summer Writing Institute, Vermont Studio Center, and the Rose O'Neill Literary House. Her work has been published widely, including in the Harvard Review, Poem-A-Day, World Literature Today, The New York Times, Oxford American, Boston Review, PBS Newshour, Buzzfeed, Adroit Journal, and in Best American Poetry 2019.

Read more about Kamilah

Dominic Orlando | Dominic Orlando, a TV writer and playwright, died due to complications from cancer on November 17, 2021 in Los Angeles. He was 57. Orlando, who was in residence in 2003, 2004, 2007 and 2009, pursued the life of an artist from an early age. He began his career in New York theatre, where he co-founded the No Pants Theater Company in 1992.

Read more about these great talents on their pages at MacDowell.org





After New York he went to Minneapolis on a Jerome Fellowship in 2003. He was awarded a second Jerome and a McKnight — all through The Playwrights’ Center. While based in Minneapolis, Dominic worked with many local theaters and co-founded the Workhaus Playwrights Collective, producing over two dozen world premieres, including his *Short Play About Globalization*, *A Short Play About 9/11*, and *The Sense of What Should Be*. With Workhaus and Jeune Lune he co-created *Fissures: Lost & Found*, commissioned by Actors Theatre of Louisville. He also pursued a career in television and wrote for shows like the Amazon series “Them,” “Outer Range,” FX’s “Retreat,” “The OA” from Netflix, “Mindhunter” and “Nightflyers,” a series based on the work of George R. R. Martin. The [Dominic Orlando Fund](#) has been created by friends and the Playwrights’ Center.

➤ [Read more about Dominic](#)

**Robert S. Phillips** | American author, poet, and professor Robert S. Phillips died on January 21, 2022. He was 83. Phillips, who was the author or editor of more than 30 volumes of poetry, fiction, poetry criticism, and other works, was in residence in 1986. In 1998 he was named a John and Rebecca Moores Scholar at University of Houston. He double-majored at Syracuse University, earning B.A. and M.A. degrees in both journalism and English literature. He had an award-winning career in advertising in New York, continuing to write poetry and fiction in the evenings. His first book, *Inner Weather*, was published in 1966. Phillips taught creative writing part time at the New School and eventually turned to teaching full time. His collection *The Pregnant Man* was nominated for the Pulitzer Prize. Among his many prizes were an award in literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and the George Arents Award, Syracuse University’s highest honor for alumni. He taught at the University of Houston, where he was director of the writing program from 1991-1996 and received the Outstanding Teacher Award.

➤ [Read more about Robert](#)

**Terry Teachout** | Terry Teachout, a playwright, director, biographer, librettist, and cultural and drama critic for *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Daily News*, and other publications, died on January 13, 2022 in Smithtown, NY. He was 65. Teachout, who was in residence in 2012, wrote about all manner of art from ballet to bluegrass. According to *The New York Times*, Teachout was comfortable writing about Haydn and Mencken, Ellington and Eakins, and “was someone who loved beauty in all its forms and believed it was his job to find it and explain it.” *Satchmo at the Waldorf*, his first play, premiered in 2011, and has since been produced off Broadway and throughout the U.S. *Billy and Me*, his second play, was premiered by Palm Beach Dramaworks in December of 2017. His books include *All in the Dances: A Brief Life of George Balanchine*, *Duke: A Life of Duke Ellington* (six chapters of which were written at MacDowell), *Pops: A Life of Louis Armstrong*, *The Skeptic: A Life of H.L. Mencken*, and *A Terry Teachout Reader*. He has also written the libretti for Paul Moravec’s *The Letter* (premiered in 2009 and revised at MacDowell in 2012), *Danse Russe*, and *The King’s Man*.

➤ [Read more about Terry](#)

**Gregory L. Tucker** | Composer, pianist, and guitarist Gregory L. Tucker died September 1, 2020. He was 67. Tucker, who was in residence in 1986 and 1990, attended Xavierian Brothers High School and went on to earn two bachelor’s degrees from University of Massachusetts Amherst. At the time of his first residency, he was finishing up his master’s of music composition at Boston University, where he studied composition with Charles Fussell. He began his career at the MIT Media Laboratory in 1986, working for Barry Vercoe, in the lab’s Experimental Music Studio. He went on to become the Director of Facilities for the Media Lab and remained in that position until his retirement in 2014. His piece “Idle Conversation,” a duet for flutes, was published by McGinnis & Marx in 1992

and appears on Leone Buyse’s CD entitled *The Sky’s The Limit*. His most recent works were some piano pieces written for John McDonald entitled “Etudes 1-5” and “Chant,” written in 2019 and 2020).

