

Manhattan Arts

JULY – AUGUST 2000
www.ManhattanArts.com

INTERNATIONAL

INTERVIEW

Cheryl Young
Director of
Mac Dowell
Artist Colony
By Donna Cameron

EXCERPTS

The New Edition of
*NEW YORK
CONTEMPORARY
ART GALLERIES*
By Renée Phillips

ARTIST PROFILES

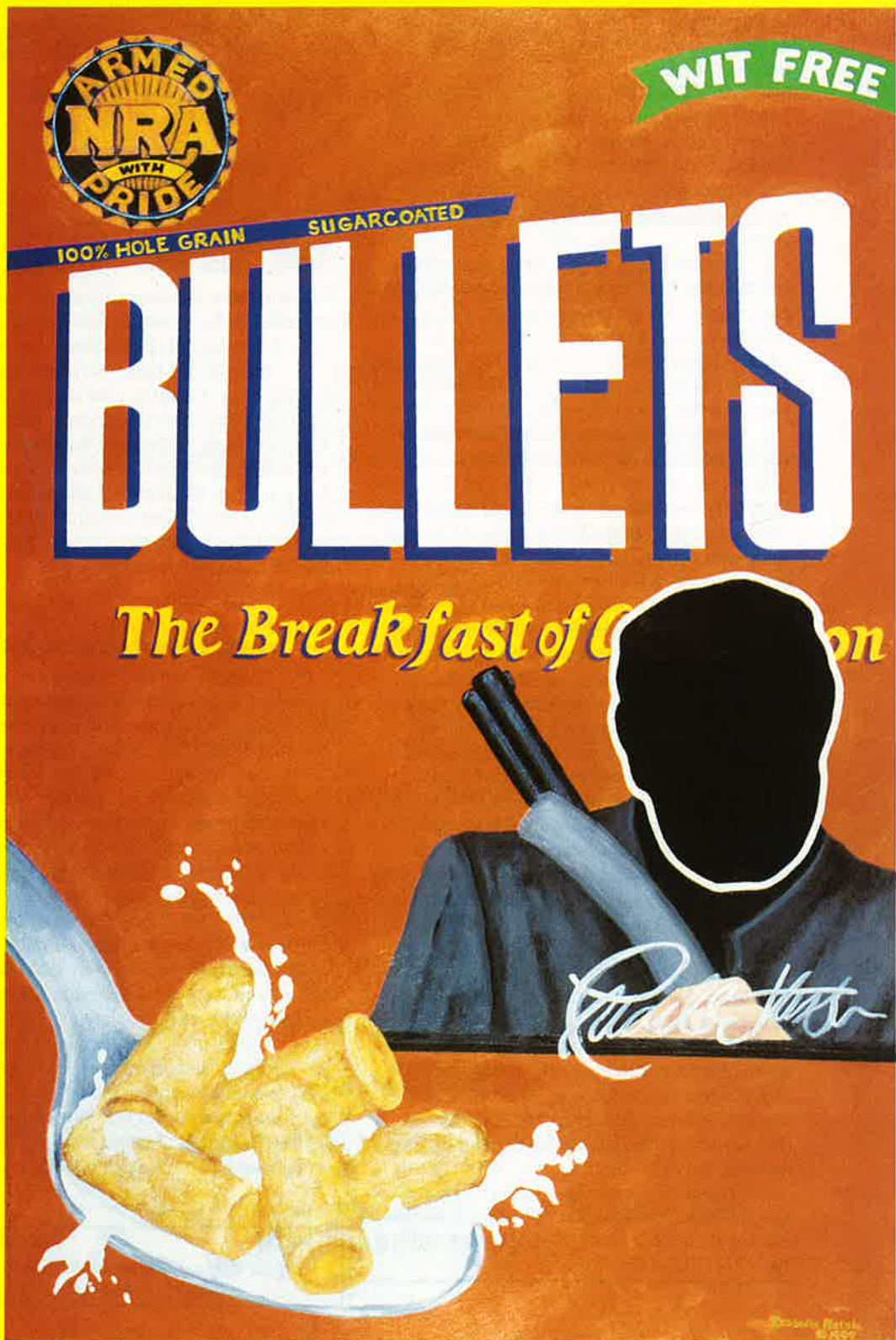
Ying Lu, Chinese Artist
Judith Peck at Fordham
Gloria Ruiz Duzoglou
at Citibank

AWARD-WINNERS

Manhattan Arts
9th Annual Competition

ISABELLA NATALE
COVER AWARD WINNER

Bullets For Breakfast,
acrylic on canvas, 36" X 24"



On Green Mountain Time

An Interview With Cheryl Young Director of the MacDowell Artist Colony

The great painter Ellsworth Kelly accepted his MacDowell Medal last August on Medal Day 1999. The MacDowell medal is awarded each year to one significant artist, each year of a different discipline. Past medalists have included Georgia O'Keeffe, Robert Frost, Chuck Jones, Thornton Wilder, Stan Brakhage, Milton Avery, Aaron Copland.

