



MEDIA RELEASE

Koffler Centre of the Arts receives \$526,200 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation for its ground-breaking community-focused offsite arts education program

Koffler Studio Offsite, a free after-school visual arts program piloted in 2019 at Thorncliffe Park Public School, to be significantly expanded to other communities in the GTA over three years

Toronto, ON, July 21, 2020 – The **Koffler Centre of the Arts** is thrilled to announce that it's received a **three-year, \$526,200** Grow grant from the **Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF)** to expand its ***Koffler Studio Offsite*** education program.

Koffler Studio Offsite is a free after-school visual arts program successfully piloted in 2019 at **Thorncliffe Park Public School** in Toronto. The program offers enriched arts experiences and arts-based learning opportunities to students aged 9-11 living outside the downtown core and attending schools that rank high on the Learning Opportunities Index. Many of these students are also newcomers to Canada.

Koffler Studio Offsite was originally developed and launched with the support of an Ontario Trillium Foundation Seed grant. Through its Grow Investment Stream, the OTF has generously committed to sustaining and expanding *Koffler Studio Offsite* over a three-year period. The arts-based educational program will continue to be offered at Thorncliffe Park Public School and will be expanded to include two additional schools to be selected in consultation with the Toronto District School Board based on community needs. The program will serve over **4,000 students** across three Toronto neighbourhoods.

"We are deeply grateful to the Ontario Trillium Foundation for its support of our *Koffler Studio Offsite* program," said Executive Director **Karen Tisch**. "The OTF Grow grant will allow the Koffler to offer high-quality arts programming to more young people, expanding access to arts participation and providing creative and educational opportunities across more Toronto neighbourhoods. We look forward to collaborating closely with students, educators and community members to build on the program's impact, value and reach."

The *Koffler Studio Offsite* program was recognized by the Ontario Association of Art Galleries as one of the province's leading arts education programs through a nomination for the Education Award at the 2019 **OAG Awards**.

Driven by the need to reduce socio-economic and geographic barriers barring students from participation in the arts, *Koffler Studio Offsite* brings professional artists into the classroom to lead multi-disciplinary artmaking workshops. Program participants also visit contemporary art galleries and institutions across the city. The program culminates in an exhibition of participants' artworks in a high-traffic public space, encouraging the whole community to participate.

Koffler Studio Offsite will be led by the Koffler's **Dainessa Nugent-Palache**, TD Assistant Curator of Education & Exhibitions, in collaboration with **Patricia Ritacca**, Koffler's Education and Public Engagement Manager.

"The Koffler education team made a commitment to work with communities rather than in them, by tailoring programming to the subjective needs of the individuals we work with, and then fostering long-term engagement," said **Dainessa Nugent-Palache**. "I am delighted by the Ontario Trillium Foundation's support of *Koffler Studio Offsite*, which will allow the Koffler to expand upon our existing relationship with Thorncliffe Park Public School and provide accessible visual arts programming to two additional schools and communities, over a three-year period."

For more information on the Koffler Centre of the Arts, please visit kofflerarts.org. *Koffler Studio Offsite* is generously supported by the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

The Koffler Centre of the Arts acknowledges the support of Thorncliffe Park Public School Principal Jeffery Crane, educators Stephanie Rallis and Katherine Beatie, and School Trustee Rachel Chernos Lin, for their sustained belief in the Koffler Studio Offsite project. Thanks to OCAD University Faculty of Art & Photography Department for the use of its darkroom facilities, and especially to Hugh Martin, OCADU Photo-Lab Technician, for his time and efforts making the university photography lab usable for grade five students.

ABOUT ONTARIO TRILLIUM FOUNDATION: The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada's leading granting foundations. OTF awarded \$115 million to 644 projects last year to build healthy and vibrant communities in Ontario.

ABOUT THE KOFFLER CENTRE OF THE ARTS: The Koffler Centre of the Arts is a cultural platform that explores critical ideas and concerns of our time through exhibitions, publications, performances, literary events and digital initiatives. We examine complex issues through transformative art experiences that stimulate intercultural dialogue and position Jewish identity in conversation with diverse perspectives and global voices. The Koffler Gallery and its administrative offices are located at Artscape Youngplace, in Toronto's vibrant West Queen West art and design district.

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