➤ [Read more about Gregory](#)



**John Wesley** | Artist John Wesley, whose work was often described as Pop but drew also from Minimalism and Surrealism, died February 10, 2022 at his home in New York. He was 93. Wesley became an illustrator for Northrop Aircraft and began painting at the age of 22. He was in residence in 1970, 1973, 1974, 1976, and 1978. His first exhibition consisted mostly of large-format acrylic paintings of imaginary seals and stamps; he would retain the flatness and limited color range of these works, but would move into the depiction of bodies and cartoon characters, the latter of which led him to be grouped with Pop Art. Wesley exhibited widely, enjoying solo exhibitions at the Fondazione Prada, Venice; the Museum Haus Lange, Krefeld, Germany; Kunsthalle Nürnberg, Germany; P.S.1 Contemporary Art Center, New York; Portikus, Frankfurt; and the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam. His work was shown at Documenta 5 in Kassel, Germany, in 1972 and is held in the collections of the Stedelijk and of New York’s Museum of Modern Art and Whitney Museum of American Art, among other institutions.

➤ [Read more about John](#)

WHY MACDOWELL NOW?

# Swimming in It: Art and (Im)Morality

By Jen Silverman



DANE LAFREY

**It’s early spring in Paris**, and the days are cold and rainy. When the sun comes through, the whole city sprawls along the banks of the Seine, sun-dazed and hopeful. I’m here to do some research for my second novel, but on the mid-afternoons in which I decide not to work, I wander the city. At the Pompidou, I stand in front of Niki de Saint-Phalle’s *La Mariée* for a long time; it is a looming sculpture of a grotesque, sad woman in a wedding dress. I feel both alarmed by and sympathetic toward her. From the plaque: *Between 1963 and 1964 Niki de Saint-Phalle created a series of works denouncing the different statuses*

*assigned to women: wife, mother, child-eater, whore and witch.* The explanation is succinct, but the sculpture spills over with contradictions; to me it feels like something more fragile than a denouncement. In its melding of too-human and too-monstrous, it feels like an uncanny mirror. I find myself thinking about it again and again as the days pass. One day, in the Palais de Tokyo bookstore, I stumble across a copy of *Weight of the Earth*, the transcribed cassette-tape journals of East Village artist David Wojnarowicz. I buy it, and from the moment I start reading, I am mesmerized.

In these tapes, Wojnarowicz is talking to himself, but he has a clear awareness of potential future audience. He isn’t interested in saying the right things in the right ways; he isn’t interested in pretending he’s less angry or confused or chaotic than he is; he isn’t trying to polish the rough edges for anyone’s comfort, least of all his own. His ideas of intimacy and power are shaped by the sexual encounters he had with older men, when he was a pre-teen and then a teen in the 1960s. Sometimes he portrays these as transactional, sometimes as consensual, always charged with a variety of potentials. Reading these sections, I can hear in my head an entire dissertation on trauma and sexual exploitation that would be applied to his experience through today’s lens. Whether or not that modern lens is correct isn’t my point; only that, in these tape journals, he doesn’t seem to see himself through it. And the fact that this occasionally makes me uncomfortable does not make it bad art.

I am troubled by how often people talk about likability when they talk about art.

I am troubled by how often our protagonists are supposed to live impeccable, sin-free lives, extolling the right virtues in the right order – when we, the audience, do not and never have, no matter what we perform for those around us.

I am troubled by the word “problematic,” mostly because of how fundamentally un-descriptive it is. Tell me that something is xenophobic, condescending, clichéd, unspeakably stupid, or some other constellation of descriptors. Then I will decide whether I agree, based on the intersection of that thing with my particular set of values and aesthetics. But by saying it is *problematic* you are saying that it constitutes or presents a problem, to which my first instinct is to reply: I hope so.

Art is the realm of the problem. Art chews on problems, turns them over, examines them, breaks them open, breaks us open against them.





Art contains a myriad of problems, dislocations, uncertainties. Doesn't it? If not, then what?

