

**MONTALVO ARTS CENTER LAUNCHES PROJECT  
EXPLAINING PERSONAL CONNECTIONS  
SOCIAL: RETHINKING  
LONELINESS TOGETHER  
EXHIBITS, WORKSHOPS, LECTURES, MORE  
September 17, 2019 – November 10, 2020**

SARATOGA, CA (23 September 2019) — **Montalvo Arts Center** has launched a year-long arts-based investigation entitled *SOCIAL: Rethinking Loneliness Together*, a series of public engagements that will invite audiences to join a shared conversation exploring loneliness, together. Through workshops, walks, screenings, exhibitions, lectures, and new artist commissions on Montalvo’s grounds and beyond, questions about human connection in a digital world, ways to nourish social engagement, and approaches to building a future based on true connections and meaningful communities will be explored along with reflections on the value of solitude. For more information and a full schedule of events, the public can visit [montalvoarts.org](http://montalvoarts.org) or call (408) 961-5858.

“At a time when people are more connected than ever through social media, loneliness has emerged as a major global public health crisis,” says Executive Director Angela McConnell. In 2017, the US Surgeon General, Vice Admiral Vivek H. Murthy, called loneliness the “most common pathology” he encountered in all his years of medical practice. In 2018, the UK appointed a “minister for loneliness” to address social and health issues caused by social isolation. In Japan, robots designed to provide companionship are now emerging to combat rising loneliness in a country where 40% of its citizens will live alone by 2040. Through workshops, walks, screenings, exhibitions, and new artist commissions on Montalvo’s grounds and beyond, guests will be invited to engage with artists and explore solitude while discovering new (and old) ways that essential connections can be built in our digital world.

Major art installations and projects that will be presented as part of this new programmatic series includes *The Mending Project*, *The Museum of Sentimental Taxonomy*, *a lone*, and *Social Spaces*. In an effort to create connections between strangers, internationally acclaimed visual artist **Lee Mingwei** created *The Mending Project*, an interactive installation featuring several simple elements – thread, color, sewing – as a point of departure. Premiering at Montalvo in 2020, *The Museum of Taxonomy* is a roving exhibition that showcases Bay Area artist Kija Lucas’ ongoing photographic investigation of objects of sentiment. In partnership with **Vignettes**, Montalvo will also present *a lone*, a series of visual and audio public art installations created for the (un)expectant viewer to encounter in their daily landscape. Seeking to inspire and provoke questions about what it means to experience loneliness, together, in the changing landscapes of growing cities, new works by local and national artists and poets will be selected and presented in public spaces throughout the Bay Area beginning in May 2020. Lastly, Montalvo will commission three new temporary installations in its public park designed for gathering, contemplation, and celebration. *Social Spaces* will be a response to the theme of ***SOCIAL: Rethinking Loneliness Together***. Produced through the Lucas Artists Program at Montalvo, each of these new works will examine how one can re-imagine and create new social spaces that help us foster deeper and more lasting connections with one another, while also reminding visitors of the benefits of self-reflection and time alone.

The year-long project will also offer the public a wide variety of workshops and classes. With subjects ranging from ceramics, photography, dance, and more, these classes were designed to develop ideas of community, connection, and sense of self in a changing world. Classes are not sequential and may be taken independently. All skill levels, from the curious novice to the practiced professional, are welcome.

Seeking to inspire and provoke questions about what it means to experience loneliness in the changing landscapes of our growing cities, lectures on the topic of **Designing for Wellness** (Oct. 17) and **Creating Community: Artists Discuss Immigration, Mentorship, Collaboration, and Placemaking** (Apr. 22) will also be presented.

