

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Tickets selling quickly for talk by comic book legend Art Spiegelman:
What the %@&! Happened to Comics?*
presented by the Koffler Centre of the Arts
January 26, 2015**

“Art Spiegelman ... to the comics world is a Michelangelo and a Medici both, an influential artist who is also an impresario and an enabler of others ...” — New York Times

Toronto, ON, January 14, 2015 – Tickets are selling briskly for ***What the %@&*! Happened to Comics?***, a live, illustrated talk by **Art Spiegelman**, the legendary, innovative, and sometimes controversial Pulitzer-Prize winning artist and author. The **Koffler Centre of the Arts** proudly presents Spiegelman’s personalized tour of the evolution of comics on **Monday, January 26, 2015, at 7 PM** on stage at the **Bloor Hot Docs Cinema**, 506 Bloor St. West, Toronto. Advance tickets are \$29-\$39 and are available at kofflerarts.org

Art Spiegelman’s comics are best known for their shifting graphic styles and sometimes controversial contents. In his talk ***What the %@&*! Happened to Comics?*** Spiegelman explains the value of this medium and why it should not be ignored. He believes that in our post-literate culture, the importance of the comic is on the rise. “Comics echo the way the brain works. People think in iconographic images, not in holograms, and people think in bursts of language, not in paragraphs.” Spiegelman reiterated this idea when he visited Toronto last month to launch *CO-MIX*, a retrospective of his work at the AGO that runs to March 14, 2015.

“Recent events make this a remarkable moment to explore the potency of the cartoon with one of the world’s great cartoonists.” said **Cathy Jonasson**, Executive Director, Koffler Centre of the Arts “The politically and socially savvy works of Art Spiegelman have redefined the comic genre as a powerful voice in contemporary culture. As his work continues to challenge expectation, explore controversial issues and provoke dialogue, the comic genre becomes an increasingly significant platform for understanding and engaging our world.”

Art Spiegelman has almost single-handedly brought comic books out of the toy closet and onto the bookshelves. As part of the underground comix subculture of the 60s and 70s, Spiegelman created *Wacky Packages* and *Garbage Pail Kids*; in 1980 he founded *RAW*, the acclaimed avant-garde comics magazine; and in 1992 won the Pulitzer Prize for his masterful Holocaust narrative *Maus* – which portrayed Jews as mice and Nazis as cats. *Maus II* continued the remarkable story of his parents’ survival of the Nazi regime and their lives in America. “It would almost be impossible to overstate the influence of *Maus* among other artists,” wrote the *New York Times*.

In 2004, Spiegelman’s *In the Shadow of No Towers* was selected by *The New York Times* as one of the 100 Notable Books of 2004; in 2005 he was named one of *Time Magazine*’s 100 Most Influential People; and in 2006 was named to the Art Director’s Club Hall of Fame. He was made an Officier de l’Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in France in 2007, and in 2008 played himself on an episode of *The Simpsons*.

Spiegelman won the Grand Prix at the Angoulême International Comics Festival in 2011, marking only the third time an American has received the award. The honour also included a retrospective exhibition of his artwork, shown in the Pompidou Center and traveled to the Ludwig Museum in Cologne, the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Jewish Museum in NYC, and the last stop at the Art Gallery of Ontario.

Thank you to our Community Partners: The Beguiling, Comic Book Lounge and Gallery/Temple of Toys, Silver Snail.

KOFFLER CENTRE OF THE ARTS

The Koffler Centre of the Arts is a multidisciplinary arts organization and independent not-for-profit based in Jewish culture. We engage a contemporary dialogue through the arts that has local, national and international resonance. 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 Foundation, UJA Federation of Greater Toronto, Cultural Season Sponsor CIBC Wood Gundy, the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Ontario Arts Council through the Community and Multidisciplinary Arts Organizations Program, our patrons and members.

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