

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Koffler Centre of the Arts presents *each hand as they are called*, an off-site project by Toronto visual and sound artist Reena Katz organized by the Koffler Gallery in Kensington Market, May 14 to July 26, 2009.

Toronto, Ontario, April 23, 2009 – The **Koffler Centre of the Arts** proudly presents **Reena Katz: *each hand as they are called*: sound, scaffolding and social performance in Kensington Market**. Organized by the Koffler Gallery and guest curated by **Kim Simon**, the exhibition runs from **Thursday, May 14 to Sunday, July 26, 2009**. A walking tour led by the artist and followed by a special reception takes place on **Wednesday, May 20**, beginning at **7 PM** on the southeast corner of Augusta and College.

each hand as they are called is the third off-site project for the Koffler Gallery and the most significant presentation of Katz's work in Toronto. Watch for Koffler Gallery exhibitions in unexpected places all around Toronto over the next three years as the Koffler Centre of the Arts prepares for its brand new 40,000 square foot arts and cultural centre scheduled to open on the Sherman Campus in 2012.

***each hand as they are called* is presented in association with Luminato, Toronto Festival of Arts and Creativity, June 5 – 14, 2009.**

Developed for the Koffler Gallery, this ambitious project reflects on Toronto's Kensington Market as the vibrant site of multiple transnational histories, layered with personal stories and fragmented by the movement of time. Taking the ephemeral nature of experience in urban space to heart, Reena Katz works with the notion of transition and movement through a series of solo and collaborative performances, temporary installations, community projects, and public posters. Katz frames the culture of the Market through the lens of her memory and lived experience, its streets and buildings offering shelter, nourishment, and context to her story as a politically engaged queer youth. *each hand as they are called* captures the spirit of the Market on any given day, filled with passing memorial vignettes.

Roaming, live vocal performances insert an experimental soundtrack of assimilation, anachronism and hybridity into the landscape of Kensington. Based on the jazz-fusion music of the Barry Sisters, a Yiddish-speaking duo popular in the late 1950s, Katz's haunting compositions are arranged backwards for varied gender duets. The resulting absurd vocals create a sensual language of calls and beckoning within the Market streetscape.

In addition, Katz performs solo against the backdrop of Kensington Market's tense relationship to urban development. At odd and unexpected hours, she will be seen working on temporary structures, building and deconstructing scaffolding in undisclosed locations. The sites of these interventions are defined by a mix of her gallivanting adolescence, Kensington's radical history and the markers of its Yiddish-speaking past. Positioning the act of construction as obstruction, Katz's scaffolding performances gesture to personal maps, Kensington's incredible labour history and to memory itself as construct.

A community-based component of the project involves Katz working with senior residents from the **Terraces at Baycrest** and grade eight students from **Ryerson Community Public School**. Together, their working process will highlight Kensington as the important meeting point of Jewish and East Asian cultures through the game of Mah Jongg, a game that originated in China, migrated west, and was popularized with North American Jewish women during the 1920s. The project culminates in a public day of inter-generational Mah Jongg in the Market's **Bellevue Park** on **Sunday, June 7** from **3 – 5 PM. (rain date: Sunday, June 14)**

While the totality of Katz's performative and social gestures are fleeting, *each hand as they are called* will have a constant presence in Kensington through a series of interrelated street posters, designed by Katz in collaboration with award-winning designer and artist **Cecilia Berkovic**. The posters provide additional context for the project while inserting a distinct visual presence amongst the eclectic mix of band-posters, lost pets announcements, political events, and other posted ephemera populating the Market. With these posters, Katz adds her voice to the living archive of text and images that make up the Market's singular street esthetic, while her unique public structures and relational performance inject a new layer in this dynamic historical space.

Reena Katz uses recorded sound, handmade electronics, wood and live performance to create diverse listening spaces. Her work explores gender, ethnicity, migration and anachronism with a constant reference to collectivity and oral archive. Katz focuses on the use and re-use of analog sound technologies, as well as fibers and materials from a variety of wounded landscapes. Guided by a deep love of collaboration, Katz has developed an inventive and strong voice across disciplines. Her collaborative projects include film and video, poetry, dance and grassroots organizing. Katz's compositions, installations and performances have been exhibited at galleries, festivals and on radio internationally, including Toronto, Montreal, New York and Berlin.

Kim Simon is a curator and writer living in Toronto. Recent writing projects include catalogue texts for Diane Landry, Karilee Fuglem and The Tree Museum. Recent exhibitions include Toronto's first Nuit Blanche in 2006, a group exhibition on relational art and design for York Quay Gallery, and an exhibition of work by Polish artist Artur Zmijewski. Simon is the curator of Gallery TPW, an artist-run centre with a focus in photography, film and video.

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

GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition: Reena Katz, *each hand as they called*, May 14 – July 26, FREE.

Reception and Artist Tour: Wednesday, May 20, 7 PM, FREE, meet on the southeast corner of Augusta and College.

Intergenerational Mah Jongg in Bellevue Park: Sunday, June 7, 3 PM, FREE. Rain date: Sunday, June 14.

Location and Hours: The public will come across the sound and scaffolding components of *each hand as they are called* unexpectedly in different public spaces and around private residences in Kensington Market, around the clock. These surprise encounters will occur within the municipal boundaries of Kensington Market, from College Street to Dundas, and from Spadina to Bellevue Avenue. The posters will be found throughout the duration of the exhibition on various poles, hoarding and postboxes in the neighbourhood.

About the Koffler Centre of the Arts

Koffler Centre of the Arts brings people together through arts and culture to create a more civil, global society. By examining the arts across disciplines and cultures, the Koffler strengthens identity and community while fostering an appreciation of difference. Headquartered just north of Sheppard Avenue at 4588 Bathurst Street and serviced by public transportation, the Koffler Centre of the Arts features: the Koffler Gallery with changing contemporary exhibitions (currently programming off-site); the Loggia Gallery with photography exhibitions, student exhibitions and more; fully-equipped studios for ceramics, stone-carving (the only studio in Toronto using pneumatic tools), painting and drawing, dance, and music rehearsals; and the Leah Posluns Theatre. The 2008-2009 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.

Construction is underway on a brand new 40,000 square foot, architecturally innovative Koffler Centre of the Arts on the present site soon to be known as the Sherman Campus. In July 2009, the Koffler's administrative offices and all classes will open in the new D.H. Gales Family Pavilion of the Prosserman JCC on the Sherman Campus.

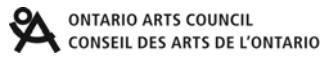
More information at <http://tomorrowcampaign.com>

KOFFLER ON THE ROAD!

Watch for Koffler programs off-site around Toronto! As we prepare for our new facility to be completed in 2012, 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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CULTURAL SEASON SPONSOR



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