

koffler gallery

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Koffler Gallery presents a solo exhibition of immersive large-scale new paintings by Toronto artist Howard Podeswa

Toronto, ON, December 21, 2015 – The **Koffler Gallery** proudly presents *A Brief History*, an exhibition featuring a new series of paintings by Toronto artist **Howard Podeswa**. Running from **January 14 to March 27, 2016**, the exhibition opens with a free public reception on Thursday, January 14, 2016 from 6 to 9 PM. The Koffler Gallery is located at Artscape Youngplace, 180 Shaw Street, Toronto.

For the last decade, the work Howard Podeswa has examined artistic legacies by re-imagining historic paintings that have influenced his practice, such as Goya's Black Paintings and Rembrandt's *The Night Watch*. Over the past couple of years, as both world and personal events seemed to veer steeply towards the tragic, Podeswa felt compelled to tackle one of the most complex subjects of art history – human mortality.

Reflecting on the current state of the world, Podeswa's new series of paintings articulate an end-of-times cosmology inspired by artistic and scientific visions. The immersive large-scale compositions build upon intricate layers of reference and meaning to convey a complex meditation on the human condition.

Derived primarily from Dante's allegories of the afterlife in the *Divine Comedy* and Stephen Hawking's quantum theories, Podeswa's poignant images also re-interpret iconic works by Pieter Breugel the Elder and Francisco Goya. Seamlessly moving between realism and abstraction, the paintings combine historic elements with personal memories as well as recent news images of natural disasters and social upheavals.

Existential questions and anxieties underlie Podeswa's philosophical speculations about the end of times as well as the notion of time itself, triggering an emotional journey from sorrow and disquiet to hopefulness. Signalling a collapse of old global orders, the series turns to the concepts of astrophysics to explore what may lie beyond our known universe. Through painting, the limitations of time and space recede, revealing an essential simultaneity of past, present and future as well as possible parallel worlds that co-exist tantalizingly outside the reach of our perception.

Howard Podeswa: A Brief History is curated by Koffler Gallery Director/Curator Mona Filip.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a publication with a commissioned essay by John Bentley Mays and a conversation between artists Howard Podeswa and Stephen Andrews.

For more information and a full list of the Koffler's Winter 2016 programs, please visit kofflerarts.org

Regular exhibition hours: Tuesday to Friday, 12 PM to 6 PM; Saturday and Sunday, 11 AM to 5 PM. Closed Mondays and statutory holidays. Admission is free.

The Koffler Gallery gratefully acknowledges the support of the Toronto Arts Council, the Ontario Arts Council, and the Canada Council for the Arts.

ABOUT HOWARD PODESWA

Howard Podeswa is an artist who lives and works in Toronto, Canada. Over the past 27 years he has exhibited his work in Canada, the U.S., Germany and South Africa. His paintings are held in numerous private and public collections including The Donovan Collection, The Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Ciba-Geigi AG, SEI Investments and The University of Toronto. His work often begins with personal history as a catalyst for meditations on art historical legacy, physics, theories of perception and the state of the world.

ABOUT KOFFLER CENTRE OF THE ARTS

The [Koffler Centre of the Arts](#) is a Jewish cultural organization that presents a contemporary cross-disciplinary arts program encouraging inquiry and exploration. We promote an inter-cultural dialogue that engages our Jewish identity with diverse perspectives and global voices. The Koffler Gallery and its administrative offices are located at Artscape Youngplace, in Toronto's vibrant downtown West Queen West art and design district.

Koffler Centre of the Arts acknowledges the support of the Koffler Family Foundation, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, Cultural Season Sponsor CIBC Wood Gundy, the Ontario Arts Council through the Community and Multidisciplinary Arts Organizations Program, our patrons and donors.

- 30 -

For further information and high resolution images, contact:

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