“Come healing of the body, Come healing of the mind”*

Montalvo’s newest exhibition of outdoor art aims to mend with focus on physical health, nature, and emotional wellbeing

SARATOGA, Calif. – Montalvo Arts Center is pleased to announce its 2013 installation of its annual Art on the Grounds program. This outdoor exhibition, entitled Come Healing, is an invitation to the public to be restored: to upgrade attitudes, calm turbulent emotions, and move toward wholeness, happiness, and peace. It features seven works by a diverse group of international artists, each examining different aspects of spiritual health, mental balance, and mindfulness. It is organized by the Lucas Artists Residency Program (LAP), and on view on Montalvo’s grounds every day through October 31, with free admission to the public.

“The role that positive emotions play in affecting the biochemistry of the body to bring about healing is well documented,” said Donna Conwell, Montalvo Associate Curator, “and the study of situations—that is, the subjective experience of spaces and places—as a means of moving people to health and healing is a growing area of inquiry. It is our hope that Come Healing can play a part in this evolving area of investigation.”

The works of art on view as part of *Come Healing* include:

**Alfredo and Isabel Aquilizan consider the connections between wellbeing and home with their two works *Dwellings: Project Another Country (Saratoga Hills)* and *Wing in Ground*.**

Originally from the Philippines and now based in Australia, husband-and-wife team Alfredo and Isabel Aquilizan have first-hand experience of the themes that permeate their work: migration, impermanence, displacement and the multifaceted concept of home. Their use of everyday, inexpensive and ephemeral materials like cardboard reflect these themes while, in combination with their community and performance-based approach to art-making, also suggest an affinity with the modern art movement Arte Povera.

They have created two new works for Art on the Grounds during their 2013 residency in the LAP, both of which involved members of the local community—mostly middle and high school students—in the construction process. *Dwellings: Project Another Country (Saratoga Hills)* is part of an ongoing series of art works involving members of the local community. During artist-led workshops participants were invited to build their perfect home from recycled cardboard moving boxes. The artists rearranged these handmade houses, incorporating moving pallets and packing tape, to create an installation that resembles an improvised migrant settlement.

For *Wing in Ground*, the Aquilizans partnered with two members of the South Bay community to fashion an airplane wing from recycled cardboard moving boxes. Representing homes and buildings, the cardboard boxes are arranged to resemble the urban topography of the region. The artists eventually intend to create an entire airplane from cardboard boxes and then cast it in concrete or aluminum.

**Artist collective Owen Driggs explore the relationship between the environment and human health with their project *Mapping Biotintimacy*.**

“Owen Driggs” is the collective identity of Matthew Driggs and Janet Owen. Individually experienced artists, educators, and curators, Janet and Matthew began their professional collaboration in 2007, after the spectacular success of their first major work, their son Theo. Together, as Owen Driggs, their practice focuses on the production of space and the impact of spatiality on action and discourse.

They argue that for well over four hundred years, Western thought has striven to separate human...
beings from the natural world. Crediting the original break to have come as a consequence of the Scientific Revolution, they lament the fact that humans experience nature as the ultimate “other,” to be tamed and used. To gently combat this alienation, Owen Driggs proposes to advance the cause of “Biointimacy,” a term first coined by artist Lauren Bon.

Their project Mapping Biointimacy, supports experiences of the natural world as a network of intimate relationships. The artists invite visitors to explore the historical, medicinal, culinary and cultural significance of plant, tree and animal species at Montalvo. Through community workshops, a mobile app, new signage for Montalvo’s grounds, and a guided walk, Owen Driggs provide experiences that underline the interdependence of the natural world, and shed light on the intimate relationship between the health of our environment and individual wellbeing. Informed by proximity, feeling, and knowledge, encounter by encounter, intimacy can grow.

Chuck Ginnever’s installation Rashomon challenges viewers to question their perspective, suggesting that our experiences are shaped by how we view them.

Hailed by art critic Kenneth Baker as “one of the most significant and little-celebrated innovations in late 20th century art,” Rashomon is an installation created by artist Chuck Ginnever. A contemporary of artists Sir Anthony Caro, John Chamberlain, Mark di Suvero, and Eva Hesse, Ginnever is a prolific and engaging artist known primarily for his large-scale abstract sculpture in welded steel and bronze. Ginnever’s work directly engages with notions of subjectivity and perception, and questions our presuppositions about rationality and universal views.

The installation consists of 15 identical geometric forms, each three feet tall, with 15 unique sides and eight balancing points. Fashioned out of bands of steel, the pieces have been made without right angles or parallel lines. The title of the work is borrowed from Akira Kurosawa’s 1950 film of the same name in which the mutually contradictory testimony of four eyewitnesses to a violent crime demonstrates the inherent unreliability of subjective experience. For the viewer, the pleasure of experiencing Rashomon is a two-fold exercise in challenged perspective: moving through the installation, shifting vantage points cause one to read forms alternately as two-dimensional shapes with flattened planes, and three-dimensional objects in space. The viewer is furthermore challenged to weigh the perception of the individual pieces as unique objects against the intellectual knowledge they are exactly identical.

Rashomon is organized by the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art On the Road Series. Viewed in the context of the Montalvo Art on the Grounds exhibition, Rashomon invites us to consider how our perception of the places we inhabit and experience is subjective, shaped by our mood, health, and predispositions.
Susan O’Malley presents *A Healing Walk*, which guides visitors through Montalvo’s forest trails with inspirational signage.