\*I think we're laboring under a moment in which many believe that the sole function of art is to provide moral guidance. I understand how we got here. Our politicians and leaders have for the most part abdicated responsibility on this front – not in what they say (there's always moralizing) but in what they're caught doing later. An entire parade of celebrities has been similarly revealed to be mouthy, handsy monsters of hypocrisy. The arts, though underfunded, have a history of being a fallback battleground for American morality. And also, always, America is obsessed with the idea of virtue. Ours is a country founded on many myths, but one of them inarguably is purity: pristine forests, clear water, virginal women, God everywhere.

In 1990, Rev. Donald Wildmon and the American Family Association excerpted some sexy collage bits out of the paintings in Wojnarowicz's NEA-funded exhibit "Tongues of Flame," and sent a mass mailing to every member of Congress and 178,000 pastors,

demanding that the NEA not fund gay pornography. Wojnarowicz, true to form, called them "a bunch of repressed five-year-olds" and pointed out that, if you're asking the government to defend the ethics of where its money goes: "Public monies are being used to fund covert wars, to buy instruments of death." And yet, though he won that case, he couldn't defeat the ongoing American misconception that art must be entwined with Goodness.

I think about this on the days when I have script meetings in which – across a variety of media – people worry about something being too provocative, too morally ambiguous. The most popular pitch for how to fix it is that a key character, at a key moment, will get up and just deliver a *great* monologue about how they *know* they've been behaving badly, and how they plan to change. Another common suggestion is that other characters indicate for the audience that the behavior we're witnessing is *not right*, in case there was any doubt. But if we expect every novel, play, film, etc. to be a PSA for Good Behavior, we lose access to the part of art that is most connected to our humanity.

That is to say: the part where we witness our flaws, our savage desires,

our troubling predilections, our shame and longing, selfishness and hope. The parts where we are creatures in flux, caught between contradictions. The parts where, presented with what makes us uncomfortable, we encounter ourselves and each other newly in the discomfort.

Sarah Kane's plays have haunted me for decades, not because I find them pleasant and enjoyable but because they push the limits of my ability to witness the collapsibility of geographies, the ways in which violences elsewhere or elsewhen inevitably become violences *here* and *now*. Akwaeke Emezi's *Freshwater* makes me ask myself intimate questions about how trauma and power intersect inside one body, and specifically how I, as a genderqueer person, can be either fueled or destroyed by the multiplicities I hold. Hemingway's oeuvre continues to mesmerize and frustrate me, because he has so little use for women and such damaged ideas of what is necessary for men. And yet more than anyone else, he has made me think about what it means to invent and perform and become the self we wish to live with; his entire body of work is a desperate self-conjuring.

We – as readers, as audiences, as visitors to places of art – are not entitled to stasis. Or: If some of us have created lives in which we feel entitled to stasis, I don't want to participate in creating work that furthers this entitlement.

David Wojnarowicz, circa January 1989: "For the most part, [art] has become very shallow, very boring, and looks exactly like what it intends to disrupt... I wish society would just wake up, because it's as if it's a nation of zombies, as if everybody's asleep... And my only feeling is that the dreams are becoming very, very boring and predictable."

This is where institutions come in, because art does not exist in a vacuum. It is published, it is performed, it is judged worthy or unworthy of receiving cultivation and funding. I worry about a climate in which, fearing censure, institutions only support works of art that portray the values that their communities have deemed worthy. I worry about the prioritization of art that declares in bold what is GOOD and what is BAD, and how the audience – by thinking one set of things over another – can go from BAD to GOOD. When I say I worry about this, I mean I am seeing it more and more.

Sometimes the BAD and the GOOD are defined by a liberal lens and sometimes by a conservative one, but in both cases the art suffers from its moral simplicity.

I hope that part of what residencies and cultural institutions do is court projects whose aims are manifold and murky, slippery and tricky, artists who are trying to figure out how to ask the hard questions, instead of being prepared to package and sell the "right" answers. Not because there is equal value in all forms of provocation – some are successful inquiries into our hidden natures and some are the artistic equivalent of gum in your hair – but because by valuing what disarms and unsettles over self-congratulatory moral binaries, we treat art as something that can truthfully reflect – and therefore change – our lives.

Omicron cases surge while I'm in Paris and the Russian invasion of Ukraine escalates. I hear that iodine is flying off the shelves of European pharmacies because of the fear of nuclear winter. It's hard not to feel paralyzed. More and more, I'm depressed. I have to take myself out into the air and make myself look around: *You are here and there is life. Catastrophe, but also life*. I tell myself again and again: *Don't simplify*.

