

## BIO



**VINCENT AVALOS**

Mountmaker  
Asian Art Museum of San Francisco

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Trained as a sculptor, painter and lab technician, Vincent Avalos graduated from the Art Institute of Boston in 1984 with awards in excellence in sculpture. In 1987 Vincent was hired by the Los Angeles County Museum of Art as a preparator. Vincent soon advanced to senior preparator, packer/courier and mountmaker, working on several traveling exhibitions and many permanent collection projects. After the Loma Prieta earthquake, in 1990 Vincent was hired by the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco as museum mountmaker to facilitate the implementation of a comprehensive earthquake mitigation program. In 1992 Vincent was a member of the seismic advisory committee, which was the museum staff oversight group of the seismic upgrading study for the future sight of the Asian Art Museum. The study was conducted by the engineering firm of Rutherford & Chekene. From 2001 to 2003 he trained and led a team of mountmakers to remount and install the entire collection for the move to the new building in the Civic Center. As well as mounting the terracotta warriors 4 times in his tenure among many other exhibitions Vincent has participated in studies to further the understanding of resonant frequency and its effects as it pertains to seismic mitigation. Vincent has also exhibited locally as a sculptor, painter, installation artist and videographer.

## ABSTRACT

### When One Mount Isn't Enough: Seismically Retrofitting a 2000-Pound Scholar's Rock in the Bay Area

The Asian Art Museum houses an extensive collection of art and antiquities from Asia. It is perhaps the deepest collection of its kind in the country. Much of the art is considered priceless and is extremely fragile. I have been able to create discreet mounts with the help of the building's base isolation system. The performance of this building is a known quantity because of the "tuning" of the structure. The design earthquake we are anticipating is a major quake with forces akin to the 1906 quake that leveled San Francisco. The sculpture called "The East Wind" by Artist Ren Tianjin is a 1 ton nickel sculpture reminiscent of a Chinese scholars rock. It was installed out in front of the museum but outside the base isolation system. Within the museum it is relatively easy with ordinary materials to make mounts that confidently protect our antiquities. But on the outside almost anything I used seemed inadequate according to my calculations. Because of this I created an integrated network of several technologies which amounted to a discreet almost invisible failsafe system for not only seismically mitigating the art but also protecting it from the public and other natural forces such as sun, wind and rain.