## **Art Installations (in chronological order):**

### ***The Mending Project*** **September 19 – December 8, 2019**

**Admission: FREE**

*The Mending Project* is an interactive installation featuring thread, color, and sewing as a point of departure to create meaningful connections between strangers. *The Mending Project* by internationally acclaimed visual artist **Lee Mingwei** premiered in 2009 at Lombard-Freid Projects in New York and has since been featured at the Venice Biennale among other international exhibitions. Participants are invited to bring an article of clothing to the exhibit, where they meet with a “mender” who repairs or embellishes the clothing while engaging in conversations, sharing stories, and taking the opportunity to learn more about a stranger. With the participant’s permission, repaired clothing is then added to the installation, attached to a colored spool on the wall, until the end of the installation when it is returned to its owner. The installation will grow as each new participant adds a personal story and piece of clothing.

### ***The Museum of Sentimental Taxonomy*** **January 26 – April 26, 2020**

**Admission: FREE**

Premiering at Montalvo, *The Museum of Sentimental Taxonomy* is a roving exhibition that showcases Bay Area artist Kija Lucas’ ongoing photographic investigation of objects of sentiment. Attendees will be invited to explore the relationship between sentimentality, memory, community, and loneliness by engaging with the work on view and through a series of related programs, workshops, and conversations that will be held at the Museum.

### ***a lone*** **May 2020**

In partnership with **Vignettes**, the curatorial collaborative of Bay Area-born, Brooklyn-based Sierra Stinson and Seattle-based Serrah Russell, Montalvo presents *a lone*, a series of visual and audio installations created for the (un)expectant viewer to encounter in their daily landscape.

Seeking to inspire and provoke questions about what it means to experience loneliness in the changing landscapes of growing cities, new works by local and national artists and poets will be selected and presented in public spaces throughout the South Bay during the month of May 2020. *a lone* will enable multiple platforms for artists to share their messages, from handheld devices to billboards, subverting what are traditionally mediums for advertisement and commerce into spaces for conversation and connection.

### ***Social Spaces*** **May 31 – November 10, 2020**

**Admission: FREE**

This spring, Montalvo will invite artists to create three new works for *Social Spaces* in response to the programming theme of *SOCIAL: Rethinking Loneliness Together*. Works on view will include *Creando Espacio/Place Making*, a newly commissioned work by 2015 Lucas Artists

Fellow Hector Dionicio Mendoza. Produced through the Lucas Artists Program at Montalvo, all three of these new works will examine how one can imagine and create new social spaces that help us foster deeper and more lasting connections with one another.

**Classes (in chronological order):**

**Wheelform Ceramics**

**September 17 – October 24, 2019**

**Enrollment Fee: \$375 – includes six Tuesdays of instruction and six Thursdays of optional additional studio time**

Instructed by Brian Caponi, **Wheelform Ceramics** will demonstrate various building, trimming, glazing, and surface design techniques. The classes will feature small group sizes, ensuring individual guidance throughout the process. The class instructor will be present at the studio sessions to answer questions and provide feedback and guidance.

**Creekside Studio Membership**

**November 12 – May 2020**

**Hand Building Only: \$175/month || Wheel Spots: \$200/month  
(Clay, glaze, and firings are included in this price)**

Open for 8 hours a week, a **Creekside Studio Membership** gives participants an opportunity to develop their wheel or hand-building practice independently. Members will have exclusive use of their own designated wheel, with additional workspaces available for sculptors and hand-builders. A studio technician will be present to assist with firings and materials during all open hours.

**The Perceptive Portrait**

**6:30pm – 9:30pm, Monday, November 18, 2019**

**Admission: \$65**

**The Perceptive Portrait** workshop begins with a casual comparison of many different types of portraits by respected artists and well-known photographers, exploring the stories told through these images and the critical elements that reveal the subject's character or essence. Attendees will then employ modest studio lighting and reflectors to integrate the light, composition, and expressions that create the perceptive portrait. The class will be taught by Joel Simon, an editorial and fine art photographer for four decades.

**Modern Wabi-Sabi Ikebana Workshop**

**6:00pm – 7:30pm, Tuesday, December 3, 2019**

**Admission: \$75**

In a time of meticulously curated social media feeds and services that demand the “best” version of self, it's hard to take a step back and appreciate reality. Wabi-sabi pushes back against this

purity, focusing on minimalistic, monochromatic, and asymmetric concepts. In the **Modern Wabi-Sabi Ikebana Workshop** taught by Yuko Tiernan, attendees will learn how to arrange modern Ikebana flowers using wabi-sabi aesthetics.

