



BERNHARDT FUDYMA DESIGN GROUP
Thinking about brands in transition.

Freedom to create.

How the oldest artist residency program in the country brought its image into the 21st century.

CONTEXT

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

In 2007 The MacDowell Colony marked its centennial as the country's first artist residency program. Since its founding MacDowell has awarded thousands of Fellowships, ranging from two weeks to two months, to artists of exceptional talent. Many Colony Fellows have become pivotal figures in American culture, their works among our treasured icons.*

To help commemorate this milestone and underscore the influence it continues to exert on the arts and culture, MacDowell chose the Bernhardt Fudyma Design Group to create a distinctive new imprimatur that would invigorate the look of the Colony's many communication materials and present a more contemporary and dynamic depiction of the organization and its mission for the centennial year - and beyond.



A National Historic Landmark and listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Colony is open to the public only one day a year for the presentation of the Edward MacDowell Medal.



* The following are a few of the artists and the projects they worked on at the Colony:

James Baldwin *Giovanni's Room* • Leonard Bernstein *Mass* • Aaron Copland *Billy the Kid* • E.L. Doctorow *Billy Bathgate*
Spalding Gray *Impossible Vacation* • Benny Andrews *various paintings* • DuBose and Dorothy Heyward *Porgy and Bess*
Oscar Hijuelos *The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love* • Alice Sebold *The Lovely Bones* • Studs Terkel *Division Street*
Wendy Wasserstein *Third* • Thornton Wilder *Our Town*

CONTEXT

THE SITUATION

Previously, the MacDowell Colony used different staff members and outside design consultants to produce their various materials when the need arose. With no established graphic identity, other than a standard typesetting of their logo, the result was a visually unrelated array of newsletters, annual reports, brochures, announcements and fund raising appeals with no branding consistency.



Upon review of these materials and their multivariate characteristics, it became clear that our approach would have to focus on developing a new branding system that was flexible enough to accommodate numerous formats and features, and enable any single component to function as a stand-alone entity. At the same time, that component had to maintain sufficient genetic similarity to work in combination with all of the Colony's other materials to reinforce a cohesive brand image.

Our solution was an elegant combination of typography, imagery and a simple protocol for their arrangement.

CONTEXT

SOLUTION

NAME DROPPING

In our initial discussions with the Colony's directors, communications team and other stakeholders we noticed that, instead of using the Colony's full name, everyone referred to it simply as 'MacDowell'. Using this appellation, we created a bold, graphic wordmark which became the visual keystone for all future communications.

The MacDowell Colony

We also developed an icon that was to embellish the new wordmark - and their existing logo - for the centennial year, but could be eliminated in the future without creating visual imbalance.



MacDowell
FREEDOM TO CREATE SINCE 1907

The tagline also evolved slightly beyond the anniversary.



MacDowell
FREEDOM TO CREATE

CONTEXT

SOLUTION

EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY

All imagery used on brochure covers, posters, advertising, press kits, invitations and the like was to consist of the 3 subjects that symbolize what makes MacDowell the remarkable organization that it is:

1. Scenes of the Colony environs, its details or characteristics



2. Colony artists at work



3. Representations of the creative output produced at the Colony



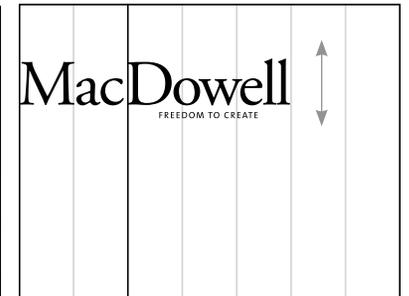
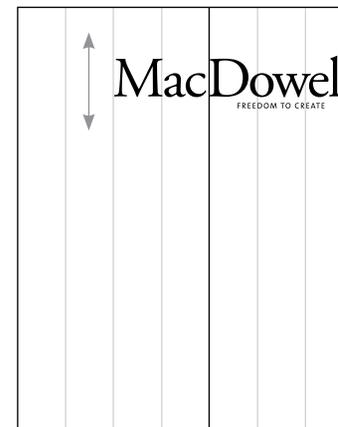
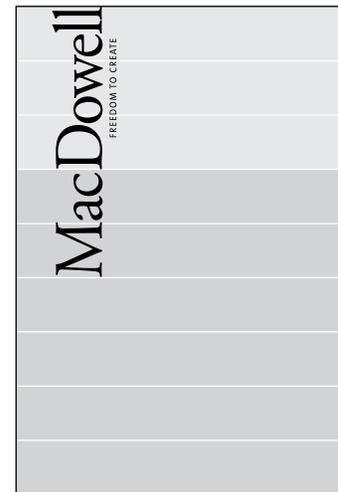
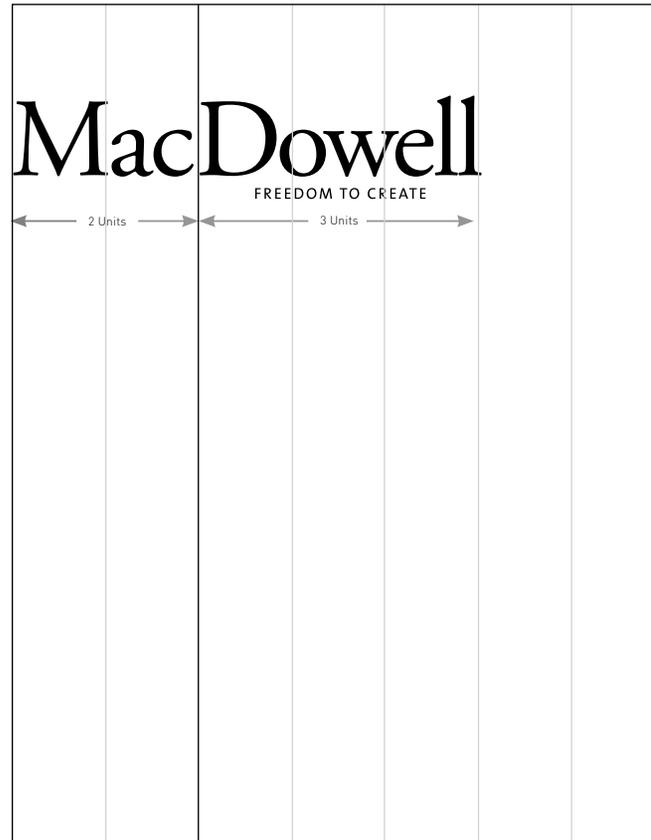
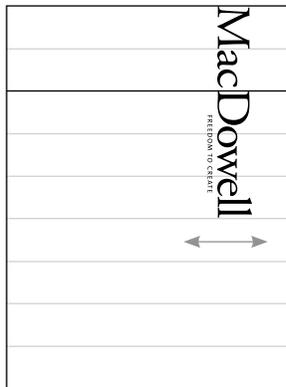
CONTEXT

SOLUTION

ESTABLISHING THE FRAMEWORK

A simple, scalable underlying grid, based on the proportions of the MacDowell wordmark, became the armature for governing page delineations and placement of graphics, and provided the overall organizing principle of the new branding system.

The MacDowell wordmark can be placed in numerous positions in either horizontal or vertical orientations.



