

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Koffler Centre of the Arts presents Toronto premiere of the critically-acclaimed one-man play *About the Oranges*, written and performed by Robbie Gringras

Toronto, ON, October 28, 2009 – Koffler Centre of the Arts proudly presents the Toronto premiere of the critically acclaimed, award-winning, one-man play *About the Oranges*. Written and performed by **Robbie Gringras**, *About the Oranges* will be performed in Toronto for one night only, on **Wednesday, November 18**, at **8 PM at Six Degrees, 2335 Yonge Street**.

About the Oranges is a hard-hitting, controversial, and intensely moving tragic comedy about a suicide bombing in Israel. Courageous, disturbing, honest and hilarious, Robbie Gringras' play often moves audiences to tears – not only through the raw unpeeling of the trauma of terror, but also at the pain of a man struggling to hold on to his beautiful yet bloodied dream.

"The Koffler is very proud to be bringing Robbie Gringras from Israel to present his challenging, thought-provoking play in Toronto for the first time," said **Lori Starr, Executive Director, Koffler Centre of the Arts**.

"At the Koffler, we strive to be a place of dialogue and debate as well as one of invitation and hospitality," adds Starr. "We believe that through arts and culture we can enlighten, inspire and build bridges between people and communities. With *About the Oranges* – and the subsequent panel *One World, Double Take: Staging Struggle*, also with Robbie Gringras – the Koffler is engaging in dialogue around today's complex issues from an arts and cultural perspective."

The play focuses on an Israeli man's attempt to make sense of a suicide bombing. What led a baker to suicide terror, a man to try to save a murderer, and a father to lose a daughter? Tragically, excruciatingly, in a desperate attempt to gain perspective and escape his daily nightmares, he attempts to create laughter from the tears.

About The Oranges has been performed around the world, in the USA, Israel, UK, Mexico, Australia and Canada, to critical acclaim. In 2004, it played 24 times in 25 days at the **Edinburgh Fringe Festival**; enjoyed great success at Vancouver's **Chutzpah Festival** in March 2005; and has played at San Francisco's **Traveling Jewish Theatre, TheaterJ** in Washington DC; **Acco Theatre** in Israel; and **Tzavta Theatre**, in Tel Aviv.

The **Sunday Times** (London, UK) gave *About the Oranges* four stars and called it "bleakly blackly funny"; **The Scotsman** (Edinburgh, Scotland) called it a "heartbreaking prayer for peace"; **The Guardian** (London, UK) said Gringras has "stripped the Middle East conflict down to its essentials: pain and comedy"; and **The Vancouver Sun** called it a "a one-man theatrical border conflict, with Gringras madly stomping across national, political and generational lines – not to mention the jagged one that divides laughter and pain."

About the Oranges will be performed on **Wednesday, November 18**, at **8 PM at Six Degrees, 2335 Yonge Street**. Tickets are \$15 in advance (plus service charges) and are available online through **TicketWeb**, www.ticketweb.ca or by calling **1-888-222-6608**.

Robbie Gringras is also a featured panelist for **One World, Double Take: Staging Struggle**, on **Thursday, November 19, 7 PM**, at the **Miles Nadal JCC, 750 Spadina Ave**. The event features a distinguished panel of playwrights and directors, discussing their projects which present cultural clashes, military struggles, and international conflicts on stage. What role can theatre play in recovering, confronting, and reconciling social and political turmoil in different parts of the world? Admission to *One World, Double Take: Staging Struggle* is "pay-what-you-can" and is presented together with the Miles Nadal JCC.

About Robbie Gringras

Robbie Gringras is a British-born Israeli living on a hill in the Galilee. In the UK he wrote, directed and performed in shows that played on London's West End, and throughout the world. In Israel he works as performer, writer and

educator. His first solo show, *The Gift*, has played throughout Israel, UK and USA in Hebrew and English. *Shabbes!* has played over 300 times throughout the world in both languages, and *That's Why I'm (Still) Here* throughout the world. Robbie also runs www.makom.haaretz.com, the site for 'hugging and wrestling with Israel' for MAKOM/Haaretz newspaper. More information: www.robbiegringras.5u.com

About the Oranges is presented by the **Koffler Centre of the Arts**.

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's Donald Gales Family Pavilion, 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 40,000 square foot, 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 Donald Gales Family Pavilion of 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**.

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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