### **The Authentic Self-Portrait**

**6:30pm – 9:30pm, Monday, December 9, 2019**

**Admission: \$65**

In **The Authentic Self-Portrait** workshop, attendees will view self-portraits by some of history's most respected artists and photographers, discussing both the personal and technical aspects of each work. Building on this exploration, students will then create their own self-portraits, drawing inspiration from the masters and making use of the various techniques learned. **The Authentic Self-Portrait** will be taught by Joel Simon, an editorial and fine art photographer for four decades.

### **Made, Mending, Meaning: The Art of Kintsugi**

**2:15pm – 4:15pm, Thursday, January 16, 2020**

**Admission: \$65**

Attendees will learn and implement strategies to mend broken ceramic objects using the traditional Japanese technique of kintsugi ("golden seams") in **Made, Mending, Meaning: The Art of Kintsugi**. Instructor Brian Caponi will teach the history of kintsugi and explore other historical approaches to mending ceramics. Attendees are welcome to bring their own broken ceramic objects, bring intact pieces to break, or use the pieces provided for this workshop.

### **Exploring Sense of Self**

**6:00pm – 8:00pm, Tuesday, February 4, 2020**

**Admission: \$30**

**Exploring the Sense of Self** will teach the fundamentals of turning, and how it enables dancers to find a sense of self and a connection between body, mind, and spirit. This class will also help attendees discover the vital balance in the rhythm of breathing, movement, posture, and concentration. **Exploring Sense of Self** will be taught by Farima Berenji, an award-winning, internationally acclaimed performing artist, instructor, dance ethnologist, and choreographer.

### **Within and Without: The Raku Tea Bowl**

**2:15pm – 4:15pm, Thursday, February 13 & 20, 2020**

**Admission: \$125**

Instructed by Brian Caponi, **Within and Without: The Raku Tea Bowl** will focus on techniques for creating Japanese-style raku tea bowls. Other course objectives include the impact of the Japanese tea ceremony in relation to the evolution and design of the tea bowl, as well as the aesthetic and philosophical influence of wabi-sabi, a world view centered on the acceptance of transience and imperfection. Attendees will also learn how to create, glaze, and fire their own

tea bowls.

## **Emptiness as Fullness – in Nothingness, We Find Everything**

**6:00pm – 8:00pm, Tuesday, March 3, 2020**

**Admission: \$30**

In **Emptiness as Fullness – in Nothingness We Find Everything**, dance students will learn turning techniques and movements as they explore the notion of emptiness as fullness. Instructor Farima Berenji, an award-winning, internationally acclaimed performing artist, instructor, dance ethnologist, and choreographer, believes that as dancers whirl, they find harmony in the motion of the universe.

## **Breaking the Mold: Cast Assemblages**

**2:15pm – 4:15pm, Thursday, March 19 & 26, 2020**

**Admission: \$125**

Attendees will be invited to create a range of sculptural/functional objects utilizing slip casting and press molding processes in **Breaking the Mold: Cast Assemblages**. Found manufactured molds, cast plaster slabs, and single part molds will be constructed and collected as a library of plaster parts. Students will then cut apart, drop, and dissect the parts, creating fragments and sections of the original object. Reimagined and reassembled, these pieces will yield incredible collaged ceramic forms. This class will be taught by Brian Caponi.

## **Silent Whirling – Sema and Dancing to the Rhythm & Melody of the Heart**

**2:15pm – 4:15pm, Thursday, January 16, 2020**

**Admission: \$30**

This workshop offers participants a look at whirling meditation, the practice of whirling in silence, solely to the rhythm of one's heart, in order to focus on finding calm and peace within moving meditation. Although circumstances vary, those who practice silent whirling meditation within a group often experience and share a wide range of emotions. In **Silent Whirling – Sema and Dancing to the Rhythm & Melody of the Heart**, dance students will learn to find peace in the silence. This class will be taught by Farima Berenji, an award-winning, internationally acclaimed performing artist, instructor, dance ethnologist, and choreographer.

