

MacArthur Fellows Program **Meet the 2008 Fellows**

Chimamanda Adichie ▶



Unaffiliated
Columbia, MD
Age: 31

Fiction Writer exploring the circumstances that lead to ethnic conflict in richly imagined novels and stories inspired by events in her native Nigeria.

Will Allen ▶



Growing Power, Inc.
Milwaukee, WI
Age: 59

Urban Farmer transforming the cultivation, production, and delivery of healthy foods to underserved, urban populations through a novel synthesis of low-cost farming technologies.

Regina Benjamin ▶



Bayou La Batre Rural Health Clinic
Bayou La Batre, AL
Age: 51

Rural Family Physician delivering high-quality medical care to diverse, underserved communities in Alabama and ensuring that the most vulnerable among us are not forgotten.

Kirsten Bomblies ▶



Max Planck Institute for Developmental Biology
Tubingen, Germany
Age: 34

Plant Evolutionary Geneticist opening avenues into the mysteries of how new species originate through her explorations of incompatible hybrids as a mechanism for speciation in shared ecological niches.

Tara Donovan ▶



Unaffiliated
Brooklyn, NY
Age: 38

Sculptor transforming accumulations of ordinary materials into visually arresting, sculptural works reminiscent of geological and biological forms.

Wafaa El-Sadr ▶



Columbia University / Mailman School of Public Health
New York, NY
Age: 58

Infectious Disease Physician introducing multi-pronged treatment strategies for some of the most pressing pandemics of our time — HIV/AIDS and TB — diseases that often afflict people with the least access to quality health care.

Andrea Ghez ▶



University of California / Los Angeles
Los Angeles, CA
Age: 43

Astrophysicist using novel, ground-based telescopic techniques to identify thousands of new star systems and illuminate the role of super-massive black holes in the evolution of galaxies.

Stephen Houston ▶



Brown University
Providence, RI
Age: 49

Anthropologist / Epigrapher illuminating the intellectual and emotional life of ancient Mesoamerican peoples through insightful interpretations of hieroglyphic inscriptions and figural art.

Mary Jackson ▶



Unaffiliated
Charleston, SC
Age: 63

Fiber Artist translating practical designs into intricately coiled vessels that preserve the centuries-old craft of sweetgrass basketry and push the tradition in stunning new directions.

Leila Josefowicz ▶



Unaffiliated
New York, NY
Age: 30

Violinist broadening the instrument's repertoire and captivating audiences through her juxtaposition of the avant-garde and eclectic with the more traditional

Alexei Kitaev ▶



California Institute of Technology
Pasadena, CA
Age: 45

Physicist / Computer Scientist deepening insights into the fundamental nature of quantum physics and bringing us closer to realizing the full potential of quantum computing.

Walter Kitundu ▶



Exploratorium
San Francisco, CA
Age: 35

Instrument Maker and Composer inventing instruments inspired by experimental and traditional musical forms to produce electro-acoustic works that navigate the boundary between live and recorded performance.

Susan Mango ▶



University of Utah
Salt Lake City, UT
Age: 47

Developmental Biologist synthesizing approaches from genetics, genomics, ecology, and embryology to address one of the most challenging questions in developmental biology – how organs are formed.

Diane Meier ▶



Mount Sinai School of Medicine
New York, NY
Age: 56

Geriatrician transforming treatment for the seriously ill into more humane and effective care.

David Montgomery ▶



University of Washington / Seattle
Seattle, WA
Age: 46

Geomorphologist unsettling accepted wisdom about both local and global environmental change by exploring the ecological consequences of a wide range of Earth surface processes.

John Ochsendorf ▶



Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, MA
Age: 34

Structural Engineer / Architectural Preservationist restoring structures from the distant past and identifying ancient technologies for use in contemporary constructions.

Peter Pronovost ▶



Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
Baltimore, MD
Age: 43

Critical Care Physician devising life-saving, clinical practices that are improving patient safety in hospitals and sparing countless lives from the often deadly consequences of human error.

Adam Riess ▶



Johns Hopkins University
Astronomer, Space Telescope Science Institute
Baltimore, MD
Age: 38

Astronomer designing experiments and devices to advance our understanding of the geometry of the universe and to trace the story of both its beginning and its end.

Alex Ross ▶



The New Yorker
New York, NY
Age: 40

Music Critic offering both highly specialized and casual readers new ways of thinking about the music of the past and its place in our future.

Nancy Siraisi ▶



Unaffiliated
Brooklyn, NY
Age: 76

Historian of Medicine elucidating in meticulously researched and elegant prose the profound impact of medical theory and practice on Renaissance society, culture, and religion.

Marin Soljagic ▶



Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Cambridge, MA
Age: 34

Optical Physicist demonstrating both theoretically and experimentally that power can be transmitted wirelessly, potentially leading to a range of electrical devices that can operate without batteries or wall connections.

Sally Temple ▶



New York Neural Stem Cell Institute
Albany, NY
Age: 49

Neuroscientist tracing the natural interactions of differentiating neurons in the development of complex, heterogeneous tissue to bring us closer to effective clinical treatments for central nervous system damage.

Jennifer Tipton ▶



Unaffiliated
New York, NY
Age: 71

Stage Lighting Designer pushing the visual boundaries of her art form with painterly lighting that evokes mood and sculpts movement in dance, drama, and opera.

Rachel Wilson ▶



Harvard Medical School
Boston, MA
Age: 34

Experimental Neurobiologist integrating electrophysiology, neuropharmacology, molecular genetics, and anatomy to measure the activity of neurons in the diminutive brain of the fruit fly.

Miguel Zenón ▶



Unaffiliated

New York, NY

Age: 31

Saxophonist drawing from a variety of jazz idioms and the indigenous music of his native Puerto Rico to create a new language of complex, yet accessible sounds that overflow with emotion.