

**NATIONAL FORUM PRESENTS LATEST FINDINGS
ON PIVOTAL ROLE OF THE ARTS IN DEVELOPING A CREATIVE
WORKFORCE FOR THE GLOBAL ECONOMY**

The MacDowell Colony and The Alliance of Artists Communities
Present

Freedom to Create: A Leadership Forum on the Cross-Sector Value of Creativity

The National Press Club, Washington, D.C.

Wednesday, November 7, from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m.

Announcing results of the **2007 National Arts Policy Roundtable**, convened by **Americans for the Arts** and **Sundance Preserve**, with keynote address from the **National Endowment for the Arts**, and a cross-sector panel.

Washington, D.C., November 2007 — Opinion leaders in culture, business, education, and policy will gather on Wednesday, November 7, 2007, at the National Press Club for ***Freedom to Create: A Leadership Forum on the Cross-Sector Value of Creativity***.

They will discuss the latest findings pointing to the growing importance of the arts and creativity in all sectors of society, especially in business and education, as the keys for success in a global marketplace. The forum is co-hosted by two leading organizations that foster creativity — **The MacDowell Colony**, among the nation's first and leading multidisciplinary artist residency programs, and **The Alliance of Artists Communities**, the national service organization representing 250 creative communities.

Dana Gioia, chairman of the **National Endowment for the Arts**, will open the ***Freedom to Create*** forum with a keynote address recognizing artist residency programs as inspiring models of creativity. This will be followed by an in-depth look at the **2007 National Arts Policy Roundtable**, which focuses on the role of the arts in developing the creative and risk-taking skills necessary to compete in today's global marketplace. The Roundtable is convened by **Americans for the Arts** — *Robert Lynch, president and CEO*, and **Sundance Preserve** — *Robert Redford, chairman*. A panel of opinion leaders from the arts, business, education and policy fields, each of whom has long recognized the value of the arts in fostering a culture of creativity and innovation in his or her societal sector, will then engage the audience in a discussion about the practical applications for these findings in today's economy. Next steps for building a climate

that is conducive to creativity in all segments of the life of our nation will also be addressed.

A new Web site, www.freedomtcreate.org, will serve as a way to connect the many diverse individuals and organizations that are engaged in the quest to develop a more innovative, and thereby competitive, culture in America.

Innovation and risk-taking, the stock in trade of creative artists, are critical ingredients for our nation's success. However, in many key policy and business forums, discussion of the arts as a basic building block in developing a creative workforce has been notably absent, even as emphasis on the issue of workforce development has increased. The *Freedom to Create* forum aims to identify the ingredients that nurture and expand the creativity of individuals, and to illuminate creativity as a national societal value, a priority issue, and a catalyst for change.

Modeling Creative Community

Artists' communities are vital research and development labs for the arts. They provide artists with the opportunity to create new work, and encourage risk-taking and invention in an atmosphere that values experimentation and cross-disciplinary exchange. By seeking to make creativity a national priority, **The MacDowell Colony**, www.macdowellcolony.org, and **The Alliance of Artists Communities** www.artistcommunities.org, strive to replicate the success of artist communities on a national scale.

The *Freedom to Create* forum is part of a yearlong celebration marking the 100th anniversary of **The MacDowell Colony**. Today, there are some 250 creative communities across the country providing residencies to more than 12,000 artists annually, supporting them as active participants in the nation's cultural development. At **The MacDowell Colony**, more than 6,000 Fellows have been inspired to reach the heights of creativity over the past century, earning nearly 70 Pulitzer Prizes and numerous other honors including National Book Awards, the Rome Prize, and Guggenheim, Fulbright, and MacArthur Fellowships. In 1997, **The MacDowell Colony** was awarded the National Medal of Arts for "nurturing and inspiring many of this century's finest artists," and offering outstanding artists "the opportunity to work within a

dynamic community of their peers, where creative excellence is the standard.” In recent decades, artist residencies have grown to become one of the most significant sources of support for individual artists, who regularly report a marked increase in both the quality and quantity of work they accomplish while in residence.

The Americans for the Arts National Arts Policy Roundtable

Now in its second year, the **Americans for the Arts National Arts Policy Roundtable** is composed of distinguished individuals who serve at the highest levels of business, government, philanthropy, education, and the arts. Roundtable participants share a commitment to the arts and a willingness to exchange ideas across disciplines and recommend policies critical to the advancement of America’s wellbeing. Robert Redford, chairman of **Sundance Preserve**, and Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of **Americans for the Arts**, led the second annual **National Arts Policy Roundtable** entitled, *Thinking Creatively and Competing Globally — The Role of the Arts in Building the 21st Century American Workforce*. More than 30 leaders from business, government, philanthropy, education and the arts convened in Sundance, Utah from October 4th – 6th to address how the arts can help foster students’ creative and innovative skills in order to compete in the 21st century global workplace.

“The roundtable discussions established that knowledge and creativity yield leaders,” said Robert L. Lynch, president and CEO of **Americans for the Arts**. “If creativity is synonymous with the arts, then the arts should be part of a student’s fundamental building blocks to develop the skills necessary to succeed in life.”

Participants were charged with generating actionable policy recommendations that will be offered to leaders in both the public and private sectors. Policy recommendations and key action items determined at the recent National Arts Policy Roundtable will be announced later this year. A list of participants, a podcast, and a multimedia presentation documenting the October Roundtable meeting in Utah is available at www.AmericansForTheArts.org.

A digital audio record of the November 7 Forum will be available on www.freedomtcreate.org.

The MacDowell Colony: Every year, approximately 250 talented artists are awarded Fellowships to spend up to two months at MacDowell, which is located on 450 woodland acres in Peterborough, New Hampshire. To date, MacDowell Fellows have come from 49 states and 50 nations. Each Fellow is provided with a private, fully equipped studio appropriate to his or her discipline, along with meals and accommodations. In 1997, The MacDowell Colony was awarded the National Medal of Arts “for nurturing and inspiring many of this century’s finest artists.” It is the only artist residency program to have received this prominent honor. The MacDowell Colony has served as the model for artist residency programs throughout the United States and internationally. Since its founding 100 years ago, such communities have become the nation’s largest source of support for individual artists. www.macdowellcolony.org

The Alliance of Artists Communities is the professional association representing the nation’s 250 creative communities, which serve over 12,000 artists annually. The Alliance provides a collective voice on behalf of its members, small and large, that leverages support for the field as a whole. It is the only national organization representing programs that support artists in all disciplines, believing that collaboration and exchange that cross traditional boundaries further our culture’s progress. Members — including artist communities, residency programs, individuals, and other institutions that support living artists in the creation of new work — provide approximately \$36 million in direct support to artists each year. www.artistcommunities.org

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