

For Immediate Release
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Contact: Corey Cronin 781/259-3628, ccronin@decordova.org

DeCordova Announces The 2006 Rappaport Prize Winner: Abelardo Morell

Lincoln, MA—Abelardo Morell is one of the most influential photographers working today and is an innovator in the medium. DeCordova is delighted to recognize Abelardo Morell for his significant achievements with the prestigious Rappaport Prize. The Rappaport Prize is a collaborative initiative of the Jerome Lyle Rappaport Charitable Foundation and the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park. It is an annual award of \$25,000 made to a contemporary American artist.

The Prize is foremost an investment in both an individual and the broader community. For the artist it reflects recognition of his/her abilities, talent, and future promise. For the community it reflects the importance of art to encourage the value of creativity within the region. Founded and funded by the Jerome Lyle Rappaport Foundation, the Rappaport Prize follows the Foundation's mission of promoting leadership in public policy, medical research, and art. Administered by the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park, the Rappaport Prize fulfills the DeCordova's mission of presenting significant artists while educating the public about developments in contemporary American art.

"Our greatest hope with the Rappaport Prize is to stimulate and advance artistic energy and expression," stated Foundation Chairperson, Phyllis Rappaport.

Since the mid-1980s, Abelardo Morell has been involved with a type of conceptual photography where he creates images exploring the myriad forms of perception. Whether looking at the world from the viewpoint of a child, or focusing on the most mundane objects from a new vantage point, Morell's photographs transform objects in the everyday world and make us think long and hard about what we are seeing.

His series of camera obscura photographs break new ground. Although the principle of the camera obscura—the optical model for the modern camera—has been known since antiquity, Morell began to use the technique in new ways to create mysterious and evocative layerings of exterior and interior spaces. Morell's inventiveness is apparent with each new project that he tackles.

Born in Cuba, Abe came to the United States as a teenager speaking little English. He overcame the language barrier and other cultural barriers to go on to a distinguished academic career, receiving a BA from Bowdoin College, an MFA from Yale, and an Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts from Bowdoin.

In 1999, the important survey exhibition, *Abelardo Morell and The Camera Eye*, was exhibited at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Organized by the Museum of Photographic Arts, Sand Diego, the show also traveled to museums in Detroit; Maine; New Mexico; Pennsylvania; St. Louis; Florence, Italy; Rochester, New York; Charlottesville, Virginia; and London.

There are currently five monographs about Abelardo Morell in print, including the most recent and comprehensive book, *Abelardo Morell*, published by Phaidon Press in 2006. In addition, Abe's photographs have been included in numerous group exhibitions nationally and internationally with accompanying publications, and his work has been the subject of many articles and reviews.

A professor at the Massachusetts College of Art and a resident of Brookline, MA, Abelardo Morell has been the recipient of awards from the St. Botolph Club Foundation, the New England Foundation for the Arts, the Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, and the Cintas Foundation. His work is included in over 75 museum collections, among them The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Museum of Modern Art, and the DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park. He was included in *The 1998 DeCordova Annual Exhibition*, and his photographs have been exhibited in several DeCordova permanent collection exhibitions.

The Rappaport Prize Criteria

Specifically, the Prize is established to foster two goals:

- Recognize the achievement and potential of an artist who has already demonstrated significant creativity and vision.
- Encourage the artist to continue in a career of art making.

The selected artist will:

- Produce artwork of exceptional quality
- Demonstrate excellence and leadership in their chosen practice
- Engage with 21st century aesthetic issues which have had a significant impact on contemporary visual art
- Support DeCordova's focus on contemporary American art, particularly of New England artists

All media are considered and we do not discriminate based on age, financial status, reputation, race, sexual orientation, or gender.

The Process for Selecting the Prize Winner:

The Curatorial Staff of DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park select candidates for consideration and also invite ten art professionals to serve as nominators for the Rappaport Prize. Each of these nominators recommends two artists for consideration. After reviewing the artists' materials and possible studio visits, the DeCordova's Museum Director and Curators select the Prize winner.

Applications are not accepted for the Prize.

The Prize winner gifts a work of art to the DeCordova's Permanent Collection. This acquisition helps build the artist's prominence and makes their work accessible to the museum going community.

Rappaport Prize Winners Include:

2000 Jennifer Hall	(interactive media)
2001 Annee Spileos Scott	(multimedia installations)
2002 Lars-Erik Fisk	(sculpture)
2003 John Bisbee	(sculpture)
2004 Debra Olin	(prints and printed constructions)
2005 Sarah Walker	(painting)
2006 Abelardo Morell	(photography)

About the Jerome Lyle Rappaport Charitable Foundation

The Jerome Lyle Rappaport Charitable Foundation sponsors the work of new and emerging leaders to increase this region's capacity for generating effective public policy solutions, breakthroughs for neurologic and mental illnesses, and world-class art. The work is accomplished through strategic partnerships with Harvard University, Suffolk Law School, Massachusetts General Hospital, McLean Hospital and DeCordova Museum and Sculpture Park. The Foundation's desire is to connect individuals with demonstrated leadership capability, intellectual rigor, and integrity, who can make meaningful change in greater Boston.

The Foundation fosters innovative thinking, productive dialogue and creative alliances to build a better future. It values and rewards those who show commitment and success, and provides grant recipients with opportunities and resources to strengthen their careers in countless ways.

For more information about the Jerome Lyle Rappaport Charitable Foundation, visit: www.rappaportcharitablefoundation.com

DeCordova General Information

DeCordova Museum is open Tuesday through Sunday, 10 am to 5 pm and on selected Monday holidays. General Campus admission during Museum hours is \$9 for adults, \$6 for senior citizens, students, and youth ages 6–12. Children age 5 and under, Lincoln residents, and Active Duty Military Personnel and their dependents are admitted free. The Sculpture Park is open year round during daylight hours. The Store @ DeCordova and the School Gallery are open Monday through Thursday, 9:30 am to 7:30 pm, Friday through Saturday, 9:30 am to 5:30 pm, and Sunday 10:30 am to 5:30 pm.

The Café @ DeCordova is open Tuesday from noon to 3 pm, and Wednesday through Sunday from 11 am to 4 pm. Guided public tours of the Museum's main galleries take place every Thursday at 1 and Sunday at 2 pm; these are free with Campus admission. Guided tours of the Sculpture Park are given on Saturday and Sunday at 1 pm from May to October; these are free with Campus admission. Visit www.decordova.org or call 781/259-8355 for further information.

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