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Contemporary Classical Music Shines Spotlight on Alcatraz
Composer Ingram Marshall partners with photographer Jim Bengston to present
an evening of music and images,
performed by the Afiara String Quartet

SARATOGA, Calif. – Montalvo Arts Center presents *Alcatraz*, a presentation of music and images created by collaborators **Ingram Marshall**, a contemporary classical composer, and **Jim Bengston**, a well-respected photographer. *Alcatraz* marries exquisite photographs with an incisive electro-acoustic composition and features three additional compositions performed by the acclaimed **Afiara String Quartet**. *Alcatraz* is part of Montalvo's 2009 arts initiative, *AGENCY: The Work of Artists*, curated by Julie Lazar.

Marshall and Bengston originally created *Alcatraz* in the early 1980s. For this project, they sought to combine music and photography in ways that highlight the communicative powers of each medium but also bring the two together to create a new artistic language. The result is a series of moving still photographs with live, electronically processed music, inspired by the famous Bay Area prison. Three additional compositions for string quartet are performed by the acclaimed Afiara String Quartet. *Fog Tropes*, *Evensongs part 1*, and *Evensongs part 2*. > Finally, *Eberbach*, based on a Kloster in Germany and serving as an analogue to *Alcatraz*, will also be performed with projected images.

Marshall is a contemporary classical composer of "live electronics," tape collages, extended vocals and acoustic instruments often scored in combination for solos, ensembles and orchestras. A composition teacher at Yale University, Marshall's work has been performed by ensembles and orchestras including the Theater of Voices, Kronos Quartet, Bang on a Can All-Stars, the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the American Composers Orchestra. He has received grants from the National Endowment of the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Guggenheim Foundation, and the American Academy of Arts and Letters, among others. In addition, the American Composers Orchestra in New York premiered his new concerto for two guitars and orchestra, *Dark Florescence*, at Carnegie Hall in February 2005. *Orphic Memories*, commissioned by the Cheswatyr Foundation, premiered at Carnegie Hall in April 2007.

Bengston became interested in photography while stationed in Germany with the U.S. Army in the late 1960s. Upon discharge from the army, Bengston took a job with the Associated Press in New York. He is known for his photographs of the Norwegian landscape, which often seem to capture fleeting moments that speak poignantly of human experience. Bengston describes his work as an attempt to capture the "feeling" of the land rather than simply its shapes and colors.

The all-Canadian Afiara String Quartet is the Graduate Resident String Quartet at The Juilliard School in New York, where they serve as teaching assistants to the celebrated Juilliard String Quartet. In 2008, the Afiara Quartet won the Concert Artists Guild International Competition in New York, following a top prize at the Munich ARD International Music Competition. As the only

Canadian ensemble to win top honors in either of these historic competitions, the San Francisco Classical Voice calls the Afiara Quartet “a terrifically unified, versatile, and moving ensemble” with “startling intensity” and a “powerful, keen-edged collective sound.”

AGENCY is a focused, thematic series of newly commissioned and existing art projects that explore the subject of interdependence – life's dynamic, reciprocal interplay – from a variety of approaches including family, immigration, the environment, faith, cultural memory and economic globalism. More than 60 artists were invited to participate in *AGENCY* because of their sensitive, compassionate investigations into relationships among people, places and systems as well as their skillful production of engaging public art, film, sculpture, photography, literature, performance and architecture. Please note: the following artists are no longer participating in *AGENCY*: Allan Sekula and Wang Wei. For the most updated information visit www.montalvoarts.org/agency.

AGENCY is funded in part by grants from The Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts, The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, The James Irvine Foundation, Nimoy Foundation, and gifts from Mickie and Gibson Anderson, Jo and Barry Ariko, L.J. Cella, Wanda Kownacki and John Holton, Sally and Don Lucas, Judy and George Marcus, Kathie and Robert Maxfield, and Joan and Frederick M. Nicholas. For more information visit www.montalvoarts.org/agency.

Tickets are available through the Montalvo Box Office: 20/\$18 members; students are free. Call the Box Office: 408.961.5858 or visit Monday through Friday 10 am – 4 pm. Tickets are also available the day of the event.

About Montalvo Arts Center

Montalvo Arts Center is a nonprofit organization that fosters community engagement through the creation and presentation of multidisciplinary art. By uniting the broadest possible audiences with a global community of artists, Montalvo expands the role of arts and culture as an essential community resource. Montalvo's programming includes: an annual theme-based arts program; music and performance; education and public programs; new media and visual arts; and the Sally and Don Lucas Artists Residency. Located in the Saratoga foothills in the midst of Silicon Valley, Montalvo Arts Center occupies a Mediterranean-style villa on 175 stunning acres, which Senator James Phelan left to the people of California for the encouragement of promising students in the areas of art, music, literature and architecture. In January 2005, the organization changed its name from "Villa Montalvo" to "Montalvo Arts Center" to better communicate its mission to increasing local, national and international audiences. Montalvo celebrates its centennial in 2012. For more information about Montalvo Arts Center, call 408.961.5800 or visit www.montalvoarts.org.

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