

# LEE MINGWEI

FIVE PLUS ONE BY HG MASTERS  
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Lee Mingwei's projects are always personal, both to him and to others. He first garnered critical attention for *The Sleeping Project* (2000), in which he invited a member of the public to spend the night with him in the gallery and leave behind an object in the space in the morning. Lee returned to the idea of what artifacts and stories we bring to—and leave behind in—a social situation in “A Quartet and A Living Room” (6/28–7/27), held at the Chinese Arts Centre in Manchester, where he invited hosts—ranging from a film buff to a knitting collective—to occupy the living room with their collections and engage with visitors as they arrived.

An emigrant from Taiwan to the United States as a teenager, Lee often revisits memories associated with his Chinese heritage. In Singapore, at the Peranakan Museum (6/21–9/22), dedicated to the culture of descendants of 15th-century Chinese immigrants to Indonesia, Lee's piece *Luminous Depths* (2013) was inspired by the museum itself, whose central atrium reminded him of his grandparents' home. Visitors were invited to purchase a ceramic pot, walk up to

the top floor and cast it down to the ground level below (to the accompaniment of Schubert's “Night and Dreams”), a momentous act that prompted reflection about the memories and associations that we attach to objects.

Lee uses simple means, as in *The Mending Project* (2009), for which he sits in the gallery with colored thread waiting to fix textiles brought to him—an activity that becomes a forum for conversation and, for the artist and for viewers, is an experience that is different every time. The project was included in Artefact Festival 2013, “A City Shaped” (2/13–24), at the STUK Arts Center, Leuven, Belgium. Lee's *Moving Garden* (2009)—in which visitors are invited to take a fresh flower from the gallery, provided they give it to a stranger whom they meet on a detour—was featured in both the Dojima River Biennale, “Little Water” (7/20–8/18) in Osaka, and in the inaugural exhibition at Seoul's National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, “Connecting\_ Unfolding” (11/12–2/28/14). In September 2014, Tokyo's Mori Art Museum surveys two decades of his work in “Lee Mingwei & His Relations.”