

# koffler gallery

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Koffler Gallery presents the first solo exhibition in Canada from British-Spanish artist/filmmaker Isabel Rocamora**

**Toronto, ON, July 23, 2015** – The Koffler Gallery opens its Fall 2015 season with the exhibition [Isabel Rocamora](#). Running from **September 17 to November, 2015**, it opens with a free public reception on Thursday, September 17, from 6 to 9 PM. The Koffler Gallery is located at Artscape Youngplace, 180 Shaw Street, Toronto.

**Isabel Rocamora** is a British-Spanish artist and filmmaker whose work considers the performative language of human gesture and its relationship to individual and cultural identity. The Koffler Gallery presents her first solo exhibition in Canada, including recent and new film works that examine the construction of authority, the exile of the self, the existential attachment to land and landscape, and the intimacy of violence.

Set in the historically charged landscape of Normandy beaches, *Body of War* reflects on the transformation of man into soldier through the relentless repetition of violence. Testimonies of retired and serving soldiers punctuate a choreographed performance of visceral hand-to-hand combat that is gradually deconstructed – drawing the viewer in to engage in the relationship between human intimacy and the brutality of war.

*Portrait in time and gesture* poetically examines the transformation of the self's core over the course of an individual's history. Referencing photography, which traditionally claims to offer a "definitive" representation of identity, *Portrait* looks at moments of inconsistency and oscillations over time, creating a body that is at once separating and re-uniting with itself, betraying feelings of self-multiplication and revealing gaps in self-perception.

Positioned between fiction, representation and metaphor, *Horizon of Exile* stages female identity at the centre of a poignant meditation on the underlying cultural causes of displacement. Referencing Middle Eastern contexts while remaining universally resonant, the film reflects on women's condition, belonging and effacement. Set to a haunting soundtrack, *Horizon* employs real interviews, cinematic narrative and experimental choreography to consider issues of land and identity through the allegorical journey of two women across timeless deserts. Their bodies exude both serenity and interiorized trauma, travelling as though released from consciousness or gravity, falling and recuperating, haunted by an irrepressible past.

Rocamora's newest work, *Faith*, poetically contemplates the conflict between the three dominant religions in Jerusalem, seeking a common ground in the gesture of prayer and its essential humanity. The three-channel film juxtaposes three men – one Jewish, one Christian and one Muslim – praying in time and place synchronism, revealing a meaningful similarity in this inner state and gestural intention. The Judean Desert serves as setting for the intimacy of worship, referencing both the Biblical holy land that nourishes all three religions and a liminal landscape positioned as a possible threshold towards a space of communion, transcendent of political and territorial debate.

*Isabel Rocamora* is curated by Koffler Gallery Director/Curator Mona Filip. The exhibition is generously supported by Chad and Lisa Wolfond.

For more information and a full list of the Koffler's Fall 2015 programs, please visit [kofflerarts.org](http://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 ISABEL ROCAMORA**

Isabel Rocamora is a British-Spanish artist filmmaker whose practice developed through performance works (1993–2003), some of which were commissioned by national institutions such as the Bluecoat Arts Centre and the Victoria and Albert Museum and have toured worldwide, often with the support of the British Council. Awarded internationally, Rocamora’s moving image works can be seen in museums and filmothèques worldwide. Her films have been exhibited, amongst others, at Centre for Contemporary Art Palazzo Strozzi, Florence; the National Museum of Photography, Copenhagen; the Herzliya Museum of Contemporary Art, Israel; and the Museum of Modern Art, Bologna. Current and upcoming shows include The Mardin Biennale (Turkey), The Musée de la civilisation (Québec) and this solo show at the Koffler Gallery. Rocamora’s work is in several international collections. She lives and works between Edinburgh and Barcelona and is represented by Galeria SENDA. More information on Isabel Rocamora is available at [www.isabelrocamora.org](http://www.isabelrocamora.org)

### **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.

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**For further information and high resolution images, contact:**

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Low res images for web-use are [available here](#). For high res images, please contact: Tony Hewer 647.925.0643 x224, [thewer@kofflerarts.org](mailto:thewer@kofflerarts.org)



Film Stills of *Body of War*, a film by Isabel Rocamora, UK, 2010. Courtesy of Galeria SENDA.



*Horizon of exile* by Isabel Rocamora, dual channel film, S16 mm transferred to digital, 21 mins, UK, 2007.  
S16 mm film still, courtesy of Galeria SENDA.



Film stills of *Faith*, a three channel film by Isabel Rocamora, 22 mins, UK, 2 K to HD, 2015. Courtesy of the artist and Galeria SENDA.