

Berkshire Museum Press Release

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Berkshire Museum Moves Forward With \$60 Million Reinvention Plan

*Funding strategy details announced as strong community interest
and support emerges*

[Pittsfield, Mass.] — In response to strong community interest and support for the Berkshire Museum's July 12, 2017, announcement of its New Vision — the creation of an exciting new interdisciplinary Museum, with a heightened emphasis on science and history as well as the arts — additional details of the funding strategy are revealed today.

The Berkshire Museum Board of Trustees met July 12 prior to the announcement and voted to approve the plans for the new Museum, the result of nearly two years of work and research, as well as the bold plans for funding the transformation and meeting the Museum's financial challenges.

Specifically designed to better serve the wider Berkshire community, the Museum's New Vision will result in an innovative twenty-first century institution. Realization of this ambitious plan is expected to cost \$20 million; in addition the Museum will create a new endowment of at least \$40 million in order to provide financial stability for the future. These initiatives will be largely funded through the sale of artworks in the Museum's collection, which have been deemed no longer essential to the Museum's new interdisciplinary programs.

“The process undertaken by the Museum to reach this point has been thoughtful and thorough, marked by intense community engagement and involvement,” says Van Shields, the Museum’s executive director. “The vision for how the Museum can best serve Pittsfield and the Berkshires is a reflection of the wishes of the community that surrounds us. By aligning our vision to community needs today, we will ensure the Museum continues its century-long track record of success as a vital cultural and educational resource for Pittsfield and Berkshire County.”

Financial strategy

Going forward, the new Berkshire Museum will be supported by a bold financial strategy designed to properly capitalize the institution. As well as upgrading its facility and core educational experiences, the Museum will establish an endowment sufficient to sustain operations through investment earnings to complement annual earned and contributed income. The Museum will also strengthen its balance sheet to reduce financial risk, pay down existing debt, and establish reserve funds for long-term capital maintenance and to mitigate unforeseen events.

To support the capitalization strategy, the Board of Trustees has opted to deaccession 40 works of art from the Museum’s extensive collection numbering approximately 40,000 objects. All of the deaccessioned works are unrestricted and unencumbered. The Museum is working with Sotheby’s to offer these works for sale. The Museum anticipates the proceeds to be in the region of \$50 million. Included are works in the fine art categories of Impressionist and Modern Art, Contemporary Art, 19th-Century European Paintings, American Art, Old Master Paintings, and Chinese Works of Art. The works that have been selected for deaccession have been deemed to be not essential to the Museum’s refreshed mission and do not directly contribute to its new interdisciplinary interpretive plan with its heightened emphasis on science and history. The complete list, released by the Museum in conjunction with Sotheby’s, is included at the end of this document.

The Museum will also continue to engage with its members, visitors, and supporters through fundraising campaigns, annual appeals, corporate sponsorships, and support

from its membership base, including the \$10 million New Vision campaign to support the new strategic plan. The generous lead gift of \$2.5 million from the Feigenbaum Foundation, added to other gifts and pledges for a total to date of \$5.4 million, means that the campaign is already more than halfway to the goal, an auspicious beginning. Together with its existing holdings, the proceeds from sales and additional fundraising will ensure the Museum can fund its capitalization goals.

The visitor experience

Community participation in the planning process revealed a strong interest in strengthening the Museum's programs related to science and history. With that in mind, the Museum's Master Plan will establish a truly interdisciplinary institution based on collections related to science, history, and the arts, unique in the Berkshire County region. New programs and exhibitions will create opportunities for people to discover more about the Berkshires and its impact on the world around them. The new model will provide visitors with technology that allows them to interact in a variety of modalities, and create regular opportunities for the community to come together.

For more than a century, the Berkshire Museum has been the region's premier museum of science, history, and the arts. Building on this legacy, the Berkshire Museum will create a radically new interdisciplinary approach to the experiences and educational opportunities it provides. Treasured objects from the collection will be integrated with new interpretive techniques, cutting-edge technology, and a fresh perspective that aims to extract contemporary relevance from historical artifacts. Static museum galleries will be transformed into active teaching laboratories, and the Museum will extend its leadership position as the region's authority on science and history for the general public. By inspiring curiosity and wonder in its audiences, the Museum will continue to nurture the social, cultural, and economic development of Pittsfield and the Berkshires.

The historic building will be updated inside, with a spacious, sunlit entryway, and an innovative display of objects from the Museum's collection enlivening the central space. Visitors will see many of the familiar, iconic objects interpreted in new ways

throughout the galleries. Wally the stegosaurus will be relocated indoors, protected from the elements. Tom Patti's magnificent glass installations will be in new locations within the Museum. Multi-media programming will be presented in a modern, more intimate space, with greatly improved sound and projection capabilities. The Alexander Calder mobiles now in the Theater will be re-installed as well.

Five thematic zones will define the visitor experience: Our Human Fabric, Make & Create, Shaping History, Perceive & Process, and Our Living World. Our Living World will feature a significantly expanded and improved aquarium, highlighting the streams and ponds of New England as well as exotic environments from around the globe. The iconic Egyptian mummy Pahat will be an important part of the Human Fabric thematic zone, prominently displayed with richer and more detailed interpretation than has been possible to date.

