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THE CHINESE AMERICAN MUSEUM PRESENTS THE EIGHTH ANNUAL LANTERN FESTIVAL!

Lantern Festival 2009 To Ring In Chinese New Year With Evening Cinema, New Exhibitions And A Variety of Enriching Activity Booths Designed To Educate and Entertain

(LOS ANGELES, January 20, 2009) -- The Chinese American Museum's (CAM) most beloved community tradition makes its eighth grand appearance in Southern California to celebrate Chinese New Year and light the way to a new programming season for the museum! Under a sweeping canopy of brilliant red lanterns, **Lantern Festival 2009 (LF'09)** will spotlight a colorful re-creation of a traditional Chinese village street fair animated with hands-on arts and crafts workshops, an exciting line-up of cultural stage performances, two new museum exhibitions and for the first time, an evening film screening with a special introduction and Q & A session with the film's actress. Presented in partnership with El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, LF'09 will be held on *Saturday, Feb. 7, 2009 from 12 -7pm* at El Pueblo plaza, the birthplace of the City of Los Angeles and now home to the Chinese American Museum.

A hugely popular holiday in the Chinese culture, Lantern Festival occurs annually on the fifteenth day of the first lunar month to mark the closing of Chinese New Year festivities. As families wish for peace and prosperity for the coming year, colorful lanterns are hung in homes and throughout the streets to celebrate this jubilant occasion. *Lantern Festival 2009* is a departure from most other street event celebration as the focus is on education and discovery rather than just entertainment. The festival's program presents the visiting public with a unique and interactive opportunity to learn and appreciate the history, traditions and customs of this Chinese holiday through a variety of enriching activities and performances.

Blending traditional Chinese entertainment with a modern, educational twist, Lantern Festival 2009 will offer dramatic musical, dance and acrobatic stage performances, along with popular workshops including kite-making, led by community artist Michael Massenburg, Chinese calligraphy, origami, facing painting and the festival's signature lantern-making booth, all presented free to the public.

New to this year's day-long festival is an evening film screening of an award-winning documentary by Academy Award-nominated director Christine Choy ("Who Killed Vincent Chin?"). Presented in partnership with Visual Communications (VC), a Los Angeles-based premiere Asian Pacific Media Arts Center in the United States,

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LONG STORY SHORT is a 54-minute documentary that tells the fascinating story of a popular Asian American husband-and-wife performance duo of the '40s and '50s and their rise from the nightclubs of Chinatown to the Ed Sullivan Show, amid the challenges of industry racism and discrimination. The documentary is narrated by their daughter, Jodi Long ("The Margaret Cho Show," "Surfing DNA"), who will be on-site to provide the film's introduction as well as address questions from the audience after the screening. LONG STORY SHORT won the *Audience Award* as well as the *Special Jury Award for Documentary Feature* at the Los Angeles Asian Pacific Film Festival in 2008. The film will screen at 5 p.m. at the historic Pico House located across from CAM at El Pueblo Plaza.

Two new black and white photography exhibitions will also greet this year's festival-goers. *Asian Roots/American Reality: Photographs by Corky Lee and Picture This!* and *My Life, Your Life, Our Lives: Photographs by Youths from the San Gabriel Valley* are the latest exhibits to grace the galleries of CAM, having just opened last November to commemorate the museum's milestone Fifth Anniversary celebration. Visitors will have a chance to see these exhibits along with the rest of the museum during CAM's extended public hours for the festival.

LF'09 will be hosted by a dynamic duo of emerging Asian American actors serving as Mistress and Master of Ceremonies. *April Hong*, an L.A.-based actress ("90210," "ER," "Numb3rs") and daughter of James Hong, a prolific Hollywood actor of over 450 film and television roles, will be joined by *Wai Mui*, whose acting career began in Florida on various television shows, film, commercials and live performances.

ABOUT THE CHINESE AMERICAN MUSEUM

The Chinese American Museum is jointly developed and operated by the Friends of the Chinese American Museum (FCAM) and El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument, a department of the City of Los Angeles. Located within the El Pueblo Plaza in downtown Los Angeles, CAM is housed in the last surviving structure of the city's original Chinatown. CAM's mission is to foster a deeper understanding and appreciation of America's diverse heritage by researching, preserving, and sharing the history, rich cultural legacy, and continuing contributions of Chinese Americans. Visiting hours are 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., Tuesday – Sunday. Admissions are suggested donation of \$3 for adults and \$2 for seniors and students. Admission is free for members. For more information, please visit www.camla.org.

ABOUT EL PUEBLO DE LOS ANGELES HISTORICAL MONUMENT

El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument is near the site of the early Los Angeles pueblo or town where forty-four settlers of Native American, African and European heritage journeyed more than one-thousand miles across the desert from present-day northern Mexico and established a farming community in September 1781. Today, as a department of the City of Los Angeles, El Pueblo is a living museum that continues to fulfill its unique role as the

historic and symbolic heart of the city, reflecting the Native American, African American, Spanish, Anglo, Mexican, Chinese, Italian and French cultures that contributed to its early history. Of the Monument's twenty-seven historic buildings, eleven are open to the public as businesses or have been restored as museums. For more information, visit www.elpueblo.lacity.org.

ABOUT VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS

Visual Communications is the premiere Asian Pacific Media Arts Center in the United States whose mission is to promote intercultural understanding through the creation, presentation, preservation and support of media works by and about Asian Pacific Americans. Visual Communications was created with the understanding that media and the arts are important vehicles to organize and empower communities, build connections between generations, challenge perspectives, and create an environment for critical thinking, necessary to build a more just and humane society. For more information, visit www.vconline.org.

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