

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Koffler Gallery presents *Vagabond Vitrine*, a new off-site exhibition by Toronto-based artist Panya Clark Espinal, June 27 to August 1, 2010**

**Toronto, ON, June 14, 2010** – Koffler Centre of the Arts proudly presents *Vagabond Vitrine*, a new off-site exhibition by Toronto-based visual artist Panya Clark Espinal. Presented by the Koffler Gallery, the installation is located at the **Mon Ton Window Gallery**, 402 College Street and is open from **June 27 to August 1, 2010**.

Developed for the Koffler Gallery Off-Site program, *Vagabond Vitrine* is the latest in an ongoing series of projects around the city of Toronto. Watch for Koffler Gallery exhibitions in unexpected places over the next few years as the Koffler Centre of the Arts prepares for its brand new arts and cultural centre, anticipated to open on Sherman Campus in 2014.

Through her mixed media installations, Toronto artist **Panya Clark Espinal** questions notions of authenticity, appropriation, reproduction, collection, and display. She investigates the nature of representation as practiced and engaged through the institutions of culture-making. A masterful creator of experiences, Clark Espinal's evocative re-invigoration of already existent images brings fresh perspectives and renewed intimacy to the act of looking.

Before the closure of the old Koffler building, Clark Espinal removed a section of the wood-and-glass display case that had lined the lobby of the Gallery. With *Vagabond Vitrine*, she transforms this uprooted institutional vestige into a temporary sculpture. The installation converges with the fixed architecture of a former storefront on College Street, now an artist studio and window gallery.

Reflecting on the current nomadic circumstances of the Gallery, the displaced structure of *Vagabond Vitrine* splices with the storefront window and its re-imagined contents, in a nostalgic search to recover purpose. Inside, fragmented traces of a natural history diorama infuse the *Vitrine* with the uncanny qualities of a lost Cabinet of Curiosities. Emulating old-fashioned museum displays, the migrant structure alludes to the history of cultural representations of nature and to outdated modes of presentation that still capture public affection with an aura of fantasy, idealism and romance.

Visible at any time, *Vagabond Vitrine* insinuates itself in the city landscape and offers passers-by an extraordinary moment in the midst of daily rush or in the mystery of the night, bringing art to the everyday. While evoking the constant transformation of the urban setting, the installation reflects on the unsettled connection between culture and nature, and on the pervasive power of the museum to equally educate and manipulate, enchant and ensnare.

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**Exhibition:** *Vagabond Vitrine*, June 27 – August 1, 2010.

**Opening Reception:** Sunday, June 27, 7 – 9 PM

**Artist Talk:** Sunday, June 27, 7:30 PM

**Location:** Mon Ton Window Gallery, 402 College Street, Toronto

**Exhibition Hours:** On view 24 hours a day, 7 days a week | Admission is FREE | To book group visits or tours, 416.638.1881 x4270

**FREE CONTEMPORARY ART BUS TOUR**

**Sunday, July 18, 12 – 5 PM** | Tour the Koffler Gallery Off-Site project, then depart from 402 College Street to the Blackwood Gallery's off-site project in Port Credit, the Doris McCarthy Gallery and University of Toronto Arts Centre. RSVP 416.287.7007 or [dmq@utsc.utoronto.ca](mailto:dmq@utsc.utoronto.ca)

### **About the Artist**

Panya Clark Espinal was awarded the Governor General's Medal upon graduating from the Ontario College of Art in 1988. Her practice as a multi-media installation artist has scrutinized and engaged the mechanisms that drive the making of meaning in our culture. She has shown across Canada and in several international cities including Tokyo and London. Key solo exhibitions include **Oakville Galleries** (2001); the **Canadian Embassy, Tokyo** (1999); the **National Gallery of Canada** (1995); **Art Gallery of Ontario** (1994); and the **Southern Alberta Art Gallery** (1994). More recently Clark Espinal co-led a collaborative project for the Harbourfront Centre entitled *The Terrarium Project*. In addition, she has completed a number public art commissions including Toronto's Bayview Subway Station and is currently working on projects for the City of Mississauga, the Toronto Transit Commission and North Toronto Collegiate Institute. Clark Espinal is represented by Christopher Cutts Gallery in Toronto. Visit [www.panya.ca](http://www.panya.ca) for more details.

### **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 2010-11 season includes major visual arts exhibitions, artist talks, lectures, film, music, dance, comedy, 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 agency 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, anticipated to open in 2014. 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 acknowledges the support of its patrons and members, Cultural Season Sponsor **CIBC Wood Gundy** and the **UJA Federation of Greater Toronto**. The Koffler Gallery 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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### **Media Contact**

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