"We're the oldest," says Cheryl Young, Executive Director of the MacDowell Artist Colony in Peterborough, NH." She smiles and nods amiably. "We're the one, the prototype for other residences in this country. That's why we won the NATIONAL MEDAL OF ARTS from President Bill Clinton in 1997."

Her office is on the second floor of Colony Hall, the main building in a conglomerate of smaller studios and houses which speckle the 450 acres of lush mountain forest that demarcate the MacDowell Artist Colony from the rest of the world. Through an open window behind her, the air swims in, carrying the scent of new pine growth and the voices of young crickets.

Slivers of orange light shift in the evening sky, silhouetting rows of blooming lilac trees on a gravel path. Somewhere in the neon green glint of that spring meadow is a loudly calling bird...

"Nature is part of the experience here..." she emphasizes. "With MacDowell, not being in an urban setting, and having

the advantage of that ritual walk through the woods to your studio with or without your flashlight, is part of the magic..."

Perhaps it's this 'magic' which makes a MacDowell fellowship one of the most coveted artist's residency fellow-

ships in the world. There are 33 artists' studios on the property, mostly out of sight of each other. There are no telephones lines to/in the studios. Although there now is heat and electricity, the decision to put in plumbing was made well after running water was a given part of American daily life. MacDowell staff and personnel to this day remain loyal to its founder's mandate to live as simply and as close to nature as possible.

"The staff at MacDowell holds a deep respect for artists," says David Macy, Resident Manager at the MacDowell Colony since 1994. "I very much believe in the importance of time away from the world of distractions and the opportunity to pay close attention to the process of creation."

Since its inception in 1907, The MacDowell Colony has provided a nurturing environment to thousands of artists of diverse disciplines. Cur-

rently, over 200 of the world's foremost creative composers, media artists, painters, photographers, writers, sculptors and architects visit the MacDowell complex annually. It was at the MacDowell Colony that Aaron Copland wrote "Appalachian Spring", Leonard Bernstein completed his "Mass", and Thornton Wilder wrote "Our Town." Other notable residencies have

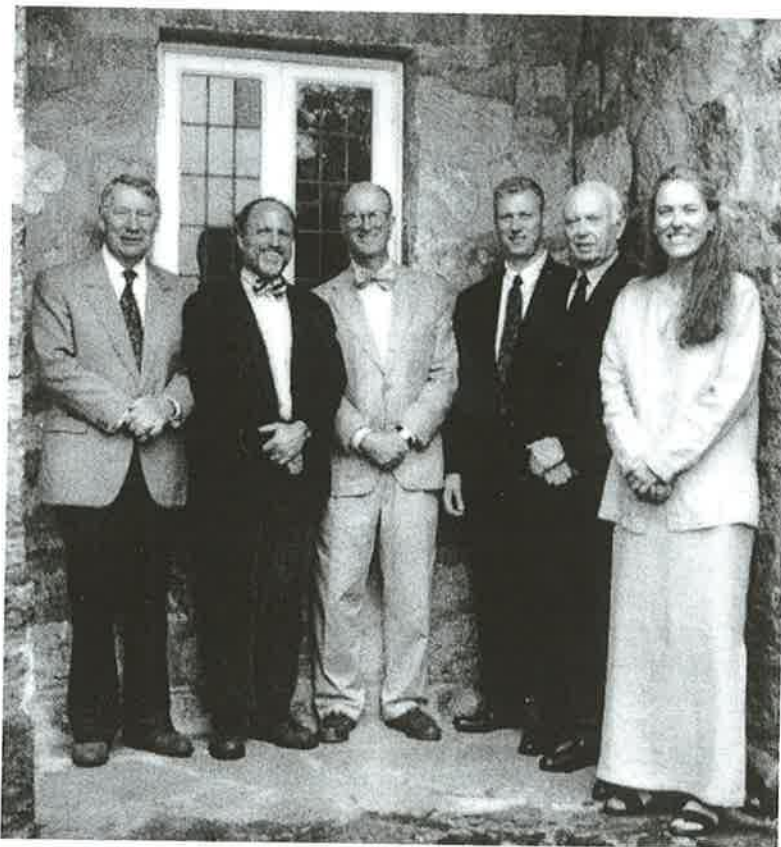


PHOTO CREDIT: JOANNA E. MORRISSEY

Left to right: Robert MacNeil, Chairman of the Board of Directors; James Cuno, Medal Day 1999 presentation speaker and Elizabeth and John Moors Cabot Director of the Harvard University Art Museums; Carter Wiseman, President of the Board of Directors; David Macy, Resident Manager; Ellsworth Kelly, 1999 MacDowell Medal recipient, and Cheryl Young, Executive Director.