About the Berkshire Museum

Located in downtown Pittsfield, Massachusetts, at 39 South St., the Berkshire Museum, a Smithsonian Affiliate, is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

In association with the Smithsonian since 2013, Berkshire Museum is part of a select group of museums, cultural, educational, and arts organizations that share the Smithsonian's resources with the nation.

The Berkshire Museum integrates science, history, and the arts in dynamic, educational, and engaging programs and exhibitions for visitors of all ages. ***Curiosity Incubator*** is on view. ***GUITAR: The Instrument That Rocked the World*** is on view now through September 4, 2017. Little Cinema is open year-round. Lab102, Feigenbaum Hall of Innovation, Worlds in Miniature, Aquarium, and other exhibits are ongoing.

List of works

Alphabetical order by artist

1. ALBERT BIERSTADT

Connecticut River Valley, Claremont, New Hampshire

1868, Oil on canvas

2. ALBERT BIERSTADT

Giant Redwood Trees of California

Circa 1874, Oil on canvas

3. RALPH ALBERT BLAKELOCK

Rocky Mountains

Oil on canvas

4. WILLIAM-ADOLPHE BOUGUEREAU

L'Agneau nouveau-né (The Newborn Lamb)

1873, Oil on canvas

5. WILLIAM-ADOLPHE BOUGUEREAU

La bourrique (The Pony-back Ride)

1884, Oil on canvas

6. ALEXANDER CALDER

Dancing Torpedo Shape

1932, Wood, wire and aluminum

7. ALEXANDER CALDER

Double Arc and Sphere

1932, Painted wood, wire and sheet metal

8. FREDERIC EDWIN CHURCH

Valley of the Santa Ysabel

1875, Oil on canvas

9. CHARLES FRANÇOIS DAUBIGNY
Paysans allant aux champs le matin
Oil on canvas

10. THOMAS WILMER DEWING
The White Dress
Oil on canvas

11. RAOUL DUFY
La Fête
Circa 1935, Watercolor on paper

12. GEORGE HENRY DURRIE
Hunter in Winter Wood
1860, Oil on canvas

13. PIETER DE HOOCH
The Music Party
Oil on canvas

14. GEORGE INNESS
Mountain Landscape – The Painter at Work (Leeds in the Catskills, with the Artist Sketching)
Circa 1867-1869, Oil on canvas

15. ADRIAEN ISENBRANT
The Temptation
Oil on panel

16. ADRIAEN ISENBRANT AND CIRCLE OF JOACHIM PATINIR
Flight into Egypt
Oil on panel

17. DANIEL RIDGWAY KNIGHT

Girl with Dog

1866, Oil on canvas

18. JOHN LAFARGE

Magnolia

1863, Oil on panel

19. HENRY MOORE

Three Seated Figures

1942, Pastel, ink and pen on paper

20. THOMAS MORAN

The Last Arrow

1867, Oil on canvas

21. ALBERTO PASINI

Market Day in Constantinople

1877, Oil on canvas

22. CHARLES WILLSON PEALE

Portrait of General David Forman

Circa 1784, Oil on canvas

23. REMBRANDT PEALE

George Washington

Oil on canvas

24. FRANCIS PICABIA

Force Comique

Watercolor on paper

25. SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

Portrait of Mr. W. Cave

Oil on canvas

26. NORMAN ROCKWELL

Blacksmith's Boy – Heel and Toe

(Shaftsbury Blacksmith Shop)

1940, Oil on canvas

27. NORMAN ROCKWELL

Shuffleton's Barbershop

1950, Oil on canvas

28. AUGUSTUS SAINT-GAUDENS

Diana of the Tower

1899, Bronze

29. FRANKLIN SIMMONS

Penelope

1884, Marble

30. GIULIO TADOLINI

Judith

1881, Marble

31. GIROLAMO TROPPIA

Apollo Flaying Marsyas

Oil on canvas

32. JAN VICTORS

Benjamin and His Brethren

Oil on canvas

33. EDOUARD VUILLARD

Deux femmes dans un interieur

Watercolor on paper

34. EDWIN LORD WEEKS

Indian Prince, Palace of Agra

Oil on canvas

35. BENJAMIN WEST

Daniel Interpreting to Belshazzar the Handwriting on the Wall

Oil on canvas

36. A FOLDING 'TALE OF GENJI' SCREEN

Japan, 16th Century

37. A TEN-PANEL COROMANDEL LACQUER 'DAOIST IMMORTALS' SCREEN

Qing Dynasty, Kangxi Period, dated by inscription 1689

38. AN ARCHAIC BRONZE RITUAL FOOD VESSEL, GUI

Early Western Zhou Period

39. A LARGE BLUE AND WHITE 'DRAGON' VASE

Qing Dynasty, Early 19th Century, Jiaqing-Daoguang Period

40. A LARGE BRONZE FIGURE OF GUANYIN

China or Japan, 19th Century

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