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**Lee Mingwei with Stephan Freid:
An Offering and Public Art Proposal: Grandfather's Incline
Proposed Sculpture is Focus of Montalvo's New Exhibition**
Exhibition runs Nov. 15 through Feb. 21, 2010

SARATOGA, Calif. – Montalvo Arts Center presents *An Offering and Public Art Proposal: Grandfather's Incline*, a new exhibition by visual, performance and installation artist Lee Mingwei, opening Nov. 15 in the Project Space gallery. For this exhibition, Lee worked with frequent collaborator, architect Stephan Freid, to conceive and design a proposal for a permanent public artwork on Montalvo's grounds. *Grandfather's Incline* will consist of a series of working drawings, a model of the proposed public installation, maps of the area as well as a 12-foot-long table representing the proposed work with fresh baked goods offered to gallery visitors. *Grandfather's Incline* is part of Montalvo's 2009 arts initiative, *AGENCY: The Work of Artists*, curated by Julie Lazar.

On Nov. 15 at 7 p.m. in the Carriage House Theatre an artist conversation will take place where Lee, Freid and Lazar will share their vision for this new permanent art piece on Montalvo's grounds and engage in a conversation about the complexities and potential of art in public spaces.

Acutely aware of the ephemeral quality of life, Lee, who characterizes himself as a "social conceptualist" in his approach to art making, attempts to produce experiences in his work that the viewer will own through their individual memory.

Lee's and Freid's vision for *Grandfather's Incline* is an 80-foot long suspended wooden platform that extends beyond the hillside at a slight incline hovering above the nearby Garden Theater and historic Villa. A descending seating area will be adorned by a single potted tree situated at the far end of the platform providing a shady, contemplative space for hikers to rest, refresh themselves and to experience a unique view of Silicon Valley. Lee and Freid have sited this sculpture to be located at a parting between ancient oak and redwood trees along a popular trail within Montalvo's parklands.

Born in Taipei in 1964 to political dissidents, Lee has a dual Buddhist-Catholic background. As a child he spent summers at a Chan (the Chinese ancestor of Zen) monastery where he learned the simple power of concentrating on daily activities. Lee then came to live in the United States and attended a Benedictine high school in California. He went on to study textile arts at the California College of Arts and Crafts, earning a BFA in Textile Arts in 1993 and receiving an MFA in Sculpture from Yale Graduate School of Fine Arts in 1997. Within a year he had his first solo exhibition at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. Lee has since had solo exhibitions at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston and The Los Angeles County Museum. He has also participated in both the Venice and the Whitney Biennials.

Lee has been an artist in residence at Acadia Summer Art Program in Maine, the Oxbow School in Napa California and was a visiting artist at DiJian University in Taipei, Taiwan. Some of his more recent projects include *Guernica in Sand*, a mixed media interactive installation for the Albion Gallery in London; *Fabric of Money*, a mixed media interactive installation for the 2006 Liverpool Biennial at

the Tate in London, and Artists as Residents for the Echigo-Tsumari Art triennial in Japan. He currently lives and works in New York City and Berkeley, Calif.

Stephan Freid is an award winning and published architect whose work bridges both large scale public projects and intimate residential work. Throughout his 28 years as a practicing architect, Freid served as a partner in a major international firm designing and managing complex science and technology research and educational buildings for public and private clients with an emphasis on sustainable design. He frequently collaborates with artists and arts institutions and believes the main purpose of architecture is to enhance quality of life by uplifting the human spirit and provide meaning and insight into daily life.

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: The Work of Artists 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. Thomas Gashbarro, Structural Engineer, provided in-kind services in support of this project.

For more information visit www.montalvoarts.org/agency. The Project Space Gallery is open Thursday through Sunday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

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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