

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Koffler Gallery presents *how good are your dwelling places*, a new off-site group exhibition organized by guest curator Cyril Reade, January 14 to March 14, 2010

Toronto, Ontario, December 18, 2009 – Koffler Centre of the Arts proudly presents the group exhibition *how good are your dwelling places*. Presented by the Koffler Gallery and organized by Rochester-based curator Cyril Reade, the exhibition runs from **Thursday, January 14, 2010 to March 14, 2010**. The off-site project is located at **23 Beverley Street** in downtown Toronto.

how good are your dwelling places is the latest in a series of off-site exhibitions for the Koffler Gallery. Watch for Koffler Gallery exhibitions in unexpected places all around Toronto over the next few years as the Koffler Centre of the Arts prepares for its brand new arts and cultural centre scheduled to open on Sherman Campus.

Developed for the Koffler Gallery by guest curator Cyril Reade and presented in a former residential space, the exhibition brings together four artists who come from diverse cultural backgrounds and work in a variety of media. **Rita Bakacs, Susan Lakin, Ross Racine** and **Allen Topolski** often examine architectural and domestic environments, attempting to decode cultural specificity within a homogenizing context.

Although not Jewish, the artists were invited to reflect on the fluidity of Jewish identity in North America, taking as departure points the shared experiences of community, individuality, displacement, continuity and assimilation to examine connections and differences.

“With this selection of artists participating in *how good are your dwelling places*, guest curator Cyril Reade has created a truly original project,” states **Lori Starr**, Executive Director, Koffler Centre of the Arts and Vice President for Culture, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. “The Koffler is thrilled to present this unique exhibition that focuses on the heart of Jewish life: the home,” adds Starr.

Berlin-based Hungarian filmmaker **Rita Bakacs** takes us to the European origins of many North American Jews with a new video piece about the Schloss Börnicke, a former residence of the Mendelssohn-Bartholdy family situated in a Berlin suburb. New York-based artist **Ross Racine** digitally renders bird’s eye views of suburbia, orderly and prosperous at first glance but revealing limited choice upon closer observation. Rochester photographer **Susan Lakin** leads us inside the home where she takes portraits of the inhabitants as a reflection in one of North America’s ubiquitous appliances, the television screen. Sculptor **Allen Topolski** transforms found domestic items, marrying the familiar and the uncanny to render them into humorously strange objects.

how good are your dwelling places is installed in a house slated for redevelopment on Beverley Street in downtown Toronto. The location is a few doors up from the childhood home of the architect Frank Gehry, born Ephraim Owen Goldberg. The inhabitants of the early twentieth century have long gone, soon to be replaced by yet other residents. The works temporarily gathered in the space give a snapshot of one of the many trajectories of North American city dwellers.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition: *how good are your dwelling places*, January 14 to March 14, 2010.

Opening Reception: Thursday, January 14, 7 – 9 PM

Curator Talk: Thursday, January 14, 7:30 PM

Location: 23 Beverley Street, Toronto (just north of Queen Street West)

Exhibition Hours: Tuesday to Sunday 12 to 6 PM, Friday closed at 4 PM, Closed Monday, statutory and Jewish holidays. Admission is FREE.

Free Guided Bus Tour: Tour begins at 23 Beverley Street with the Koffler Gallery Off-Site at 11:30 AM, departing at noon to Blackwood Gallery, AGYU and Doris McCarthy Gallery. **Sunday, January 31, 2010, 11:30 to 5 PM** | RSVP 905.828.3789

About Cyril Reade

Cyril Reade is Associate Professor of Art History at the Rochester Institute of Technology. His book *Mendelssohn to Mendelsohn: Visual Case Studies of Jewish Life in Berlin* was published by Peter Lang AG in 2007. Reade is currently working on *The Mendelssohns in Berlin: Portrait of a Family*. He recently participated in the Koffler's *The Wrecking Ball* (June 2009) and was guest curator for the Gallery's 2005 exhibition *NXT.Message*.

For artist bios, please visit: www.kofflerarts.org

About the Koffler Centre of the Arts

Koffler Centre of the Arts is a Jewish cultural institution with a broad mandate to serve all, and present a wide range of artistic programs through a global lens in a specifically Canadian context. The Koffler's mission is to bring people together through arts and culture to create a more civil and global society. Its unique mix examines the arts across different disciplines and cultures in a way that strengthens identity while encouraging an appreciation of difference. Headquartered just north of Sheppard Avenue at 4588 Bathurst Street in the brand new Prosserman JCC, the Koffler Centre of the Arts features: the Koffler Gallery with changing contemporary exhibitions (currently programming off-site); visual art exhibitions, student exhibitions and more; fully-equipped studios for ceramics, painting and drawing, dance, and music rehearsals; and a variety of other programmatic spaces. The 2009-2010 season includes major visual arts exhibitions, artist talks, lectures, film, music, dance, and literary performances often presented in partnership with other arts organizations. The Koffler presents the annual Helen and Stan Vine Canadian Jewish Book Awards and the Jewish Book Fair as part of its growing literary repertoire along with over 65 classes for all ages as part of the Koffler Schools of Dance, Visual Arts, and Music. Koffler Centre of the Arts is an affiliate of the UJA Federation of Greater Toronto.

Planning is underway on a brand new, architecturally innovative Koffler Centre of the Arts on the Sherman Campus. In July 2009, the Koffler's administrative offices and all classes opened in the Prosserman JCC on the Sherman Campus. More information at <http://tomorrowcampaign.com>

Koffler Centre of the Arts gratefully acknowledges the support of its patrons and members, Cultural Season Sponsor **CIBC Wood Gundy**, Art Aficionado Sponsors **Trinity Development Group** and **Weirfoulds LLP**, and the **UJA Federation of Greater Toronto**. The Koffler Gallery of the Koffler Centre of the Arts gratefully acknowledges the support the City of Toronto through the **Toronto Arts Council**, the **Ontario Arts Council** and the **Canada Council for the Arts**.

KOFFLER ON THE ROAD!

Watch for Koffler programs off-site around Toronto! As we prepare for our new facility to be completed, the Koffler Centre of the Arts is continuing to program exhibitions, events and performances both at our current facilities and at various downtown sites in Toronto. Check our website for details and watch out for Koffler events in **your** neighbourhood!

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