## **Contemporary Floral Design: Asymmetry**

**6:00pm – 8:00pm, Wednesday, April 15, 2020**

**Admission: \$75**

**Contemporary Floral Design: Asymmetry** will use a new, asymmetric approach to design that will allow the creator to preserve and make beautiful empty space. Attendees will collaborate and share community as they create their own arrangement using contemporary techniques, foam-free mechanics, and fresh, seasonal blooms. **Contemporary Floral Design: Asymmetry** will be taught by Amanda Borges.

## **Introduction to Macro Photography**

**10:00am – 1:00pm, Saturday, April 25, 2020**

**Admission: \$65**

**Introduction to Macro Photography** will invite attendees to take a closer look at the intricate details and delicate colors of the world as they learn how to create artistic, up-close images. Taught by editorial and fine art photographer Joel Simon, **Introduction to Macro Photography** will explore macro techniques, lighting, backgrounds, choosing the best subject, depth of field, and other helpful tips.

### **Lectures (in chronological order):**

#### **Designing for Wellness**

**7:30pm, Thursday, October 17, 2019**

**Admission: \$25**

Dennis Boyle, one of the founding team members of the design firm IDEO and one of the leaders of its Design for Health studio in San Francisco, will define “design thinking” and how it integrates the needs of people, the possibilities of technology, and the requirements for business success in **Designing for Wellness**. With an emphasis on a human-centered perspective, Boyle will illustrate how designers think, approach, and define problems. Listeners will then participate in part of the process of design thinking as Boyle leads the audience through the brainstorming process using the topic of reducing loneliness across our lives.

#### **Creating Community: Artists Discuss**

#### **Immigration, Mentorship, Collaboration, and Placemaking**

**7:30pm, Wednesday, April 22, 2020**

**Admission: \$25**

Hector Dionicio Mendoza, 2015 Lucas Artists Fellow, will be joined by collaborators Amalia Mesa-Bains and Viviana Parades for **Creating Community: Artists Discuss Immigration, Mentorship, Collaboration, and Placemaking**. For this lecture, they will discuss *Creando Espacio/Place Making*, a featured installation of *Social Spaces*. Together the artists will explore loneliness through an artistic lens informed by their shared Latin experience, and discuss the role mentors and community building played in the development of their professional practice. The artists will also discuss their collective interests in ritual, memory, and traditional herbal ethnobotany, and how these elements will be employed as tools for combatting loneliness in *Creando*.

**Montalvo Arts Center** is a donor-supported nonprofit institution whose mission is to engage the public in the creative process, acting as a catalyst for exploring the arts, unleashing creativity, and advancing different cultural perspectives. Located in Silicon Valley's Saratoga Hills,

Montalvo occupies 175 stunning acres and is home to the Sally and Don Lucas Artists Program (LAP), the Carriage House Concert Series, and a robust arts education program.

**FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:**

**WHAT:** **Montalvo Arts Center** has launched a year-long arts-based investigation entitled ***SOCIAL: Rethinking Loneliness Together***, a series of public engagements that will invite audiences to join a shared conversation exploring loneliness, together. Through workshops, walks, screenings, exhibitions, lectures, and new artist commissions on Montalvo's grounds and beyond, questions about human connection in a digital world, ways to nourish social engagement, and approaches to building a future based on true connections and meaningful communities will be explored along with reflections on the value of solitude..

**WHEN:** Now through November 10, 2020

**WHERE:** **Montalvo Arts Center**, 15400 Montalvo Rd., Saratoga

**TICKETS:** Ticket prices vary, see individual events for prices  
Overall price range: FREE to \$375

**INFO:** For information or to order tickets, visit [montalvoarts.org](http://montalvoarts.org) or call **408-961-5858**.

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**PHOTOS:** Downloadable high-res photos are available here: <http://cbpr.co/press/social>