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Video Exhibition by Louis Hock Examines U.S./Mexico Immigration and Border Issues
Exhibition Runs September 11 – November 1, 2009

Hock's new work, *The American Tapes,* premieres at Montalvo on September 27

SARATOGA, Calif. – Opening September 11, Montalvo Arts Center presents a thought-provoking and evocative exhibition of video work by San Diego-based artist Louis Hock that examines the complex issues surrounding immigration and the U.S./Mexico border. Hock has addressed these issues in his work for many years starting with *The Mexican Tapes: A Chronicle of Life Outside the Law (1986),* which will be on view in the Billiards Room in the historic Villa at Montalvo. After its premiere in the Carriage House Theatre on September 27, *Sketches for The American Tapes: A Tale of Immigrations (2009),* a new piece that profiles the families portrayed in *The Mexican Tapes* 25-years later, will also be on view in the Villa's Billiard Room*. Feral (2004),* Hock's examination of the Border Patrol and how its function has changed post-9/11, will be on view in Montalvo's Project Space Gallery adjacent to the Carriage House Theatre. The exhibition is part of Montalvo's 2009 arts initiative, *AGENCY: The Work of Artists*, guest-curated by Julie Lazar.

The highlight of the exhibition is the premiere of *Sketches for the American Tapes: A Tale of Immigrations* (2009) on Sunday, September 27, at 2 pm, which will be followed by a public conversation at Montalvo's Carriage House Theatre. For the event, Hock has invited first-generation immigrants to address their expectations and civic evolution in the United States. Joining Hock will be Jaime Contreras, M.A., community director, GenerationEngage, Silicon Valley; Raj Jayadev, executive director, *Debug* Magazine; and Angelica Muro, faculty, California State University, Monterey Bay, co-founder, Space 47. Free admission with a suggested donation of $10 at the door.

Guest Curator Julie Lazar states, "Louis Hock's artworks are created by engaging with people's lives rather than fictional stories. Through his life's work in art, we are offered the kind of understanding about issues permeating individual immigrants lives that only long-term, personal relationships can afford. Through Hock's art we can share experiences that we might otherwise not have enjoyed the privilege of learning from."

LOUIS HOCK VIDEO WORKS ON VIEW:

***The Mexican Tapes: A Chronicle of Life Outside the Law* (1986)**
Thirty years ago, Hock lived in a cluster of Southern California beach apartments where he seized the opportunity to chronicle the life and community of the undocumented Mexican families who were his neighbors. Filmed over a five-year period, the award-winning four-part documentary of one-hour videotapes has been shown on WNET, NY; KQED, San Francisco; KCET, Los Angeles, and the BBC, United Kingdom. The video work is in the collections of the Pacific Film Archive/Berkeley Art Museum and the Whitney Museum of American Art.

(MORE)

Louis Hock Exhibition at Montalvo Arts Center (continued)

***Sketches for The American Tapes: A Tale of Immigrations* (2009)**
After the completion of *The Mexican Tapes*, Hock regularly kept in touch with some of his old neighbors; others he did not see again until more recently. In 2004 some of the children from those families, now in their 30s and 40s and still living in southern California, contacted him via email, asking for fresh copies of *The Mexican Tapes* to show to their own children. This fresh view into their parents' and grandparents' earlier lives initiated a year-long dialogue with Hock that ultimately prompted him to undertake a new video work. Now, Hock's earlier subjects reappear in *Sketches for The American Tapes: A Tale of Immigrations,* in a feature-length tape that revisits these families and examines how they have retained their cultural ties, progressed in their working life, and absorbed American values and culture into their lives. *The American Tapes* represent a unique opportunity to witness intimate reflections on how both U.S. culture and immigration continue to shape the existence of once-undocumented Mexican Americans and their children. Both sets of tapes will play alongside each other in the Billiards Room in the historic Villa.

***Feral* (2004)**
Hock's two-screen video and surround-sound installation depicts the fear instilled by the United States Border Patrol through their intimidating, random process of screening people attempting to cross the U.S./Mexico border. The uniformed government authority, once reserved only for the marginalized and undocumented, is now asking everyone for their papers, everywhere. In his large-scale video installation, Hock asks if this is a tangible and necessary new reality or political theater. One screen depicts the work shift of a U.S. Border Patrol agent at an inland check-point. His vigilant gaze wants us to believe he is able to discern the illegal from the legal, the terrorist from tourist, and "them" from "us." However, the hyper-reality of this gatekeeper calls the reality of the threat into question. On the opposite screen, the unidentified objects, zooming around through a goofy-colored atmosphere, loom at us from a Godzilla-textured, make-believe world. *Feral* will be on view in the Project Space gallery.

Hock, recognized nationally and internationally for his controversial videos and media installations, began making films as an undergraduate at the University of Arizona. In 1973 he received his M.F.A. from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and in1977 he joined the faculty of the Visual Art Department at UC San Diego, where he still teaches today. Hock's work has been exhibited at numerous venues including the Museum of Modern Art, NY; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; the Whitney Museum of American Art, NY; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte, Reina Sophia, Madrid. In addition, Hock's work has been recognized with grants and awards from Rockefeller Media, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the American Film Institute among others. Hock has also been involved in the production of eight public art media events.

The Mexican Tapes: A Chronicle of Life Outside the Law (1986); *Sketches for The American Tapes: A Tale of Immigrations (2009)*; and *Feral (2004)* is on view from September 11 through November 1, 2009. Project Space Gallery and Billiards Room hours are Thursday through Sunday, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The exhibition is also open by appointment during regular business hours; contact Kelly Sicat at 408.961.5812 or ksicat@montalvoarts.org for appointments.

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.

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For more information visit www.montalvoarts.org/agency. To reserve a space for this event, call the Box Office: 408.961.5858. Tickets are also available the day of the event at the registration table in the historic Villa.

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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