As both an artist and curator, Susan O’Malley has participated in programs and exhibitions throughout the San Francisco Bay Area and internationally in Denmark and Poland. In her socially-based projects, she uses simple and recognizable tools of engagement—installing roomfuls of inspirational posters, distributing flyers in neighborhood mailboxes, conducting doodle competitions at high schools—in order to offer entry points into the interactions of everyday life. In shifting these otherwise mundane exchanges into heightened experiences, O’Malley’s projects rely on the back-and-forth between herself and others in the creation of the artwork. Ultimately, her projects aim to incite hope, optimism, and a sense of interconnectedness in our lives.

Examining the power of natural places to elevate and enrich human experience and health, O’Malley’s *A Healing Walk* guides visitors through Montalvo’s forest trails with text-based signage reminding hikers to practice mindfulness and appreciate the healing effects of the countryside.

**Tiffany Singh draws inspiration from Buddhist practice to create a sacred space in the Italianate Garden with *The Bells of Mindfulness*.**

Of Maori, Indian, and Pacific Island decent, Tiffany Singh draws inspiration from her varied background to create work consisting largely of natural mixed-media-based installation and participatory community building. She has garnered critical acclaim for her use of ceremonial and ritualistic materials gathered from and transcending everyday culture.

With *The Bells of Mindfulness*, she proposes to deeply examine the idea of sacred spaces. Drawing on the Buddhist tradition of using temple bells as an aid for mindfulness, she has suspended 1000 bells and 1000 paper cranes attached to brightly colored ribbons from a persimmons tree in Montalvo’s Italianate Garden, creating a tranquil space for rest and reflection.

Her project unfolds over time: first, she greets visitors under the bell-covered tree, inviting visitors to make origami paper cranes and discuss peace, community, and wellbeing. At the end of the summer, she will give the bells as gifts to participants who will carry them to places they consider shared spaces of calm and peace. Documentation of these
spaces will be uploaded onto an interactive web-based map, creating a complex portrait of what sacred space means to us today.

Singh’s work will also be the focus of Montalvo’s July Final Friday Celebration on July 26 from 6 to 9pm, featuring food trucks, live music and dance performance, and an LAP artist art sale. For more information about the evening’s line-up, visit montalvoarts.org/events/final_fridays_0713/.

Christine Wong Yap demonstrates the healing force of community and gesture with her *Irrational Exuberance Flags*.

Christine Wong Yap is an interdisciplinary artist whose installations, sculptures, multiples, and works on paper explore the power of optimism and pessimism. Her work examines the paradox that mundane materials or situations can give rise to irrational expectations, emotions, and experiences. Major touchstones are language, light and dark, and psychology.

Her *Irrational Exuberance Flags* are a spirited declaration of unabashed communal enthusiasm, and an examination of the power of ceremony and positive thinking. A member of the public is designated weekly to select one of Yap’s brightly colored hand-made flags, proceed in an ad hoc procession down to the Lucas Artists Residency, and hoist the flag up a flagpole.

**Flourish: Artists Explore Wellbeing**

Come Healing, the 2013 installation of Art on the Grounds, is presented as part of *Flourish: Artists Explore Wellbeing*, Montalvo’s latest multiyear programming theme, organized by the Lucas Artists Residency Program in collaboration with Montalvo’s Education Department. Through exhibitions, conversations, performances, and workshops, Montalvo explores the question, “How can we live meaningful, happy, and healthy lives?” For more information, please visit montalvoarts.org/flourish.

**Art on the Grounds of Montalvo: A History**

Sculpture has been an important element in Montalvo’s gardens and grounds ever since it was built as a private residence in 1912. Still, the organization did not begin formally experimenting with outdoor sculpture installation until 2000. In 2010, Montalvo officially launched its Art on the Grounds program under the direction of Kelly Sicat, Director of the Lucas Artists Residency Program. Envisioned as a laboratory for artistic experimentation, the program seeks to offer emerging and established artists—many of whom may have never worked outdoors—the unique opportunity to test out new approaches
in a non-traditional exhibition setting that includes formal gardens, forested areas, creeks, trails, and hideouts.

Montalvo is the only arts center in California that provides artists with the opportunity to produce experimental works in an outdoor public park setting, and one of only a few such institutions nationally and worldwide. As such, the organization is uniquely positioned to foster and support a range of innovative art practices in the public sphere. As of 2011, former public art director for the City of San Jose Office of Cultural Affairs, Barbara Goldstein, has acted as a consultant for the Program. Under her guidance, Montalvo has made major strides toward developing a master plan to build the initiative, ensuring that Sculpture on the Grounds will become a central focus of Montalvo’s programming in the coming years.

Art on the Grounds 2013 is made possible thanks to the generous support of Arts Queensland, Johnny Chen, The Film Production Society at San Jose State University, Indika, James Irvine Foundation, Lynn Kitajima, Art Okada, Mary Okin, David and Lucile Packard Foundation, Santa Clara County Library District and Dan and Charmaine Warmenhoven. It is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts. *Rashomon* was organized by the San Jose Institute of Contemporary Art, California.

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**Montalvo Arts Center** is an estate of mind! A multidisciplinary nonprofit institution, our mission is to create and present arts of all types, nurture artists, and use our historic Villa, buildings, and grounds in innovative ways that engage people in the creative process. Located in Silicon Valley’s Saratoga hills, Montalvo occupies a Mediterranean-style Villa, built in 1912 by Senator James Duval Phelan, surrounded by 175 stunning acres, including the campus of our international Lucas Artists Residency Program. Senator Phelan bequeathed the villa and grounds to the people of California for the encouragement of art, music, literature and architecture, a mandate that Montalvo has carried forward ever since its founding. For more information, call (408) 961-5800 or visit [montalvoarts.org](http://montalvoarts.org).