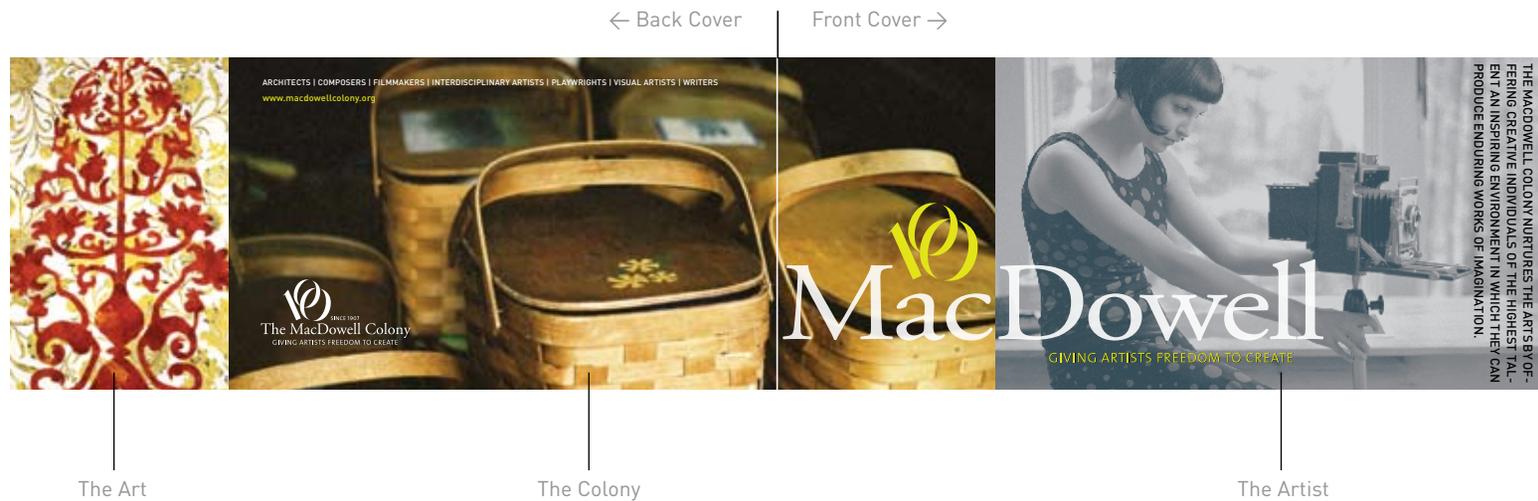
CONTEXT

SOLUTION

APPLICATION

PUTTING THE BRAND ELEMENTS TOGETHER

When possible, components with wrap-around covers that used the horizontal wordmark were to utilize the grid to feature one of each type of image. Other items with a vertically oriented wordmark would consist of only 2 images (for an image and a clear field).



We also suggested listing all of the disciplines supported by the Colony on each component, which helped MacDowell clarify and reinforce its mission:

ARCHITECTS | COMPOSERS | FILMMAKERS | INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTISTS | PLAYWRIGHTS | VISUAL ARTISTS | WRITERS

