

Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art Challenges Convention with Iconic Contemporary Art in New Exhibition

"ICONS of Contemporary Art" showcases works by George Condo, Sherrie Levine, Frank Stella, Yoshitaka Amano and others

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LAS VEGAS (December 5, 2023) – [Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art](#) (BGFA) unveils its newest exhibition, *ICONS of Contemporary Art*, open to the public now through March 31, 2024. Exploring the complex enigma of an icon in contemporary society, the collection features work from living artists that break molds and redefine what it means to be iconic in the context of a rapidly changing world.

Uniquely curated by art advisor and curator, Ralph DeLuca for BGFA, this intimate and bold exhibition highlights a visually rich array of paintings, videos and sculptures by diverse, global artists. *ICONS* welcomes guests to enjoy artwork by celebrated names in contemporary art, such as George Condo, Frank Stella, Sanford Biggers, Yoshitaka Amano, Esther Mahlangu and Ghada Amer. Each featured artist – already iconic in their own right – employs a myriad of symbolic motifs, cultural mythologies and reconfigurations of the human figure to push the boundaries of art-making and visual languages in the current era.

Inspired by the textures and colors of artworks featured in *ICONS*, the experience begins with an immersive gateway to the gallery. Pairing faux fur and neon, visitors are transported to a glamorous scene featuring the title of the exhibition in glowing letters. This contemporary and lush color-blocked atmosphere offers a unique photo opportunity for guests.

ICONS boasts a variety of unconventional approaches to materiality including Ghada Amer's *Twins* (2023) which beautifully intertwines feminine portraiture and embroidery techniques to challenge the masculine traditions in art, and paintings by Yoshitaka Amano, who utilizes automotive paint to create fantastical otherworldly scenes and portraits. In Amano's *Devaloka 13* (2010), pastel and neon-colored creatures and blonde waifish figures ride atop celestial beasts of Amano's imagination, creating an environment of dream-like wonder.

The exhibition further mesmerizes with cast metal works by George Condo, Sherrie Levine and Sanford Biggers, which disrupt the history of sculpture. In his work, George Condo employs his own contemporary style described as "psychological cubism" to capture the beauty and grotesqueness contained within the experience of the human body. Simultaneously evoking ancient deities and modern man, Condo's *Constellation II* (2022) collages angles and forms of a human bust together in a crude yet dynamic application that animates the work as a whole.

Celebrating women's artistic cultural work, Esther Mahlangu's bright, geometric paintings both honor and document the traditional painting style of the Ndebele people of her native country of South Africa. Mahlangu's *Untitled (Ndebele abstract)* painting series transposes the Ndebele ceremonial custom of painting the exterior walls of houses, traditionally performed by Ndebele women, to a contemporary format. Gina Beavers' nine perfectly rendered drawings elevate and catalog contemporary modes of feminine decoration and makeup. By making permanent the temporary practices of feminine labor, both Beavers and Mahlangu honor the craft and history of women's creative practices.

"In this micro-survey of preeminent artists, we offer multiple points of connection to sensuality, architecture, play and experimentation both visually and conceptually," said Demecina Beehn, Director Art & Culture for MGM Resorts. "While vastly different in their approach, each artist hones a clear voice or style that challenges boundaries, thus exemplifying aspects of their greatness."

Ralph DeLuca said, "It was a privilege to curate *ICONS* for Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art during this thrilling time for Las Vegas as the city hosts many exciting events and welcomes visitors from around the world who can connect with the featured art and artists. This exhibition is a convergence of some of the most influential artists, creating an incredibly significant display of contemporary art for the community to enjoy."

ICONS of Contemporary Art showcases an exciting selection of artworks that reflect MGM Resorts' commitment to displaying works by underrepresented artists. The full list of artists featured in this exhibition include Yoshitaka Amano, Ghada Amer, Gina Beavers, Sanford Biggers, George Condo, Haas Brothers, Sherrie Levine, Esther Mahlangu, Rashaad Newsome and Frank Stella. Works are on display courtesy of the artists, Private Collections, Hauser & Wirth, Marianne Boesky Gallery, LOMEX and David Zwirner.

ICONS of Contemporary Art is on display daily at Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art through March 31 from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Last admissions are sold 30 minutes prior to closing time.

Tickets are \$18 for adults; \$15 for Nevada residents, seniors 65 and older, students, teachers, and military with a valid ID. Children 5 and younger are free. Daily docent-led tours will be held at 2 p.m.

For additional information, call (702) 693-7871 or (877) 957-9777 or visit bellagio.com/bgfa.

Image Credits

Courtesy the artist and Hauser & Wirth, © George Condo

About Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art

An intimate, 2,600 sq ft experience, Bellagio Gallery of Fine Art is Las Vegas' premier exhibition space, located in the heart of Bellagio Resort & Casino in the pool promenade. Since opening in 1998, the gallery has presented exhibitions of artworks and objects drawn from internationally acclaimed museums and private collections, including *In Bloom*; *Ase: Afro Frequencies*; *Yayoi Kusama*; *Primal Water: An Exhibition of Contemporary Japanese Art*; *Samurai: Armor from the Ann and Gabriel Barbier-Mueller Collection*; *Town and Country: From Degas to Picasso*; *Yousuf Karsh: Icons of the 20th Century*; *Picasso: Creatures and Creativity*; *Fabergé Revealed*; and *Warhol Out West*.

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