Toward the end of the cassette diaries,

after Wojnarowicz has been diagnosed with AIDS, he talks about depression, rage, waves of desire, paralyzing fear. And then, a recording from a road-trip somewhere in North Carolina. The air is filled with the smell of trees; he can see green and blue mountains superimposed against each other, rolling and endless. He says he had been wondering if, headed for a car-crash, he would hit the brakes or step on the gas. But then he nearly had an accident, and it turned out that his instinct was still to hit the brakes.

"This is life," he says. "Let's swim in it."

*Jen Silverman is a New York-based writer and playwright. Jen is the author of plays Collective Rage: A Play in 5 Betties, The Roommate and Witch; the debut novel We Play Ourselves, and the story collection The Island Dwellers (Random House); and the poetry chapbook Bath selected by Traci Brimhall for Driftwood Press. Additional work has appeared in Vogue, The Paris Review, Ploughshares, LitHub, The Yale Review, and elsewhere. Jen is a three-time MacDowell Fellow, and the 2022 recipient of fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts (Prose) and The Guggenheim (Drama).*

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## New Staff/New Board Members

### NEW STAFF

#### Betty Leigh Hutcheson

##### *Institutional giving manager*



Betty Leigh Hutcheson joined MacDowell in 2022 to manage institutional fundraising efforts after working as senior grant writer at the Rubin Museum of Art. Previously

employed at the College Art Association for 14 years, Betty Leigh's tenure concluded as director of publications, where she provided oversight of three journals, two websites, and all publication grants. She holds degrees in anthropology and fine art, and for several years she maintained a photography practice. Betty Leigh lives with her husband in Brooklyn, where she enjoys walking the urban landscape (especially in Greenwood Cemetery), practicing yoga, indulging in art and culture of all types, and befriending other people's dogs. Contact Betty Leigh via e-mail.

### NEW BOARD MEMBERS

#### Jeannie Suk Gersen

##### *Law professor, author*



Jeannie Suk Gersen, born in Seoul, South Korea, is a MacDowell Fellow and the John H. Watson, Jr. professor of law at Harvard Law School, where she has taught courses

ranging from constitutional law to the law of art, fashion, and the performing arts. In 2010, she became the first Asian American woman to receive tenure at Harvard Law School in addition to earning the school's Sacks-Freund Award for Teaching Excellence. She earned a B.A. from Yale University, a D.Phil. in modern

languages from Oxford University, and in 2002 she graduated from Harvard Law School where she studied as a Paul and Daisy Soros Fellow. She has written three books and many articles in scholarly journals and general media. Her book, *At Home in the Law*, was awarded the Herbert Jacob Prize from the Law & Society Association. She is also a Contributing Writer for *The New Yorker*.

#### Julius Tapper

##### *Consulting strategist*



Julius Tapper is an innovation strategist working to redesign systems to value equity, inclusion, culture and community. Tapper is the head of inclusive innovation for Ethos (Deloitte's

purpose-driven innovation offering) and leads equity-centered design at Doblin (Deloitte's human-centered design practice). Prior to consulting, Tapper worked at TD Bank, founding their impact investing and social finance program and issuing TD's first Green Bond. He earned a M.B.A. from MIT, a M.P.A. from Harvard, and a bachelor of commerce from the University of Toronto.

#### Katie Firth

##### *Foundation VP, actor*



Katie Firth was born in New York City and raised and educated in London, returning to the U.S. to attend Williams College from which she graduated magna cum laude with a degree in political

science and theatre. She is vice president and treasurer of the Jean & Louis Dreyfus Foundation and has also served on advisory boards and committees for several nonprofit institutions in New York City including MacDowell, Partnership

with Children, and Planned Parenthood of NY, and volunteers with LEAP, East Harlem School at Exodus House, and the 52nd St Project. She has worked as an actor in New York and regional theaters around the country and is a member of The Actors Center. She also works in the fields of voice-over and audiobooks.

#### Luke Kelly

##### *CEO, producer*



Luke Kelly is the former CEO of the Roald Dahl Story Company where he drove a tenfold increase in company revenue before leading the strategy and execution of the sale of the

company to Netflix. Luke has acted as a producer and executive producer across 19 television, film, and stage productions in partnership with Warner Brothers, Sony, and Netflix, among others. He is currently on the board of Yoto, MTT, is a trustee of Partners in Health, and a trustee of a grant-giving trust, The Fantastic Peach Charitable Trust.

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