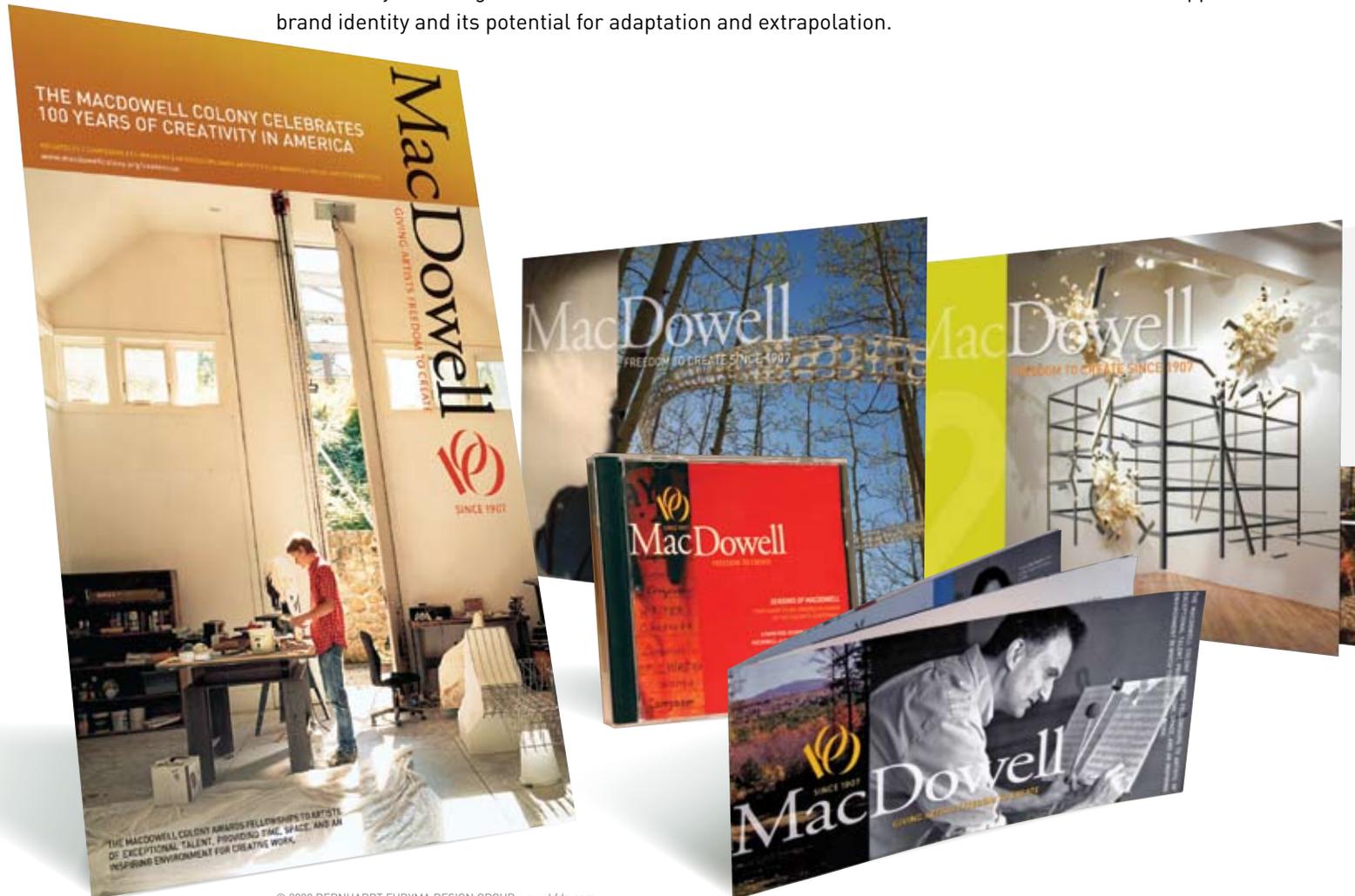
CONTEXT

SOLUTION

APPLICATION

PUTTING THE BRAND ELEMENTS TOGETHER *Continued*

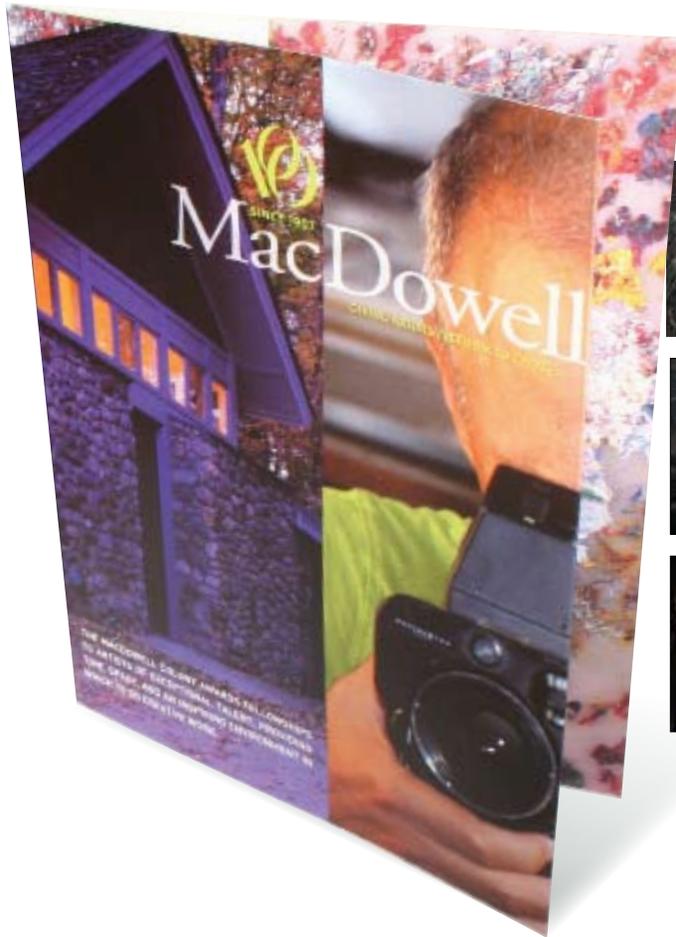
With the graphic system parameters established, we began to produce components for immediate use in their centennial year. The goal was to create a 'critical mass' of items that would illustrate various applications of the new brand identity and its potential for adaptation and extrapolation.



