

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Koffler Gallery the exclusive Canadian presenter of groundbreaking exhibition featuring Jewish women's autobiographical comics and graphic storytelling

Toronto, ON, November 23, 2010 – Koffler Gallery is proud to be the exclusive Canadian presenter of the international touring exhibition ***Graphic Details: Confessional Comics by Jewish Women***. Featuring the works of eighteen Canadian and international artists, *Graphic Details* is presented by the Koffler Gallery Off-Site at Toronto's **Gladstone Hotel**, from **February 17 to April 17, 2011**.

Presented as part of the Koffler Gallery Off-Site program, *Graphic Details* 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.

Graphic Details is a groundbreaking touring exhibition, providing the first in-depth look at a unique and prolific niche of graphic storytelling – Jewish women's autobiographical comics. While the influential role of Jews in cartooning has long been acknowledged, the role of Jewish women in shaping the medium is largely unexplored. This exhibition of original drawings, full comic books and graphic novels, presents the powerful work of eighteen Canadian and international artists whose intimate, confessional work has influenced the world of comics over the last four decades, creating an entirely new genre.

Artists include **Vanessa Davis, Bernice Eisenstein, Sarah Glidden, Miriam Katin, Aline Kominsky-Crumb, Miss Lasko-Gross, Sarah Lazarovic, Miriam Libicki, Sarah Lightman, Diane Noomin, Corinne Pearlman, Trina Robbins, Racheli Rotner, Sharon Rudahl, Laurie Sandell, Ariel Schrag, Lauren Weinstein, and Ilana Zeffren.**

Spotlighting the raw, revealing voices of Jewish women and their singular presence in graphic storytelling, the exhibition illuminates the intersection of experiences that make these diaristic comics so compelling. By turns funny, outrageous, poignant and embarrassingly intimate, the works in *Graphic Details* reflect the artists' individual journeys, refracted through a distinctively Jewish lens in a pop-culture art form. Some bare their bodies. Some expose their psyches. All are fearless about sex, romance, politics, body functions, experiences, emotions, and desires.

Many of the original artworks on display have never been exhibited in public until now. Artists run the gamut from pioneering *Wimmen's Comix* and *Twisted Sisters* artists of the 1970s and 1980s to the superstars of the new generation.

"We are thrilled to bring this landmark exhibition to the Gladstone Hotel – one of the city's preeminent arts and culture establishments – in the heart of Toronto's art and design district," said **Lori Starr**, Executive Director of the Koffler Centre of the Arts and Vice President for Culture, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto. "The exhibition puts a whole new twist on how we think about comics, graphic novels and the role of women in this captivating genre," added Starr.

Graphic Details is co-curated by **Michael Kaminer**, a New York journalist and collector whose December 2008 story on confessional comics in the *Forward*, the leading independent Jewish weekly newspaper, provided the impetus for the show. His collaborator, **Sarah Lightman**, is an award-winning artist, curator and arts journalist based in London who is researching a PhD at The University of Glasgow on *Autobiography in Comics*.

From the *Forward* story: "While women have been writing frank confessional cartoons since the early 1970s, the context has changed. Brutal sexism defined underground comics back then, with females mostly depicted as fawning objects for a largely male readership. Blunt confessional comics were a throat-grab from women who dared male readers to confront real, unvarnished female characters. Today's autobiographical comics come as less of a cultural jolt. For one thing, women have become a formidable presence in comics. Personal problems have also supplanted gender politics as a dominant theme. But these young artists are just as ruthlessly honest, presenting their bodies as nakedly as their emotions. They're also finding a new crop of audiences, weaned on blogs and tell-all Facebook pages, even hungrier for first-person intimacy."

Media sponsor the *Forward* is publishing the exhibition catalogue as an eight-page newspaper broadsheet. The catalogue includes essays by comics experts **Federica Clementi, Paul Buhle, Ranen Omer-Sherman, Sarah Jaffe, Ariel Kahn** and artist **Trina Robbins**.

The Koffler Gallery is the only Canadian venue for *Graphic Details* as part of a North American tour starting at the Cartoon Art Museum in San Francisco in October 2010, and continuing to the Yeshiva University Museum, New York in January 2012, and the Jean Paul Slusser Gallery of the University of Michigan's School of Art & Design, Ann Arbor in September 2012.

About the Artists

Full artist bios are posted on our website: www.kofflerarts.org

GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition: *Graphic Details: Confessional Comics by Jewish Women*, February 17 to April 17, 2011, FREE
Opening Reception: Thursday, February 17, 2011, 8 – 10 PM, FREE

Location: Gladstone Hotel, 1214 Queen Street West, Toronto

Hours: Monday to Sunday (7 days a week), 12 – 5 PM

Koffler Centre of the Arts acknowledges the support of its patrons and members, Cultural Season Sponsor **CIBC Wood Gundy**, Print Media Partner **National Post**, 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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