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## Anderson Ranch Announces 2008 Honorees

Snowmass Village, CO –Anderson Ranch Arts Center's twelfth annual Recognition Dinner will take place on Wednesday, July 9, 2008, at The Snowmass Club in Snowmass Village, Colorado. The event, which begins at 6:00 p.m., celebrates creativity and service to the arts by recognizing the accomplishments of key figures in the art world. This year's honorees are: George Condo, National Artist Award, and Mera and Don Rubell, Service to the Arts Award.

### **George Condo, National Artist Award**

The National Artist Award is given to a nationally or internationally recognized artist who has supported artists, created innovations in art education, and whose career has set an example and a direction for other artists. George Condo is one of the most influential American artists living today. Born in New Hampshire in 1957, Condo has occupied a prominent position in the art world for close to three decades. Ranging from painting, drawing, printmaking and sculpture, his work is informed by the inherited European tradition of art making. Incorporating a hybridization of different classical influences, such as Raphael, Goya, Velazquez, Picasso and Manet, his work demonstrates a distinctive style which he coined "Artificial Realism" in the early 80s when he emerged as painter on the New York art scene. This original painterly language has greatly influenced the generation that followed him.

Often called an "artist's artist", Condo has stood as an example for younger practitioners through his unabashed commitment to his personal vision, despite the coming and goings of trends in the art world. Beginning in the mid-1980s, Condo divided the art world with his sensibility. His reintroduction of Old Master techniques into contemporary painting was at odds with the wave of New Image painting widely seen at that time.

In the '90s Condo's reworking of the Old Masters became a primary inspiration for a younger generation of painters ranging from Glenn Brown to John Currin. Over the past two decades, his work has consistently surprised and engaged viewers with grotesque and often tradition-conscious paintings. As Peter Schjeldahl wrote in the Village Voice, "He sets a standard for sophisticated fun that is pretty much unbeatable by any other contemporary painter." Dismantling and reconfiguring archetypes found throughout our cultural map, from Playboy

Bunnies to Queen Elizabeth and from Superman to God, Condo questions and contemplates the underpinnings of our society. His rich pictorial inventions and many "imaginary portraits" straddle the space between comedy and tragedy, the bizarre and the classically beautiful.

Mr. 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 in 1981 at various East Village galleries. His first solo exhibition was in Los Angeles in 1983 at the Ulrike Kantor Gallery, followed in 1984 by a two-gallery solo exhibition running concurrently at the Pat Hearn Gallery and Barbara Gladstone Gallery.

Mr. Condo has exhibited extensively in both the United States and in Europe with 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, Moderne et d'Art Contemporain, Nice, France, Stalliche Kunthstalle Baden-Baden, Germany, Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht, The Netherlands, and The Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland. 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 in Buffalo, New York.

There has been extensive writing about Mr. Condo's work and recently several monographs have been released, including *The Imaginary Portraits of George Condo (Powerhouse)*, *George Condo: Sculpture* by Thomas Kellein, and in conjunction with an exhibition of the same title, *George Condo: One Hundred Women*. In 2000, USA Films released a documentary entitled *Condo Painting* by director John McNaughton.

In 1999 Mr. Condo received an Academy Award from the American Academy of Arts and Letters and in 2005 he received the Francis J. Greenberger Award. He has been invited to lecture at many prestigious institutions including Columbia University, Pasadena Art Center, San Francisco MOMA and The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York. In 2003 Mr. Condo taught a six-month course at Harvard University entitled *Painting Memory*. Most recently, Mr. Condo was the recipient of the annual artist's award from ArtsConnection New York in 2008.

Mr. Condo is represented by Luhring Augustine Gallery, New York, Galerie Andrea Caratsch, Zurich and Simon Lee Gallery, London.

### **Mera and Don Rubell, Service to the Arts Award**

The Service to the Arts Award is given to locally or nationally recognized arts advocates whose efforts have supported artists and arts institutions and who has made contributions to the cultural and social life of our country, representing the highest level of leadership, integrity and vision. Mera and Don Rubell are dedicated community leaders whose advocacy and support for the arts is felt across the country.

Mera and Don Rubell launched the Rubell Family Collection (RFC) in 1964 soon after they were married. The collecting group expanded some years later when their children Jason and Jennifer, then quite young, joined their parents in buying and collecting art. Recently Jason's wife Michelle joined the collecting team alongside her husband. Today the RFC is one of the leading collections of contemporary art in the world, featuring works dated from the 1960s to the present.

The collection is housed and exhibited in a converted 45,000-square-foot former Drug Enforcement Agency confiscated-goods warehouse. Open to the public since 1996, the collection features rotating exhibitions of work by such prominent artists as Maurizio Cattelan, Marlene Dumas, Keith Haring, Damien Hirst, Anselm Kiefer, Jeff Koons, Paul McCarthy, Takashi Murakami, Neo Rauch, Charles Ray, Gregor Schneider, Cindy Sherman and Luc Tuymans. The museum features 27 galleries, a research library with over 30,000 volumes, a film and lecture theatre, a new media room, a bookstore, a gift shop and a sculpture garden.

Founded in 1994, the Contemporary Arts Foundation (CAF) has been the locus for housing, preserving, archiving and presenting works from the collection of the Rubell family. In addition, the CAF presides over an in-house research library containing over 30,000 volumes, including many rare texts and periodicals. The library is open to the public.

CAF believes that great works of art are an intrinsically transcendent, elevating, liberating and empowering force, and that the artifacts of our time are the legacy of society as a whole. Based on this premise, the Foundation seeks to prompt social intercourse and debate, an essential freedom of a democratic society, by sharing with the world the physical, sensual and intellectual properties of cutting-edge art.

CAF advances public interaction at the Rubell Family Collection by presenting works from the collection of the Rubell family in rotating, curated exhibitions with accompanying

documentation, throughout its Miami facility, as well as through a variety of educational and community outreach programs. CAF commissions new works of art and produces traveling exhibitions, which are presented throughout the world. In addition, CAF operates as a lending resource for curators and museums.

The gala dinner will feature an awards presentation, silent auction of specially decorated wooden stands by Ranch artists and live music throughout the evening. Table sponsorships, tickets and underwriting opportunities are now available. For more information, please contact Nicole Garrett, Anderson Ranch's fundraising events coordinator, at 970.923.3181 ext. 211, or email her at [ngarrett@andersonranch.org](mailto:ngarrett@andersonranch.org).

Anderson Ranch Arts Center is a learning community whose mission is to inspire creativity and enrich lives through the visual arts. The organization serves the personal and professional development of artists of all levels of expertise through workshops, residencies, conferences, exhibitions, lectures, and community outreach programs. Over the past three decades the programs have been led by hundreds of today's most prominent artists and educators. For more information on our programs, call 970.923.3181, email [info@andersonranch.org](mailto:info@andersonranch.org), write Anderson Ranch Arts Center, P.O. Box 5598, Snowmass Village, CO 81615, or visit the web site [www.andersonranch.org](http://www.andersonranch.org).

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