

NEW
235 BOWERY
NEW YORK NY
10002 USA
MUSEUM

TEL +1 212.219.1222.
FAX +1 212.431.5326.
newmuseum.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 29, 2010

PRESS CONTACTS:

Gabriel Einsohn, Communications Director
press@newmuseum.org

Andrea Schwan, Andrea Schwan Inc.
info@andreaschwan.com

New Museum Presents First Major US Survey of Works by George Condo

From January 26–May 8, 2011

New York, New York... Since first bursting onto the scene in the early 1980s with his unique adaptation of the language of Old Master painting, George Condo has created one of the most adventurous, imaginative, and provocative bodies of work in contemporary art. Condo's work has been deeply influential to two generations of American and European painters, who have felt the impact of the artist's astonishing technical ability, stylistic versatility, and inventive subject matter. This January, the New Museum will present "**George Condo: Mental States**," the first major US survey of **over eighty paintings and sculptures** from the past twenty-eight years of the artist's career. Condo is famously prolific, and this tightly edited selection of works **from 1982 to the present** responds to his prodigious output with a unique conceptual approach. The exhibition is organized thematically and stylistically in "chapters" developed in close collaboration with the artist. Highlighting the breadth of Condo's artistic exploration, the exhibition will focus on the specific ideas to which he has returned throughout his career, particularly his ongoing investigation of human physiognomy and its capacity to convey varied "mental states."



George Condo, *The Insane Queen*, 2006. Oil on canvas, 20 x 16 in (50.8 x 40.6 cm). Collection Per Skarstedt

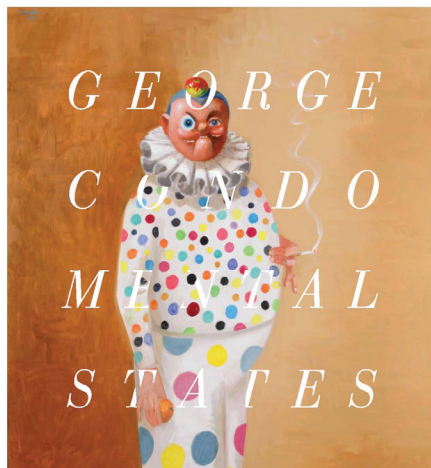
"George Condo: Mental States," will be on view at the **New Museum** from January 26 through May 8, 2011. The exhibition is organized by the **Hayward Gallery, London and New Museum, New York**. "George Condo: Mental States" is curated by Ralph Rugoff, Director, Hayward Gallery, and Laura Hoptman, former Kraus Family Senior Curator, New Museum. Following its premiere at the New Museum, a European version of the exhibition will tour to Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Hayward Gallery, London and Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt.

“George Condo: Mental States” will be arranged in four groupings over two gallery floors of the New Museum. A dramatic installation of more than fifty portraits demonstrating a variety of styles and subjects will be featured in the soaring fourth-floor gallery as a centerpiece of the exhibition. This “portrait wall,” hung salon-style, will be populated by invented characters that often assimilate and appropriate elements from masterpieces by the greatest Western artists of the past 500 years, from Velázquez to Picasso to Arshile Gorky. This collection of imaginary characters is a blend of recognizable figures and archetypes rendered in Condo’s particular form of artificial realism: butlers, businessmen, saints, and historical figures are familiar in spite of their often fantastic or humorously grotesque features. Complementing the portrait wall will be a series of sixteen patinated gold sculptures.



George Condo, *Nude Homeless Drinker*, 1999. Oil on canvas, 72 x 65 in (182.9 x 165.1cm). Private Collection

On the New Museum’s third floor, visitors will find three galleries of paintings, each designed to reflect particular states of mind. Each room will feature a selection of canvases from various moments in Condo’s career, portraying lonely and marginalized figures as well as scenes of manic decadence that engage with the social and psychological undercurrents of our boom-and-bust era. The final room in the exhibition will bring together, for the first time in the United States, a major grouping of large-scale paintings created over the past thirty years that play with the boundaries between abstraction and figuration. For Condo, these paintings also depict a mental state—that of the artist. Condo recently stated, “Representational pictures are the artist’s body, abstractions are pictures of the artist’s mind.” Condo’s work provokes us to consider our own contradictory natures and often-extreme emotional states expressed through a cast of characters that are equally comedic and tragic.