A man far ahead of his time, Edward MacDowell envisioned a Utopian community where artists of all disciplines could both work in solitude and interact socially.

included Milton Avery, David del Tredici, Willa Cather, Alice Walker.

Colony founder Edward MacDowell and his wife, Marian originally purchased the property in 1896, to enable MacDowell, a composer to do what Miriam called 'his best work'. MacDowell, recently awarded a National Medal for his classical music compositions and named to the American Classical Music Hall of Fame in 2000, was also an innovative educator who was a founding Chair of the Department of Music at Columbia University in New York City. A man far ahead of his time, Edward MacDowell envisioned a Utopian community where artists of all disciplines could both work in solitude and interact socially. Although there were other innovators of that time with similar ideas for artist communities, MacDowell was the first to realize his, says Young. (At Yaddo Art Colony in upstate New York, for example, they came up with the idea in 1899 but they didn't act on it for 25 years, according to Young.)

Edward MacDowell's original log cabin studio still stands, and is open annually every August for Medal Day. Like his, all studios on the premises are equipped simply to serve the specific artist's needs. Composers' studios have

a baby grand piano, visual artists' studios have natural northern light and full spectrum lighting; photographer's studios have a fully equipped darkroom; writer's studios have cork board walls and writing tables, and so on. Emphasis is on work, solitude and creative process.

"There are statistics now that say the average human being needs at least an hour and a half of being alone each day. You need that down time," Young says.

In the following exclusive interview, Young talks about her role in helping the MacDowell Colony increase its endowment more than tenfold, and future Colony plans.

DC: What about you? What brought you to and keeps you at the MacDowell Colony?

CY: ...It always is a strange circle of events. I had been working at the Archeological Institute of America in Boston and I wanted to relocate to New York...a fellow at the New York office of Archeology Magazine said, "You know... my aunt, who is executive director of the MacDowell Colony, is looking for a Director of Development, and you should meet her." And that per-

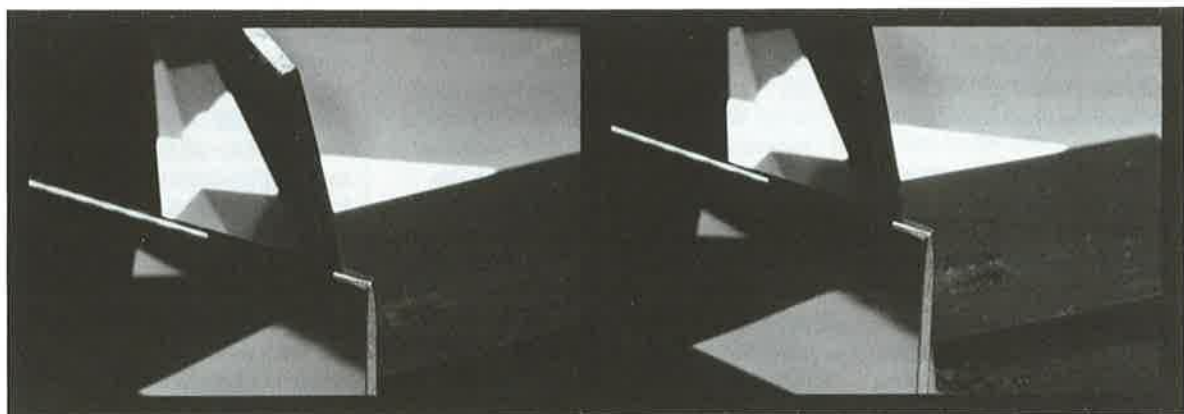
son was Mary Carswell. When I met her, we hit it off instantly...I interviewed with the current board members who are involved with development...I got the job, moved to New York and started fundraising for the Colony. It was a great team. We met the challenge grant that I had been brought on for which raised about 3 million dollars, and then we had a second challenge grant to renovate the studios which I applied for and we got, so we raised another two million dollars with that. Then, we socked it all away. The stock market started to take off, and it's doubled since then. What was a three million dollar endowment became a 22 million dollar endowment over the last 11 years. What keeps me here? The number of people who are so committed, and the work which is always new and challenging...

DC: Do you, personally, have an arts background?

CY: I come from a working class family. I was always the person who wrote and drew. When I told my parents that I would maybe like to go into Art or Theater they said, "No, you can't do that. You can't earn a living. We have no money. How are you going to do this?"

Continued on page 12

**MANHATTAN ARTS INTERNATIONAL 9TH ANNUAL ART COMPETITION
ARTIST SHOWCASE AWARD WINNER**



BERNYCE ALPERT WINICK
Sequence X, photograph