CONTEXT
 SOLUTION
 APPLICATION

PUTTING THE BRAND ELEMENTS TOGETHER *Continued*

Materials were also created to demonstrate how the underlying grid could be used to inform the physical structure of components such as press kits, or accommodate different types and volumes of content throughout the interiors of documents.



Compatible font families were specified for all text but no specific color palette was defined, as accent colors were to be chosen to complement those in the photographs being used.



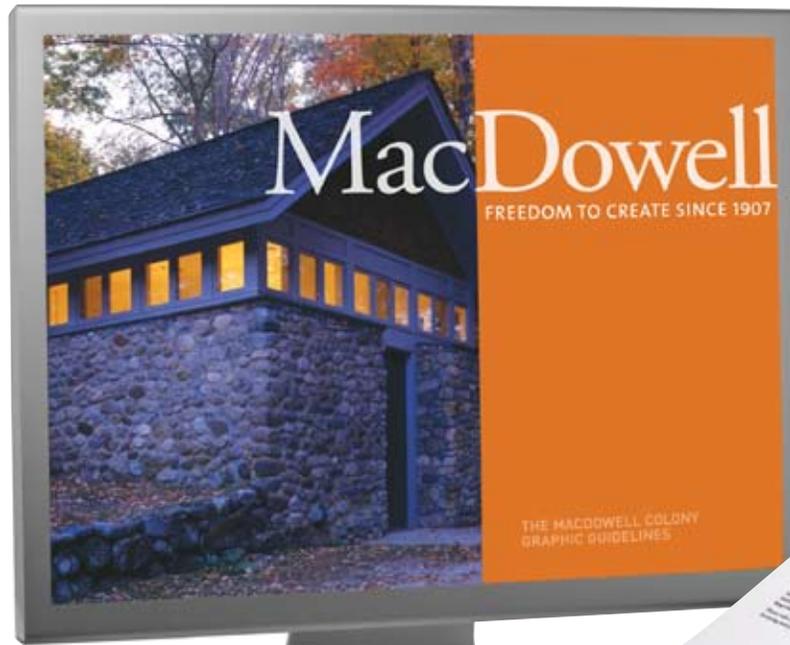
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DOCUMENTING THE NEW BRAND SYSTEM

The ultimate goal was to turn over the design of all Colony communications to their staff who could then direct the creation of future materials more consistently - no matter who produced them.



Easy to follow guidelines were created in PDF format to enable electronic distribution or the printing of hard copies as necessary.





THE RESULT

“The work of MacDowell is not always easy to explain, which can make it challenging to gain support for our organization and mission. Bernhardt Fudyma listened closely to what we were saying about ourselves and updated our look with beautiful and compelling new materials that convey what we do and why it matters. Their breadth of experience and professionalism was invaluable and there was no question we were getting the best advice and talent.”

Cheryl Young
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WHAT ABOUT YOU

The Bernhardt Fudyma Design Group creates branding and graphic solutions for organizations in transition – whether due to acquisitions or mergers, expansion into new markets, or the need for increased visibility or differentiation in existing markets. Each brand identity project we've encountered has inspired the client to move beyond business as usual and the results can be invigorating.

We look forward to helping you do the same.

To learn more about this and other brand positioning and identity systems created by Bernhardt Fudyma, contact Craig Bernhardt:

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