Catalogue cover: George Condo: *Mental States*

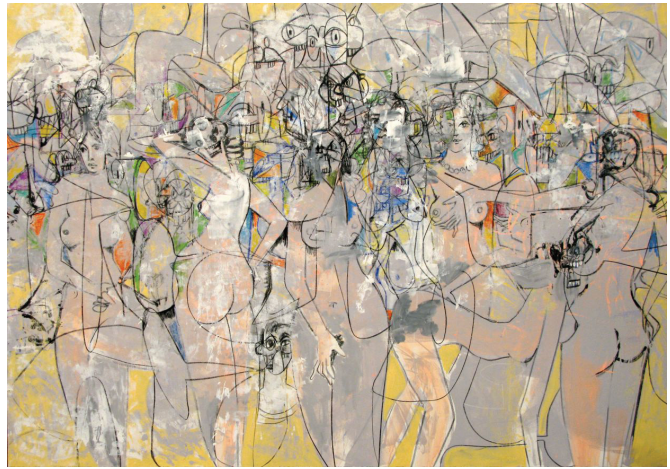
Catalogue

The exhibition will be accompanied by a 190-page catalogue, produced by Hayward Publishing. *George Condo: Mental States* will feature essays by Ralph Rugoff, Director, Hayward Gallery; Laura Hoptman, Curator, the Museum of Modern Art and former Kraus Family Senior Curator at the New Museum; as well as the novelists Will Self and David Means.

About George Condo

American artist George Condo was born in New Hampshire in 1957. He has occupied a prominent position in the art world for close to three decades. Often called “an artist’s artist,” Condo has stood as an example to younger practitioners through his unabashed commitment to his personal vision despite the coming and goings of fads in the art world. Along with Schnabel, Basquiat, and Haring, Condo was instrumental in the international revival of painting in the 1980s. Condo studied art history and music theory at the University of Massachusetts in Lowell. The first public exhibitions of his work took place in New York City at various East Village galleries in 1981. His first solo exhibition was in Los Angeles in 1983 at the Ulrike Kantor Gallery, followed in 1984 by a simultaneous two-gallery exhibition in New York at Pat Hearn and Barbara Gladstone galleries. The New Museum previously showed Condo’s work as part of the exhibition “East Village USA” (December 9, 2004–March 19, 2005).

Condo has exhibited extensively in both the United States and in Europe. His work has been included in museum shows at the Whitney Museum of American Art; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston; the Museo de Arte Contemporaneo de Monterrey, Mexico; Musée d'Art Moderne et d'Art Contemporain, Nice, France; and Stalliche Kunthstalle Baden, Germany, among others. His work is in the permanent collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Whitney Museum of American Art; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; and the Albright-Knox Museum, Buffalo, New York.



George Condo, Female Figure Composition, 2009. Acrylic, pastel, and charcoal on linen, 78 x 108 in (198.2 x 274.3 cm). Private Collection

In 1999, Condo received an Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and in 2005 he received the Francis J. Greenberger Award.

About the New Museum

The New Museum is the only museum in New York City exclusively devoted to contemporary art. Founded in 1977, the New Museum was conceived as a center for exhibitions, information, and documentation about living artists from around the world. From its beginnings as a one-room office on Hudson Street to the inauguration of its first freestanding, dedicated building on the Bowery designed by SANAA in 2007, the New Museum continues to be a hub of new art and new ideas and is a place of ongoing experimentation about what art and arts institutions can be in the twenty-first century.

###