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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

"Art" Off the Wall at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre

The gallery's Atrium provides a fitting venue for this wildly funny exploration of the value of art and the nature of friendship.

Hope Theatre Projects, formerly The Seat Of Your Pants Theatre Company, proudly presents **Yasmina Reza's award-winning play "Art" in the unique venue of the Atrium at the Agnes Etherington Art Centre** (corner of University Ave. & Bader Lane) **from October 31 to November 11 Tuesday-Saturday at 8pm, and 2pm on Sundays**. Tickets are available via the Grand Theatre Box Office at 613-530-2050 or www.grandtheatre-kingston.com (Adults \$22/Seniors \$18/Students \$12). Join an all-star Kingston cast of talented professional actors to explore the intrinsic value of art in society and the true nature of friendship.

What is art? What is the value of art? What does friendship mean? Are your friends really who they seem to be? Yasmina Reza's "Art" is the story of three friends, Serge, Marc and Yvan, and what happens to their friendship when Serge buys an expensive piece of modern art: a white canvas with several white lines. The result is what Newsweek calls "...a non-stop cross-fire of crackling language, serious issues of life and art expressed in outbursts that sound like Don Rickles with a degree from the Sorbonne." The play was first produced in Paris in 1994 where it won the Molière Award for Best Author. **Translated by Christopher Hampton** (*Les Liaisons Dangereuses*), subsequent London and Broadway productions won the Olivier Award for Best Comedy and the Tony Award for Best Play respectively.

The friends are played by **local actors Matthew Gibson, Shane Carty and Mark Purvis** all of whom grew up and began their professional training in Kingston at Queen's University. Matthew Gibson, named by *The National Post* as one of the best actors of 2004 in Toronto-area productions, is a veteran professional with many acclaimed performances including last year's one-man tour-de-force *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*. Shane Carty has spent the last five years performing feature roles with the Stratford Festival and still finds time to work here whenever he can, including several seasons at the Thousand Islands Playhouse, most recently in this summer's *The Red Priest*. Mark Purvis is an emerging professional with a series of remarkable performances on his résumé including *Bent*, *Our Town*, and *Cherry Docs*.

Director Jennifer Radford Gibson, also a Queen's Drama alumna, is a dedicated theatre professional who has brought her unique vision to over a dozen challenging productions over the last ten years. Most recently, Kingston audiences have enjoyed Jennifer's productions of *Billy Bishop Goes to War*, *Bent*, *Cherry Docs* and *The Gospel According to Saint Mark*.

Hope Theatre Projects is a brand new professional not-for-profit theatre company based in Kingston, Ontario. Formerly known as The Seat Of Your Pants Theatre Company, Hope Theatre Projects is helmed by Co-Artistic Directors Matthew Gibson and Jennifer Radford Gibson. Hope Theatre produces plays which question preconceptions, are intellectually challenging and emotionally provocative, and which have immediate relevance to the Kingston community. For more information, please contact Jennifer Radford Gibson at 613-547-2860 or at hopenetheatre@gmail.com.

NOTE: There will be no performance on Saturday 10 November due to the AEAC gala.

This production is made possible by the support of the Ontario Arts Council and the City of Kingston Arts Fund.

